

10 May 2013

Mr Martin Brown
Environmental Planner
Department of Planning & Infrastructure
PO Box 5474
WOLLONGONG NSW 2520

Dear Mr Brown

Proposed Planning Policy – Canberra Airport

Virgin Australia appreciates the opportunity to provide a submission outlining our views regarding the NSW Department of Planning and Infrastructure's proposed planning policy direction in relation to development near Canberra Airport.

Our services to Canberra Airport are an essential element of the Virgin Australia network, providing direct connections between our nation's capital and Adelaide, Brisbane, Gold Coast, Sydney and Melbourne. We operate more than 140 return services each week to/from Canberra with a combination of jet and turbo-prop aircraft. Over the last five years, the number of flights we operate to Canberra has increased by almost 100 per cent, and the recent opening of a new Virgin Australia terminal and state-of-the-art lounge facilities at Canberra Airport provides a strong indication of our commitment to increase and enhance our services in the future. Accordingly, Virgin Australia strongly supports initiatives which will assist in ensuring that Canberra Airport's 24-hour curfew-free passenger and freight operations are not compromised by incompatible land developments.

Virgin Australia actively engages with communities, governments, airports and other stakeholders in the aviation industry in seeking to manage aircraft noise, by maintaining an appropriate balance between the social, economic and environmental needs of communities on the one hand and the effective use of airport sites on the other. While aviation plays a critical role in driving economic development and facilitating social cohesion, its growth has resulted in an inevitable increase in the number of aircraft movements over populated areas.

While we broadly support the stated objectives of the proposed direction to avoid incompatible development in the vicinity of Canberra Airport and prevent any increase in the residential density of land located within the Australian Noise Exposure Forecast (ANEF) contour 20, it should be noted that aircraft noise is not confined to areas within ANEF contour 20. This is consistent with our understanding that many complaints regarding airport noise are received from people residing in areas outside of the published ANEF contours and is confirmed by the *National Airports Safeguarding Framework – Measures for Managing Impacts of Aircraft Noise* (the Framework), which provides that:

“...the 20 ANEF and 25 ANEF zones do not capture all high noise affected areas around an airport, and Australian Standard AS 2021-2000 Acoustics – Aircraft Noise Intrusion – Building Siting and Construction (AS2021) recognises that the ANEF contours are not necessarily an indicator of the full spread of noise impacts, particularly for residents newly exposed to aircraft noise.”

The Framework also underscores the importance of governments considering a complementary suite of noise measures and management options, in conjunction with the ANEF system, to enhance the outcomes of the strategic planning process and provide clearer and more comprehensive information on aircraft noise for communities.

As you would be aware, the Framework was developed by the National Airports Safeguarding Advisory Group, of which State and Territory government planning and transport officials are members, and considered and agreed to by Commonwealth, State and Territory Ministers. We would therefore encourage the NSW Department of Planning and Infrastructure to adopt a forward-thinking approach in finalising the proposed direction by incorporating some of the additional noise management measures suggested within the Framework, such as a requirement for a disclosure process that ensures future residents of properties in areas impacted by aircraft noise are informed of such impacts prior to purchase.

Should you wish to discuss our comments or require any further information, please contact Lee-Anne Tomkins on (02) 8093 7114.

Yours sincerely



Jane McKeon
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Government Relations