



Australian Government
Department of Infrastructure and Transport

Community Aviation Consultation Groups Guidelines

National Aviation Policy White Paper



Issued - February 2011

1 INTRODUCTION

These Guidelines are provided for those establishing, running and participating in Community Aviation Consultation Groups.

Community Aviation Consultation Groups are a mechanism to ensure appropriate community engagement on airport planning and operations.

The following leased federal airports have a responsibility to establish and maintain permanent Community Aviation Consultation Groups:

Adelaide	Hobart
Archerfield	Jandakot
Alice Springs	Launceston
Bankstown	Melbourne
Brisbane	Moorabbin
Camden	Parafield
Canberra	Perth
Darwin	Sydney
Essendon	Townsville
Gold Coast	

These airports vary in size and activity, operate in different communities and have different development and operational plans. The arrangements put in place for one Community Aviation Consultation Group will not necessarily be appropriate for another.

2 ROLE AND PURPOSE

- to enable airport operators, residents affected by airport operations, local authorities, airport users, and other interested parties to exchange information on issues relating to the airport operations and their impacts;

- 
- to allow concerns to be raised and taken into account by the airport operator, with a genuine desire to resolve issues that may emerge; and
 - to complement and support the consultative requirements already established for Master Plans, Airport Environment Strategies and Major Development Plans.

The goal is that the Community Aviation Consultation Group will assist in ensuring that debate on these issues is well-informed and undertaken in a spirit of collaboration.

Airport operators will be expected to take serious account of recommendations made by the Group.

The Group is just one avenue through which concerns can be raised and does not replace other forums and complaints handling mechanisms established by the airport operator or other authorities (such as the handling of aircraft noise complaints by Airservices Australia). The Group is not an arbitration or decision making body.

3 TERMS OF REFERENCE

Each group should establish terms of reference consistent with role and purpose outlined above.

Terms of reference might cover the following:

- Impacts of existing development and operations;
- Plans for future development and steps being taken to implement the airport's Master Plan or develop a new plan;
- proposals to increase or change aviation services;
- noise (including aircraft noise) and environmental issues;
- ground transport and access issues;
- access issues for passengers, including people with disabilities;
- planning, regulatory, and policy changes affecting the airport;
- improvements or changes to airport facilities;
- ensuring effective complaints-handling procedures are in place;
- reports from Airservices Australia and the Civil Aviation Safety Authority on issues affecting the community ;
- the contribution of the airport to the local, regional and national economy; and
- strategies to ensure the broad community is informed of issues discussed in the group.

4 COMPOSITION AND BUSINESS

The Group is expected to meet at least three times per year. The constitution and procedural arrangements adopted by the Group should be clear and transparent.

The Group is encouraged to develop strategies to ensure the broad community is informed of any major issues and provided an opportunity for appropriate input.

INDEPENDENT CHAIR

The Group should be convened by a person who is independent of the airport and able to manage the deliberations of the Group in an impartial manner.

Those airports that do not already have an independent chair in place should work closely with neighbouring local authorities and others to identify and engage an appropriate person for this role.

For subsequent appointments, the Group itself should be involved in the selection process where feasible.

The independent conduct of the Chair is critical for the effective functioning of the Group. An independent Chair will:

- ensure the input of the full membership is sought as to agenda items;
- ensure adequate discussion time is devoted to issues of significance;
- allow for discussion of unanticipated 'other business' at Group meetings;
- ensure agenda materials and papers are meaningful and facilitate effective engagement of members in Group discussions;
- encourage open discussion and a frank exchange of views; and
- monitor effective follow-up of action items.

Any interests, arrangements or associations of the Chair which might reasonably give rise to perceptions of a conflict of interest should be disclosed to the group.

MEMBERSHIP

Membership of the Group should include persons who can contribute views representative of :

- aviation services and operators at the airport;

- 
- community organisations, resident groups or individuals, ensuring the representation of residents affected by airport development and operations;
 - representatives from state, territory or local government bodies; and
 - local tourism bodies and business groups.

The size and membership of the Community Aviation Consultation Group will depend upon local circumstances but should be both manageable and sufficient to achieve its objectives.

SECRETARIAT

Airport operators are expected to organise and resource appropriate secretariat support for the group.

Duties attached to the secretariat will include:

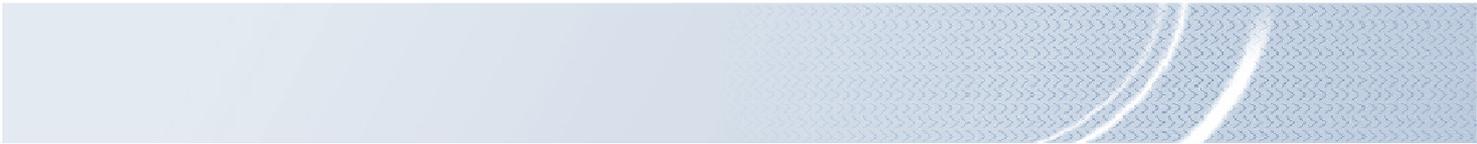
- communication of arrangements made for the Group, including any framework documents such as procedural arrangements and terms of reference, to the membership
- preparation, distribution and publication of records of Group meetings;
- preparation and distribution of meeting agendas;
- ensuring that Group members are notified of meetings and given an opportunity to prepare for meetings;
- supporting the activities of the chair, as required;
- coordinating input to assist the Group on policy, technical and other support issues, where agreed; and
- preparing a report on the Group's work for the purpose of consideration as part of the airport's annual lease review.

THE ROLE OF AIRPORT MANAGEMENT

It is important that the airport management participate fully in Group proceedings, offering items for the agenda, attending meetings and providing relevant information on the operation of the airport.

THE ROLE OF OFFICIALS AND PARLIAMENTARY REPRESENTATIVES

Commonwealth officials, including officers of the Department of Infrastructure and Transport, and of other relevant agencies such as Airservices Australia and the Civil Aviation Safety Authority, will attend meetings of the group as appropriate, to provide relevant information and assist in discussions if



invited, but will not be formal members. Officials from state or local government organisations and elected parliamentary representatives may also be invited to participate.

5 FURTHER INFORMATION

For further information on these guidelines, or other issues relating to the Federal leased airports, please contact the Department of Infrastructure and Transport on (02) 6274 7111 or www.infrastructure.gov.au