



SYDNEY AIRPORT COMMUNITY FORUM (SACF)

Meeting 01/2021, 5 March 2021

AGENDA ITEM 1 Opening Remarks and Adoption of Agenda

The Chair welcomed members and guests and acknowledged the traditional owners of the land the Gadigal people.

Given the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, SACF met in-person as well as by videoconference and teleconference. The Chair reminded everyone the meetings are recorded and the recording is deleted after the draft Summary Record has been accepted.

SACF adopted the Agenda at the Chair's request. The SACF Secretariat conducted a roll call.

AGENDA ITEM 2 Confirmation of Draft Summary Record of Meeting 05/2020

Meeting 05/2020 was held by videoconference and teleconference on 6 November 2020. The draft Summary Record for this meeting was circulated to members following Meeting 05/2020 and again on 25 February 2021.

2.1 *Incorporation of suggested changes*

No changes to the draft Summary Record for Meeting 05/2020 were proposed. The draft Summary Record was confirmed by the SACF membership and will be published online.

2.2 *Action items arising from previous meetings*

There were four Action Items arising from Meeting 05/2020.

- Action Item 01/05: SACF Secretariat to circulate the Australian Business Aviation Association's (ABAA) paper to the SACF membership out of session, and to collate a joint SACF submission on the paper. The ABAA paper was circulated to SACF members on 25 November 2020 and, as no responses were received, the paper was discussed as Other Business at Agenda Item 11.
- Action Item 02/05: The Chair was requested to write to Airservices Australia (Airservices) regarding the public consultation undertaken on the Flight Path Design Principles, particularly in regard to their interaction with LTOP. The Chair wrote to Airservices on 25 November 2020, and received a response on 10 February 2021.
- Action Item 03/05: The Department is to brief SACF on any regulatory reform options being considered for demand management at Sydney Airport. This was covered under the Department's update at Agenda Item 10.
- Action Item 04/05: Airservices is to brief SACF on the National Flight Path Change Program. This was covered under Airservices' update at Agenda Item 7.

AGENDA ITEM 3 Secretariat Update

The SACF Secretariat provided an update on the correspondence received and sent since Meeting 04/2020. Some topics of note included:

- The correspondence between the Chair and Airservices regarding the Flight Path Design Principles (per Action Item 02/05);

- Out-of-session updates from Ted Plummer regarding developments at Sydney Airport;
- Correspondence from the NSW Minister for Transport and Roads, the Hon Andrew Constance MP, and Transport for NSW to the Chair regarding public and active transport links to and around Sydney Airport;
- The US Federal Aviation Authority’s Neighbourhood Environmental Survey; and
- The Australian Business Aviation Association’s discussion paper.

John Clarke, representative for the Member for Bennelong, questioned whether the redacted letter circulated to SACF was the letter previously raised by the representative for the Member for Bradfield and referred to in Action Item 03/04. The request for a copy of the constituent's letter was made in Meeting 04 /2020, which was held on 18 September 2020. However, the letter circulated to SACF is dated 20 November 2020. SACF Secretariat committed to follow up with the representative for the Member for Bradfield, who provided the letter.

Action Item 01/01 – SACF Secretariat to confirm the veracity of the redacted letter provided to fulfil Action Item 03/04.

AGENDA ITEM 4 Community Question Time – Members of the Community

Since Meeting 05/2020, the SACF Secretariat has not received any questions from the community. The Chair reminded all members of the existence of Community Question Time, and reminded members they can refer anyone wishing to ask a question at SACF to the SACF Secretariat.

AGENDA ITEM 5 Transport for NSW Update

Adrian Dessanti of Transport for NSW gave a presentation on the rail and bus services to Sydney Airport and the surrounding precincts. Key points included:

- Sydney Airport’s existing public transport connections on the T8 Airport and South Line, as well as the 400, 420/420N and N20 bus routes.
 - Other bus routes connecting the wider airport precinct include the 307, 357, 400/400N and 418.
- Recent improvements in October 2020 added almost 200 additional weekly bus services on these routes, with new overnight services connecting the Sydney Airport precinct seven days a week.
- Transport for NSW is working on future transport improvements under the “More Trains, More Services” program and the South East Sydney Transport Strategy.

Ken Welsh, representative for the Inner West Council, asked whether the T8 Airport and South Line had a non-compete clause in effect. Mr Dessanti advised that this non-compete clause for rail services is still in effect, but as it only applies to Airport-CBD travel, Transport for NSW has been focusing on improving connectivity between the Airport and the inner west, which helps the day-to-day commutes of workers at the airport.

