

SYDNEY AIRPORT COMMUNITY FORUM



Dr Brendan Nelson MP

Federal Member for Bradfield
Chair

Mr Anthony Albanese MP

Federal Member for Grayndler

The Hon Bruce Baird MP

Federal Member for Cook

Cr Mark Bonanno

Mayor of Ashfield

Mr Bill Bourke

Australian Air Transport Association

Mrs Kerry Chikarovski MLA

State Member for Lane Cove

Mr John Clarke

Upper North Shore Community

Cr Barry Cotter

Mayor of Marrickville

Mr Chris Falvey

Australian Air Transport Association

Mr Randolph Griffiths

Sydney Airport Forum Pty Ltd

The Hon Deirdre Grusovin MLA

State Member for Heffron

Mr Kevin Hill

Kurnell Community

Cr Steve Holroyd

Rockdale Council

The Hon Joe Hockey MP

Federal Member for North Sydney

Mr Robert McClelland MP

Federal Member for Barton

Cr Ken McDonell

Mayor of Sutherland Shire

Mr Michael Megna

Inner West Community

Mr John Murphy MP

Federal Member for Lowe

Ms Sandra Nori MLA

State Member for Port Jackson

Ms Maria Patrinos

CRAAN

Cr Andrew Petrie

Wentworth Community

Cr Anthony Roberts

Mayor of Lane Cove

Cr Philip Sansom

Mayor of Hurstville

Cr Ross Sheerin

Bennelong Community

Cr Dominic Sullivan

Mayor of Randwick

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27 June 2000

The Hon John Anderson MP

Deputy Prime Minister

Minister for Transport and

Regional Services

Parliament House

Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Deputy Prime Minister

I am writing to convey to you the resolutions and issues arising from the 25th meeting of the Sydney Airport Community Forum (SACF) held on Friday 7 April 2000.

As I discussed with you recently, I consider that the continuing inability of Airservices Australia to demonstrate to the community how they propose to move towards meeting the Long Term Operating Plan (LTOP) targets necessitates an independent examination of LTOP. I believe this is the only way to establish what has actually been achieved to date with LTOP, what more can be done to meet the LTOP targets and what, if any, impediments there are to Airservices achieving the targets.

SACF has considered my proposal and resolved that:

The Minister appoint an independent external aviation expert to audit LTOP. The audit would examine matters including: what progress has been made to date in implementing LTOP; the priority Airservices accords LTOP vis vis other competing Sydney operations matters; the further scope for meeting the LTOP targets; the barriers to meeting the targets; and recommend actions and priorities so as to enable the targets to be met.

The Forum also resolved that the Terms of Reference for the audit should be developed with SACF and that the Forum be involved in the selection and appointment of the auditor. SACF also asks that a community representative be appointed to assist the auditor.

A number of SACF members also expressed the view that in choosing an independent expert to do the audit, it would be appropriate to utilise Sabre Technologies of the US which was the company which did the original modelling of LTOP modes for Airservices. This may somewhat obviate the problem of an overseas consultant having to take time to get "up to speed" with Sydney Airport operations.

Such an audit would be additional to the “community audit” which is proposed by Airservices Australia to enable community representatives to access data on the reasons for runway mode changes.

The Forum again expressed its deep concerns at the continuing failure of Airservices Australia to detail to the community how it intends to meet the LTOP targets. SACF resolved that:

That the SACF calls upon Airservices Australia to provide forthwith the project schedule as previously requested or provide reasons to SACF at the next ordinary meeting of SACF as to why the Forum’s repeated and consistent resolutions have been ignored, delayed or otherwise denied.

As you are well aware, SACF strongly opposes any proposal to divert regional air services from Sydney Airport to Bankstown Airport and any move to exclude regional or propeller aircraft from the current capacity cap on Sydney Airport. To this end we welcome your statements that the recent presentation given by Sydney Airports Corporation representatives to country elected representatives suggesting such a move is not Government policy. However, we remain concerned at the continued push from some for such an outcome.

I recently wrote to Airservices seeking information on the impact of the operation of IFR scheduled regional services at Bankstown Airport on Sydney Airport operations, and particularly on the LTOP noise sharing modes. Airservices has declined to provide any such advice stating in reply that this is a matter for the Government to comment on. SACF does not accept this reply.

The Forum requests that any analysis and modelling which has been done on the impacts of shifting regional airlines to Bankstown be provided by Airservices to the community so as to enable a better public understanding of any implications for LTOP from such a proposal. SACF also resolved to:

Ask the Minister for Transport and Regional Services to publicly reaffirm that the 80 movements per hour cap on Sydney Airport will remain inclusive of propeller and regional aircraft.

SACF noted the passage last week through the House of an amendment to the Sydney Airport Curfew Act 1995 to lift the level of maximum penalty for curfew breaches to \$550,000. The Forum appreciates the Government taking such action to protect the amenity of Sydney residents.

However, the Forum was extremely concerned to learn that Thai Airways was recently only fined \$10,000 after pleading guilty to breaching the curfew. Clearly, this appears to be a very small cost for the company given the costs the airline would have had to bear had its aircraft not departed from Sydney Airport that night. SACF has asked that your Department provide it with a detailed paper on this curfew breach.

The Forum’s attention was drawn to the recently approved Sydney Airport Environment Strategy, and in particular the disclaimer in the front of the document which appears on the face of it to absolve the Sydney Airports Corporation from any requirement to implement the Strategy. I would ask that you clarify for the Forum the legal status of the Strategy and the requirements it places upon the Corporation.

The Forum also noted the Discussion Paper recently published by your Department on the proposal to limit operations in Australia by recertificated and low by-pass jet engined aircraft. SACF supports the Department's proposal to prevent any more such "noisier" jet aircraft operating in Australia and for the phasing out within 3 years of the small number of such jet aircraft already operating here.

Finally, in your recent letter to me you asked that a community representative be nominated by the Forum for appointment to the Implementation and Monitoring Committee (IMC). SACF has resolved that Mr John Clarke be nominated as its replacement for Mr Lidbetter on the IMC. However, Mr Clarke's ability to serve the community in this role is dependent on the meetings of the committee being held after 6pm. I do not consider that this is unreasonable given the enormous time already devoted by people such as Mr Clarke to representing the community. I have asked that the other IMC members agree to this change of time for the meetings.

I would be happy to discuss these matters further with you.

Yours sincerely

<p><i>Signed by Dr Nelson MP</i> <i>12 April 2000</i></p>

Dr Brendan Nelson MP
Chairman