

Councillors' Room

260 Liverpool Road, Ashfield
 PO Box 1145, Ashfield NSW 2131
 DX 21221 ASHFIELD



Facsimile: (02) 9716 1911
 Telephone: (02) 9716 1902

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Senator Bill Heffernan
 Chairperson
 Senate Enquiry into Airports Amendments Bill
 Fax 0262775811

Dear Chairperson,

Re: Senate Enquiry into Airports Amendment Bill

I am pleased to make a submission to the Senate Enquiry into the Airports Act Amendment Bill. While the Bill is being justified on the basis that the airport will be more accountable for aircraft noise, we submit that this is under the control of Airservices Australia under the Airservices Act. Such a justification is therefore illegitimate. Ashfield Council is home to a number of individuals who have for years sought to exercise every possible democratic opportunity to protest their feelings of injustice against aircraft noise. To reduce the response time to new airport Masterplans and Development Plans to only 45 days restricts their individual rights unfairly.

Since the building of the Third Runway under a previous Government, Ashfield Council and surrounding areas have been seriously impacted by steadily increasing Aircraft Noise. This has not been diminished or shared equitably, in any sense, by the implementation of LTOP. Under this scheme, heavy aircraft taking off from the main North-South Runway have been obliged to turn sharply to the West when the prevailing winds come from the North. This means that Ashfield, Summer Hill, Haberfield and Croydon are heavily impacted. The bombardment is intense all year around, but is especially heavy during the Summer Months. Ashfield Council area contains a number of schools in which classes are interrupted by noise. The development of children is likely to be affected by sustained exposure to noise, especially those who are musically talented. It is arguable that Airservices Australia's response is inadequate if not pathetic, but they are the body that should respond under present legislation and therefore this is not a justification for other measures, such as the restriction of response time to the Airport's Development plans.

I do not believe that any urban area should be subjected to such intense bombardment irrespective of political or social demographic, the previous practice, where aircraft took off due North is *relatively* safe, because aircraft are straining to turn as well as gain height. Northerly take offs are also more economical for airlines, because less fuel is consumed.

**Ashfield
 Municipal Council**

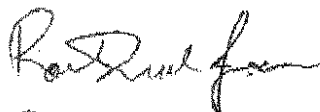
Aside from the significant issue of noise, overflying aircraft are responsible for considerable pollution. Studies have shown that in populations subject to overflying, there is a significant increase in asthma, emphysema, heart problems and strokes. To expand an airport on such a limited space surrounded by the most densely populated area of Australia with indifference is negligent, and may yet be considered criminal. Diminishing the submission time as proposed only makes the situation worse, and establishes a precedent for similar measures in unrelated areas.

Since the events of 11th September 2001, passenger aircraft have the potential to be used as weapons against a civilian population. As a partner in the 'Coalition of the Willing', Australia has been fortunate so far in not being targeted for such treatment. The population around Kingsford Smith Airport is extremely vulnerable. To reduce the submission time on Developments in the light of this possibility is not justifiable.

As mentioned earlier, a number of residents of the Municipality have persisted in complaining for years. In this endeavour, they are giving voice to the thousands who resent the aircraft but feel themselves significantly disempowered by the decisions of their own Governments. Confidence in the fairness of our political system is diminished. Ashfield Council has submitted previously that the 25 ANEF boundary is growing, and will continue to grow over the next twenty years unless there is an alternative, far beyond the borders of Ashfield Council. The matters under consideration will not improve the situation. They will, if implemented, make them worse.

The future development of a large sector of our population will be significantly hindered and endangered by the failure to properly plan for the human as well as the transport needs of this city. While the airport may benefit in the short term from unhindered development, the city and by extension the country will not. The 45 day gag can only restrict individual freedoms to an extent incompatible with our democratic form of Government. Such a decision is certainly incompatible with the philosophy of a Federal Government which seeks to champion the rights of the individual. Despite the inconvenience and the cost, Kingsford Smith Airport should be relocated away from the industrial, entrepreneurial, artistic, social and academic centre of Australia. This may be beyond the scope of your committee, but your decisions will have influence far beyond a seemingly simple but unjustifiable restriction of the right to comment.

Yours Truly,



Councillor Rae Jones

57 Henson Street Summer Hill 2130
0419 983 725