Tara Dias and Mark Stevenson of Transport for NSW updated SACF on the progress of the Sydney Gateway Project. Topics of note included:

- Early works on the Sydney Gateway Project commenced in January 2021, with construction activities, site clearing and building demolition works ramping up in the middle of the year.
- More than 4000 jobs will be created over the construction period of the project.
- More information on the Sydney Gateway Project can be found at www.nswroads.work/SydneyGateway.

Owing to the mixed in-person and virtual meeting, the SACF Secretariat committed to circulating all presentations made during the meeting to SACF Members.

Action Item 02/01 – SACF Secretariat to circulate all presentations made during Meeting 01/2021 to the SACF membership.

AGENDA ITEM 6 Sydney Airport Update

Ted Plummer provided an overview of recent activities for Sydney Airport. Topics of note included:

- Passenger numbers across 2020 were down almost 75% from 2019, owing to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- There remains a strong, pent-up demand for air travel, both domestic and international.
- The gradual return to normal will begin with the re-opening of the east-west runway, expected in April 2021.
- The main runway resurfacing project is continuing and new aircraft parking has come online in the Northern Ponds area.
- Sydney Airport plans to reconstruct the concrete threshold at the northern end of Runway 16R (the main north-south runway).
 - This project is expected to commence in June and will run for approximately 6 months, depending on weather.
 - Due to the nature of the work, the re-concreting cannot be undertaken solely during the curfew and will also take place during the day.
 - For worker safety reasons, aircraft cannot land over the worksite, so the approach flight path to Runway 16R (the main north-south runway) will be unavailable during the life of the project.
 - All other flight paths will be available, allowing a resumption of noise sharing.
 - The environmental assessment has commenced, and SACF, local MPs and councils will be briefed when more detail is available.
- The last Qantas 747 took off from Sydney Airport in 2020.
- A flight jacket belonging to Charles Kingsford Smith is now on permanent display at Sydney Airport.

Questions were raised about the implications of aircraft landing on Runway 16L, instead of Runway 16R. Mr Plummer explained that more aircraft will be landing on Runway 16L, with

larger aircraft using this runway in stronger wind conditions. Sydney Airport is continuing to forecast these changes and will engage with the local communities over the coming weeks.

Subsequent questions were then raised about possible curfew implications, which Mr Plummer explained might be required, depending on the progress of other runway maintenance works. Dispensations would be applied for through the Department, which will consider all requests following the legislation and existing processes.

Julie Adams, representing the Member for Cook, asked for a confirmation of the timing of these works. Mr Plummer confirmed the reconstruction works are planned to commence in June 2021.

AGENDA ITEM 7 Airservices Australia Report

Donna Marshall, Terry Fulton and Timothy Gill provided an update from Airservices. Key topics included:

- The former Airservices representatives, Fiona Lawton and Glenn Cox, were thanked for their service and updates to SACF.
- Action Items:
 - Action Item 02/05 was met by Airservices providing a response to the Chair on 12 January 2021.
 - Action Item 04/05 requested Airservices provide an update on the National Flight Path Change Program. This Program, also known as the Airspace Modernisation Program, consists of a series of enhancements to Australian airspace over the coming years. The Program will improve service outcomes for the aviation industry through national standardisation and leveraging the benefits of increased surveillance coverage.
 - The safety of air navigation remains Airservices' most important consideration.
 - The Program has no effect on the Long-Term Operating Plan for Sydney (Kingsford-Smith) Airport (LTOP).
- The Coogee Noise Monitor Terminal suffered two outages since the previous meeting of SACF, with the first outage between 6-12 December 2020 and a short outage on 26 February 2021. These issues have been resolved and the terminal is operating correctly.
- Across 2020, there were 328 individual complainants, compared to 620 complainants in 2019. This dramatic reduction is due to reduced aircraft movements as a result of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.
 - Movement numbers have decreased by two-thirds, year-on-year, while complainant numbers have halved.
 - More information on aircraft noise and complainants can be found on the Aircraft in Your Neighbourhood website:
<https://aircraftnoise.airservicesaustralia.com/>

Bob Hayes, Community Representative for the North, asked what the acronym IFR meant in relation to the National Flight Path Change Program. Mr Fulton explained that IFR stands for Instrument Flight Rules, a system of aerial navigation based on instrument readings (as opposed to navigating by visual landmarks, or VFR). The changes to IFR guidelines, Mr

Fulton explained, are because Airservices' increased surveillance coverage in regional Class G airspace means that separation services can now be provided by air traffic control down to 4,000 feet.

