



Committee Secretary
Senate Standing Committee on Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport.
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Inquiry into Airservices Australia's (AsA) Management of Aircraft Noise

The RAAA represents 25 AOC holders and 46 companies supplying services to the former. The AOC holders are mostly regional airlines, the RFDS medi-vac services, as well as a number of flight training schools. Industry turnover is well over \$1.5b per annum with RAAA members supplying essential services to regional and remote Australia.

It is the RAAA's general view that AsA does a reasonable job of managing aircraft noise.

It should be noted by the Committee that communities have developed around airports, not the other way around. Local Councils have allowed this encroachment and residents have taken advantage of the usually cheaper land near an airport. Airport designers place buffer zones between airport land and surrounding suburbs, both current and potential. Those buffer zones have not always been respected in the planning for communities nearer to airports. To use the legal precedent established by Lord Denning, noise complainants have often 'come to the nuisance'.

Passenger carrying aircraft are now significantly quieter and this trend will continue. It is quite possible that within 20 years aircraft noise will not be a significant issue at most major capital city and regional airports. This is true for jet and turboprop aircraft. The aviation industry takes noise issues very seriously and is spending millions on researching ways of making aircraft quieter. The investment is ongoing and communities are and will reap the benefit.

The regional aviation industry accepts that noise sharing strategies are a reality of modern aviation. However, there is a cost in the extra fuel required to meet noise sharing flight paths and therefore often added cost for the passenger. In addition noise sharing arrangements can lead to a higher carbon footprint. An example of the issue is the banning of night operations on runway 16L/R at Sydney Airport. If there is a strong southerly blowing, aircraft are forced to make expensive diversions to other airports, burning more fuel, adding to cost and pollution levels.

It is acknowledged that AsA has a complex challenge in meeting community noise expectations and providing an efficient air traffic management system. Priorities are often competing and it is virtually impossible to keep all parties happy.

The RAAA looks forward to working with the Parliament, AsA and airport community groups to ensure that noise sharing arrangements are organised in a fair, equitable and efficient manner.

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CEO
05 February 2010

Serving regional aviation, and through it, the people and businesses of regional Australia

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