

## **OPENING STATEMENT**

### **AT PUBLIC HEARING FOR SENATE INQUIRY ON AIRCRAFT NOISE**

**20<sup>th</sup> September 2024**

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1. Good morning, Senators. Initially, I prepared a succinct summary of my submission and supplementary on ANEF (co- authored with Tony Williams). However, when I visited this place on Wednesday night, I had a lumen and decided to tell you a short story instead.
2. It's a story about the steady decline over forty years in scholarly research on aircraft noise in Australia. ***Back in 1982***, Dr Rob Bullen and I published a report on the only national survey of community reaction to aircraft noise conducted in this country, namely, the ***NAL Report***, (see 'Additional Document 12').
3. ***In 1996***, the Government responded to the '*Falling on Deaf Ears*' report by recommending some important research on aircraft noise. They did fund one major study on which I collaborated, but it was not about the important issues they mentioned.
4. ***In 1998***, I was invited by the World Health Organisation to join their expert panel in London and collaborated on writing their revised '*Guidelines for Community Noise*'.
5. ***In 2014***, the Sydney Airport Community Forum (SACF) invited me and Rob Bullen to assess the need for a new national survey. We recommended that a new survey was long-overdue. SACF actively promoted our recommendation, but it was mysteriously blocked (possibly by Airservices Australia and/or the Department). Ten years later, the Government has taken no action re a new survey.

6. **In 2018**, SACF invited me to advise on recent international research on aircraft noise and its implications for *'the NAL study and the ANEF system'*. I advised that five reports were needed to address the relevant issues, and undertook to write the first two (see *'Additional Documents 23 and 24'*).
  
7. **In 2024**, I researched our submission on ANEF by conducting a literature review of the international research on aircraft noise over the past four years. In our supplementary, we report on a review we conducted of all mentions of ANEF, ANEC or ANEI in all the submissions to this Inquiry.
  
8. ***The moral of this story is that Australia has failed dismally to maintain its scholarly research on aircraft noise, and the Government urgently needs to commission the following studies:***
  - 1) **a new national survey** around seven Australian airports including a regional and a general aviation airport;
  - 2) **'before-and-after' surveys** of communities exposed to *'new noise'*, namely, at **Western Sydney Airport** due to open in 2026, and at **Melbourne Airport** when their recently-approved third runway opens.
  
9. Senators, I submit that such a research program is **essential** if this Inquiry is to be a catalyst for effective reforms on ***the impact and mitigation of aircraft noise***.

***For Your Consideration...***