

**Keilor Residents &
Ratepayers Assoc.Inc.
P.O.Box 141, Keilor
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27th January, 2010

Committee Secretary

**'Inquiry into the effectiveness of Airservices Australia's
management of aircraft noise.'**

This submission will be sent by email to rrat.sen@aph.gov.au

This submission is from the Keilor Residents & Ratepayers Assoc.Inc and we are very concerned about the handling of aircraft noise matters related to Melbourne Airport. We have four committee members who attend (when these meetings are haphazardly called) the Brimbank Community Noise Abatement meetings. It has been quite a time since there was an Airservices representative present at any of those meetings.

The title of the inquiry which includes the words effectiveness is a total mismatch. Try and go through the very fundamental ways of lodging a noise complaint. Please keep in mind that not every resident has access to a computer nor can they find their way around with online searches. When you go to the AirServices site how long does it take you to find the form that you have to fill out to lodge your complaint or enquiry? If you ring the phone number you have to wait to go through a long recorded message generally because often you are lodging your complaint at non-office times. The message here is even if you go to either of the airport or the airservices homepages there is no entry up front for noise complaints.

The total disaffection with how you lodge a complaint cannot be emphasised too strongly. Try and go to the Melbourne Airport website and find out how you lodge a Noise Complaint. You will find you can do a search by the keyword noise and when you scroll down the page you can find the entry about how to lodge a complaint with airservices. All this indicates is how hard it is to actually register a complaint and then note how much detail you have to give.

The greatest disadvantage we have found for residents to whom we speak with is they find that if they go through all of this gruesome registration process they know that one phone call, for instance, is registered as one complaint, even though you might be ringing about the fact that you may have had 12 flights flying over your home between the hours of midnight and 3am and they were particularly noisy. Apart from the fact that the numbers the officials work to never reflect the number of flights that are causing residents concerns there is also the added issue that you have to note the time. So in your report you must say 12.20 approx. a departure from the 16 heading south caused a noise complaint for you.!

If you want to know about noise levels well that's another exercise altogether. You have to write to an address in Canberra and then they will send you the graph and as

with the complaint no. 234776, Keilor, 14/1/10 0000 – 0330 the noise levels were 70.0 to 77.2.

The noise level instrument is placed on the roof of a local scout hall and was at risk of being removed but our local council did try and emphasise how important it was to keep it in that place. At least there is a local attempt in understanding the noise levels that residents are experiencing. When your house rattles and shakes with noise in the early hours of the morning you have to take note of the time of the flight and then set to the next morning and register the details.

All of this procedure demonstrates how hard it is for us to get the message across that there are problems to do with noise exposure to aircraft from Melbourne Airport and that the increased traffic loads on the North South runway have heightened the problems particularly as there is no curfew in place for Melbourne.

There are so many details we can comment about in such as Noise Abatement Procedures and in the committee report of December 2009 it says “Noise Abatement Procedures – This is outstanding. The Noise Abatement Procedures were changed on 15 March 2007 particularly with a view of reducing the impact of aircraft noise to the south. The key issue appears to be the removal of the suburb listing. It is timely to review the NAP’s generally and whether or not specific suburbs should be re-included. Review to be undertaken.” Another item is about Aircraft Separation Times. These last items illustrate you have to become a ‘mini expert’ in aircraft activity, weather conditions, airport procedures, Planning Environs, Ground Running Policy and Air Services practices to name some of the entries on forum reports.

Your inquiry is only interested, we realise, in the effectiveness of Airservices Australia’s management of aircraft noise. But, what we are interested in are you really hearing all the voices that could be heard about aircraft noise related matters?

Today there was an advertisement in the Australian newspaper re ‘Senate Committee Activities’ and there is an entry in the 3rd column saying ‘Aircraft Noise’. How many of the general public living in the Keilor region actually know this inquiry is going on?

Your forums (not the community ones) organised at the airport – have they suggested to letterbox residents in certain postcode areas and asked them do they want to take part in the inquiry? Or more importantly why can’t a very simple information card be given to each letterbox saying the phone no. of Airservices and the online form url entry? Yes, when those forums are held it can be said well only so many people complained from that area but for each of those persons you can multiply it many times over for the people who are annoyed and affected by noise levels but they simply don’t know how to go about complaining.

Since the Airservices complaint mechanisms were registered in Sydney you can still get individuals who appear not to know anything about Melbourne nor the proximity of Keilor to the airport and I know because I was told recently well the people of Sydney put up with this, etc. etc. Well the people of Sydney also experience the benefits of a curfew. What is important here and I know personally I always try and fill out the forms online because I simply don’t want to go through the palaver of

having to make my message understood before I get a number one complaint written against my name.

In your guidelines it is stated 'the committee shall consider whether Airservices Australia: (a) has conducted an effective, open and informed public consultation strategy with communities affected by aircraft noise.'

The strong response is no, the procedure is not open and there are so many more responses we could give after a tortuous couple of years working on committee forums that deliver no change and no difference to the environment we live in.

Keilor Village was here before the airport was developed and I add this most particularly because you will always get readers of such a submission saying why live near an airport. The answer is we were here first and Keilor is an ancient part of Australia but this is not the place to give you a history lesson. We do care and we do feel we are not getting a fair deal for our region. There is more to be added but I hope with this submission you understand the sincerity of the message that our local environment is being affected by aircraft noise.

Yours sincerely,

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