

**North Canberra Community Council
PO Box 396, Dickson ACT 2602**

16 January 2007

The Secretary
Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Committee
PO Box 6100
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Sir/Madam

Thank you for your letter of 5 January 2007. I was disappointed to note the limited amount of time allowed for submissions on this important matter, and suggest that this contrasts starkly with Mrs De-Anne Kelly's recent statement (Hansard, 30 November 2006) that "The Australian government takes very seriously the views of the community in relation to airport development". I trust that any shortcomings in the content provided below will be viewed in the light of the imposed urgency of our response.

We write with specific regard to two matters relating to Canberra International Airport ("the airport"). At the outset we acknowledge the considerable importance of a safe, efficient and functional airport facility to commercial and social activity in the ACT.

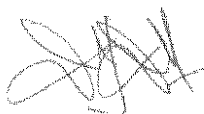
The first matter of concern to North Canberra Community Council (NCCC) is the proposal in the Airport's Amendment Bill to remove the airport from the operation of the National Capital Plan. NCCC does not agree with this proposal, which would seemingly make the airport the only part of the ACT exempt from planning considerations that apply to all other Territory businesses and residents.

We contend that the fact that Canberra airport is currently not "on an equal footing with other privatised airports" (Kelly; Hansard, 30 November 2006) elsewhere in Australia is not a material consideration, given that it enjoys a monopoly in the area of its purported primary business (ie, hosting of aviation traffic), with a volume of trade guaranteed by its proximity to the Commonwealth Parliament and associated departments, agencies and facilities.

While the recent FCA decision established the legality of non-aviation developments on airport land, NCCC does not accept that development of a shopping mall (eg, 'Brand Depot') or business offices, or the myriad other possibilities, are matters that should be dealt with by the Commonwealth Department of Transport. Such ancillary activities and developments impact substantively on requirements for and functionality of local infrastructure, and, accordingly, should be subject to local regulatory considerations.

Continuing local input to regulation of activity at the airport is especially important in light of the operator's stated intention to establish a major 'round-the-clock' freight hub on the site (Canberra International Airport Master Plan 2005). If successful, this activity will impact considerably both on local infrastructure and residential amenity, with the prospect of continual operation of heavy ground and air transport, and concomitant exposure of north Canberra residents to associated constant noise. NCCC maintains its view that Canberra airport should be subject to an operational curfew no less stringent than that which applies to Kingsford-Smith Airport in Sydney.

Yours sincerely



David Dall
Chairman
North Canberra Community Council