AGENDA ITEM 8 National Acoustic Laboratories (NAL) Review Study Update

Russell McArthur, of the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications, updated SACF on the US Federal Aviation Noise Study, the *Neighbourhood Environmental Survey*, a copy of which was provided to SACF members. Key points included:

- The *Neighbourhood Environmental Survey* (the Survey) was released on 14 January 2021. The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) commissioned this research to review and update the original studies on which the USA's aircraft noise controls are based.
- The Survey received over 10,000 responses.
- The Survey shows that the Schultz curve, which measures the dose-response relationship between aircraft noise levels and community annoyance, is outdated. Lower levels of aircraft noise are resulting in higher levels of community annoyance.
- The FAA have now requested comments from members of the public on future aircraft noise policy. More information is available on the FAA's website: https://www.faa.gov/regulations_policies/policy_guidance/noise/survey/
- The Department is continuing to engage with the FAA and will keep SACF updated on future research initiatives by the FAA and their applicability in the Australian context.

Mr McArthur was asked to brief SACF on the results of the Survey, which demonstrates that the aircraft noise dose-response research used by the US in land-planning around airports is no longer current. The Department was then asked whether Australia would be updating its aircraft noise policies in light of the Survey's research. Mr McArthur noted that Australia has not determined any changes in its noise policy, and reiterated that the FAA is still undertaking further research. The Department will continue to engage with the FAA, the International Civil Aviation Organization and other international stakeholders on this issue. Given the ongoing effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, however, the Department's focus is on working to support the recovery of Australia's aviation sector, with aircraft noise surveys not an immediate priority.

Mr Clarke and SACF's community representatives expressed concern about the currency of the science used to underpin the Australian Noise Exposure Forecast (ANEF) and other systems used to manage aircraft noise and land-use planning around airports. These members recommended Australia should aim to produce similar research to the Survey for the Australian context, to feed into future reforms of the ANEF.

Mr McArthur confirmed that the Department is not beholden to its international equivalents when it comes to taking action in this space. The Department waited for the Survey because of the large survey base. An Australian survey is possible, but would require Commonwealth funding and would take time to develop the survey and to reach a statistically significant sample size. Mr McArthur and Mr Plummer both reminded SACF that

Australia does not rely solely on the ANEF for aircraft noise exposure, but also uses N70 and N60 contours – unlike the US, which uses a sole Day/Night Level contour set at 65 decibels.

Recognising the community concerns regarding these issues, the Chair committed to write to the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Development, the Hon Michael McCormack MP, to request the Commonwealth consider commissioning research equivalent to the Survey, with a view to amending or updating the ANEF noise contours as a tool for land-use planning.

Action Item 03/01 – Chair to write to the Deputy Prime Minister expressing SACF’s concerns over the ANEF contours as a measure for managing aircraft noise, and requesting the Commonwealth commission research equivalent to the FAA’s *Neighbourhood Environmental Survey* for the Australian context.

AGENDA ITEM 9 Implementation and Monitoring Committee (IMC) Report

The Chair advised the IMC had met on 16 February 2021, with SACF represented by John Clarke, Bob Hayes and Kevin Hill. Minutes for this meeting have not yet been issued, but will be circulated by the SACF Secretariat once they have been finalised.

Action Item 04/01 – SACF Secretariat to circulate meeting minutes for the 16 February 2021 IMC meeting once they have been finalised.

Mr Clarke informed SACF that IMC had discussed a number of topics at this meeting:

- The review into ‘high and wide’ operations, as part of the Mode 9 Implementation Review, has been referred to a sub-committee of IMC, which is due to report back at the next meeting.
- The IMC Gap Analysis is ongoing, with a focus on modes of operations and flightpaths.
- SODPROPS: Questions were raised about the low usage of Simultaneous Opposite Direction Parallel Runway Operations (SODPROPS) at Sydney Airport. Airservices Australia has investigated this issue and has confirmed that SODPROPS was used as much as possible over the relevant time period given the prevailing meteorological conditions.
- Sydney Australian Noise Exposure Index (ANEI): The IMC discussed Airservices’ provision of ANEI and other reports for Sydney Airport. This topic was tabled for discussion under Agenda Item 11 Other Business.

AGENDA ITEM 10 Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications Report

Mr McArthur presented the Department’s update. Key topics included:

- The functions previously administered by the Airport Safeguarding section have been spread across the Domestic Aviation and Reforms Division as follows:
 - Protection of Airspace is now the responsibility of the Demand Management and Protection of Airspace Section.



