



**HON WARREN TRUSS MP**  
Minister for Transport and Regional Services  
Deputy Leader of the Nationals

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Reference: 07612-2005

Senator Marise Payne  
Chair  
Sydney Airport Community Forum  
PO Box A301  
SYDNEY SOUTH, NSW 1235

- 9 MAR 2006

Dear Senator Payne

Thank you for your letters of 11 October 2005 and 17 February 2006 regarding the outcomes of the 43<sup>rd</sup> and 44<sup>th</sup> meetings of the Sydney Airport Community Forum (SACF).

I note that SACF Members have continuing concerns about the future protection of airspace around Sydney Airport and that you have written to me separately on that issue. I am advised that the SACF proposal to ban all high-rise development around the leased Federal airports raises a number of issues relating to constitutional law and to Commonwealth policy on its relationship with the States and their rights. I understand that my Department has advised the Forum that its study into current airspace protection is continuing and Members will receive regular updates on the study at each meeting.

I also note the concerns raised about the possibility of increased use of marginally compliant (hush kitted) Chapter 3 aircraft at Sydney. You have also written to me separately on this issue. I am advised that although these aircraft are noisier than equivalently sized modern aircraft they meet current international noise standards and do not require any special permission to operate in Australia. A previous proposal for a national phase out of these aircraft met with strong resistance from some of our major trading partners and did not proceed. My Department is now investigating options that would allow airport by airport operating restrictions to be placed on these aircraft in response to the aircraft noise situation at a particular airport. I will keep you informed of any developments on this issue.

I am advised that the Department is seeking to have the consultant complete the extra work on the Review of the Long Term Operating Plan (LTOP) in the near future and I would hope that this will finalise the Review to the satisfaction of the community representatives.

However, I understand that the Members may seek further work through other avenues and if so I would appreciate detailed advice on the extent of such work.

In relation to the Community Advocate position, although I am generally supportive of the proposal, you may recall that I raised a number of concerns about the scope of the position when we last met, including what governance arrangements should apply to the position. I have sought further legal advice from the Department on the various options available to address my concerns. I will write separately to you on this matter once I have been able to review this advice.

I have noted the community issues relating to the lodging of aircraft noise complaints were discussed. I would expect that a management decision by any independent agency is its sole responsibility, however, it is important that the community always has various avenues available to convey its comments and the information is appropriately recorded. I understand that you have written directly to the Chair of Airservices Australia on this matter.

I would be grateful for your comments on the Forum's consideration of the TF 3 recommendations at its 45<sup>th</sup> meeting on 10 March 2006.

Thank you for conveying the outcomes of the two meetings to me.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Warren Truss', written in a cursive style.

WARREN TRUSS