

Dear Sir/Madam,

Re: Senate Standing Committee on Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport - Inquiry into Airservices Australia's handling of noise issues at Perth Airport

As a resident of Chidlow, I have been severely affected by noise nuisance since the change in aircraft movements in and out of Perth airport.

I would like to make the following submission to the inquiry:

- Airservices Australia (ASA) did not consult the community. The simple evidence for this is that virtually no-one in the areas affected had any prior knowledge of the changes. If no-one got the information then it has NOT been communicated. As a result, with no communication, the consultation process was a non-starter.
- ASA did not ensure that noise sharing was equitable. I base this assertion on the fact that if everyone else in Perth was suffering similar noise nuisance to myself, then it would be on the news every night and an ongoing public scandal! In fact, I suspect that ASA has made a conscious decision to target less populated suburbs in the knowledge that annoying a few people a lot is better for them than annoying everyone a little. Certainly, their changes have affected the rural, less populated, poorer suburbs rather than the beach suburbs with the millionaires – coincidence maybe, but rather like the coincidence of the fox being caught in the hencoop!
- ASA has taken a very simplistic approach in taking their dB readings as a measure of the noise nuisance. The World Health Organisation has conducted extensive studies and published the results here: <http://www.who.int/docstore/peh/noise/guidelines2.html> - this document clearly states several things that I already know :

“Studies suggest that it is the difference in sound pressure levels between a noise event and background, rather than the absolute sound pressure level of the noise event, that determines the reaction probability.”

“The intermittent character of noise has to be taken into account when setting night-time limits for noise exposure. For example, this can be achieved by considering the number of noise events and the difference between the maximum sound pressure level and the background level of these events.”

“Special attention should also be given to the following considerations: Noise sources in an environment with a low background noise level.”

“Even if the total equivalent noise level is fairly low, a small number of noise events with a high maximum sound pressure level will affect sleep.”

At the end of the day, my noise detectors (one on each side of my head) know what noise constitutes a nuisance – and what noise wakes me up at night – I don't need electronic equipment or ASA's dubious 'interpretation' of figures. Don't these people understand the simple concept that saying 'boo' behind someone in a nightclub is different to saying 'boo' behind someone on a quiet night in the bush?

- The whole thing stinks - a bureaucracy intent on imposing change that it sees as necessary, while cynically ignoring those unfairly affected by those changes and manipulating the checks and balances to ensure it gets its own way with the least amount of hassle and publicity.

I hope the Senate Standing Committee can rein in the inappropriate behaviour of the ASA and put right the wrongs done by them to me and my neighbours. This shouldn't happen in Australia – it's bloody unfair!

Yours faithfully,  
Tom McNaughtan