- Airport Safeguarding is now the responsibility of the QLD, NT Airports, Airport Building Controllers and Safeguarding Section.
 - Curfews and aircraft noise management is now the responsibility of the South West, ACT and NSW Airports Section.
- Mr Peter Harris AO has completed his review of the Sydney Airport demand management scheme and its associated legislative framework and has provided his final report to the Australian Government.
 - Mr Harris took into account the views expressed during the consultation period, including those from the targeted consultation meetings held with members of this forum and the 41 written submissions received from a wide range of stakeholders. The Government is now considering Mr Harris's report.
- On 5 February 2021 the Deputy Prime Minister issued a Ministerial Direction to the Sydney Airport Slot Manager, suspending the 'use it or lose it' slot rule for the Northern Summer 2021 scheduling season (28 March 2021- 30 October 2021) on a conditional basis.
 - The Government determined a further Ministerial Direction was warranted to provide certainty to airlines and promote recovery.
 - This will continue to enable airlines to retain their historic precedence for slots at Sydney Airport without having to operate commercially unviable flights during the pandemic.
- Submissions on the Future of Australia's Aviation Sector Issues Paper closed on 27 November 2020. These submissions will feed into a Five Year Plan to provide policy certainty and confidence to the aviation sector as it moves beyond the health crisis. Any agreed reforms would be modest and would be implemented over the next five years, as the sector recovers. On 14 December 2020, the Government announced the establishment of the Future of Aviation Reference Panel, to be chaired by Professor Patrick Murray, to consult the aviation industry on the recently released Issues Paper on the Future of Australia's Aviation Sector.
- The Australian Government is very conscious of the major impact COVID-19 has had on the aviation industry, and has committed \$3.8 billion to support the industry through this unprecedented crisis, and to assist economic recovery post COVID-19.
 - The industry-wide assistance to the aviation sector is more than \$1.31 billion so far and when added with other programs that also benefit the aviation industry more generally, this figure increases to \$3.8 billion. This includes the International Freight Assistance Mechanism, agency funding for the Civil Aviation Safety Authority, Airservices Australia and the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission, ensuring this vital industry can operate safely throughout the pandemic.
 - A range of measures are being implemented to support airports in the long term, including reform of the existing ex-gratia land tax measures.
- The COVID-Safe Domestic Passenger Journey Protocol (the Protocol) was developed by the aviation industry in June 2020. The Protocol was supported by the Australian Health Protection Principal Committee (AHPPC). Following the Prime Minister's announcement on National Cabinet decisions on 8 January 2021, the wearing of face-masks is mandatory at Australian airports and on domestic commercial flights.

- Information and updates on the Government’s broader responses to the COVID-19 pandemic can be found online at www.Australia.gov.au.
- As highlighted in previous SACF meetings, the regulation sunseting process for the associated legislative instruments under both the Airports Act 1996 and the Sydney Demand Management Act 1997 is continuing.
 - The Department is undertaking a review of these instruments, considering them thematically/simultaneously to result in more meaningful consultation and consideration of impacts.
 - The Department aims to inform stakeholders of an indicative timeline for future consultation in later this year.
- A copy of the curfew dispensation report for 1 October to 31 December 2020 was included in the agenda papers. Within this period, 999 permitted freight movements occurred and 21 curfew dispensations were granted. 15 business jet movements occurred during this period, and 169 movements were declared as emergencies.
 - As stated in the Agenda Papers, the dispensation reports covering the period up until 7 December 2020 have been tabled in Parliament and are available online at www.infrastructure.gov.au/aviation/environmental/curfews/CurfewDispensationReports/2020/index.aspx.

Kevin Hill, Community Representative for the South, asked when the dispensation permitting Boeing 737 freight movements will expire. Mr McArthur confirmed this dispensation is due to expire on 30 June 2021, with the Department planning to reassess this dispensation in May. Dispensations to support the delivery of COVID-19 vaccines will continue.

AGENDA ITEM 11 Other Business

Three items of Other Business were raised:

- ABAA Issues Paper. The Chair noted that the SACF Secretariat had not received any submissions or comments from SACF members on the paper, and proposed that SACF members could send their submissions and comments to the Secretariat out of session. If no submissions are received, a formal ‘no comment’ response will be provided.
 - Several SACF members posed questions about the ABAA’s Issues Paper, which were unable to be answered by the ABAA (an observer) due to technical faults.
 - The Chair requested the SACF Secretariat to invite the ABAA to present on the paper at the next SACF meeting.

Action Item 05/01 – SACF Secretariat to circulate ABAA Issues Paper to members, and to collate submissions or comments on this paper out-of-session.

