

SUBMISSION 42

AIRPORT OF THE YEAR 2002

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Senator Ross Lightfoot
Chair
Joint Standing Committee on the National Capital and External Territories
Suite PR1, 119
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

RECEIVED
28 JUL 2003

Dear Senator

We wish to make a submission to the Inquiry into the National Capital Authority (NCA).

The NCA is the appropriate organisation to represent the Australian Parliament through the Joint Parliamentary Committee on the ACT to present its views, carry out its wishes and preserve and nurture the freehold estate which is vested in the Australian people.

The NCA have established and maintained a number of important principles in relation to topographical and landscape elements within the context of the national capital open space system, together with protection and the nurturing of the intrinsic value of the existing and future requirements of the built environment. This is particularly important in the Central National Area, which contains the main activities of Parliament and the Government in the central area, as well as other locations designated as land subject to NCA control, including the major approach routes.

It is entirely appropriate that the NCA administer these functions, as they are quite correctly under the purview of the Australian Parliament and these should not be issues that are handled by locally elected representatives of Canberra, as they do and would, quite rightly, respond to local issues and pressures. Their interests will not always be in the national interest. It goes further than planning issues per se. This, reverberates throughout such topics as transport, private or public access and parking, appropriate land use, water, conservation and sustainability issues. The NCA's role in preserving the Commonwealth's interests is necessary and should be strengthened. Canberra is the creation by the Commonwealth arising from the Seat of Government Act and should be held and nurtured for the people of Australia.

This concept goes further, as the NCA is responsible for the promotion and presentation of our national institutions to the Australian community and this is an important social and strategic objective of national importance in being the country's primary and principal democratic, social, judicial, cultural and administrative institutions in an accessible and in a well presented manner for all Australians.

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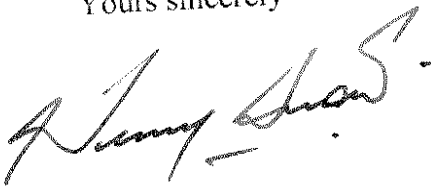
We believe the NCA has achieved their charter in these respects and, especially over the last five years, has been proactive in its discharge of these obligations.

The NCA has a town planning role and, as a result, is the approving authority for the land that comes under its mandate. The Airport is one such area. I write as the Chairman of the Airport and say that the Airport, under the auspices of the NCA, has achieved the highest level of planning, architectural quality, user amenity and urban design. The Airport, as a consequence of the NCA planning role, has benefited from a higher standard of planning, than any of the private sector developments elsewhere in the Territory.

Canberra Airport is justly proud of being recognised as the Australian Airport of the Year in 2003 – a considerable achievement. This could not have been achieved without the support and active input from the NCA. We have found that we have been able to work in a collaborative, rather than a confrontational, environment to achieve outcomes which have proven to be of benefit to the community. The NCA has been timely and responsive to our requests and quite often, not always, agreeable to our proposals, but we have worked together to resolve our various interests to achieve the highest standard of planning and urban design outcomes for the significant gateway to the National Capital.

We encourage your Committee to commend the worth of the National Capital Authority and consider giving them more resources to continue to position Canberra as a worthy National Capital in the interest of all of the Australian people.

Yours sincerely



Terry Snow
Executive Chairman