Action Item 06/01 – SACF Secretariat to invite the ABAA to present on their paper at the next SACF meeting.

- Lack of Submissions by SACF and Status of the Aviation Community Advocate Position (and an update on the status of the Chair’s request for membership of the Expert Steering Group for the Western Sydney Airport (ESG)).
 - Mr Hayes expressed concern that there had not been a consolidated SACF submission made on recent topics of importance, such as the Sydney Airport Demand Management Review and the Future of Australia’s Aviation Sector Issues Paper. Mr Hayes is concerned that while individual SACF members have made submissions, the absence of consolidated SACF submissions poses a reputational risk for the Forum. Given the volunteer nature of the community representatives, and the detailed technical knowledge that may be required when commenting on topics of relevance to SACF, Mr Hayes sought an update on whether the Deputy Prime Minister had approved the reinstatement of the position of the Aviation Community Advocate (ACA) for Sydney Airport to assist SACF members with their submissions.
 - Mr McArthur advised SACF that the Deputy Prime Minister has approved the reinstatement of an ACA. The Department is currently working through the relevant funding and procurement processes associated with this position.
- Aircraft Noise Information.
 - Mr Clarke drew SACF’s attention to changes in Airservices’ reporting of the ANEIs and operational statistics for Sydney Airport. The Sydney Airport Operational Statistics Report has not been published by Airservices since 2019, and the ANEI annual report is also no longer being published. While Mr Clarke acknowledged Airservices’ statement in the most recent IMC meeting that the statistical data can be found through Airservices’ *Aircraft In My Neighbourhood* website, he maintains the website does not contain all of the relevant data, does not collate it into a single document and is difficult to find and to use.
 - Donna Marshall, representing Airservices, commented that this issue was raised at the previous IMC meeting and a response was provided then. She linked the change from consolidated reports to *Aircraft In My Neighbourhood* to two main reasons: Airservices’ decision to provide operational statistics to everyone through the website, and the reduced administration burden from no longer producing these consolidated reports. Airservices is happy to educate SACF members about the website and its capabilities. Ms Marshall also explained that the production and publication of the ANEI contours has been delayed due to COVID-19 pandemic staffing issues, but that last year’s quarterly reports should be published soon.
 - Discussion then turned to requesting Airservices make the *Aircraft In Your Neighbourhood* website more prominent on the Airservices website, as well as questioning why Airservices was no longer resourced to produce these reports.

Action Item 07/01 – SACF Secretariat to circulate previous example of the Sydney Airport Operational Statistics Report produced by Airservices to the SACF membership for their information.



Action Item 08/01 – Chair of SACF to write to the CEO of Airservices Australia asking that resources be made available to compile, produce and publish the Sydney Airport Operational Statistics Reports and to make the *Aircraft In Your Neighbourhood* website (and guidance material) more prominent on the Airservices website’s landing page.

AGENDA ITEM 12 Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting was scheduled for May-June 2021, pending the finalisation of the Commonwealth parliamentary sitting calendar.



ATTENDANCE

Members

J.	Alexander	Chair
J.	Ward	Assistant to the Chair
J.	Clarke	Representing the Member for Bennelong
J.	Adams	Representing the Member for Cook
B.	Leeson	Representing the Member for Kingsford-Smith
M.	Rohan	Representing the Member for North Sydney
K.	Hill	Community Representative for the South
M.	Patrinos	Community Representative for the West
B.	Hayes	Community Representative for the North
J.	Patterson	Representing the Member for Heffron
Z.	Solomon	Representing the Member for Summer Hill
P.	Barber	Representing Bayside Council
C.	Harley	Representing Bayside Council
K.	Welsh	Representing the Inner West Council
R.	Edney	Virgin Australia
S.	Annand	Board of Airline Representatives Australia
T.	Plummer	Representing Sydney Airport Corporation Limited

Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications

R.	McArthur	Director, South West, ACT and NSW Airports Section
P.	Inall	Assistant Director, South West, ACT and NSW Airports Section
A.	Osborne	SACF Secretariat, South West, ACT and NSW Airports Section
M.	Harrison	South West, ACT and NSW Airports Section

Airservices Australia

T.	Fulton	Director Operations – Sydney Terminal Service
T.	Gill	Community Engagement Senior Adviser
D.	Marshall	Community Engagement Head

Observers and Presenters

A.	Dessanti	Transport for NSW
T.	Dias	Transport for NSW
L.	Hirst	Transport for NSW
M.	Stevenson	Transport for NSW
D.	Bell	Observer
D.	McComb	Observer
T.	Williams	Observer