



**Essendon Airport Pty Ltd**  
Essendon Fields House  
Level 2, 7 English Street  
ESSENDON FIELDS VIC 3041

Phone 03 9948 9300  
Facsimile 03 9948 9330  
Web [www.essendonairport.com.au](http://www.essendonairport.com.au)  
ABN 47 082 907 980

31 July 2009

Airports Branch  
Department of Infrastructure, Transport,  
Regional Development and Local Government  
GPO Box 594  
Canberra ACT 2601

Attn: Nicholas Dowdie

Dear Nicholas,

**Re: Response to Discussion Paper: Safeguards for airports and the communities around them**

---

Essendon Airport appreciates the opportunity to submit comments on the "Safeguards for Airports and the Communities Around Them" discussion paper.

The public comment period for the Essendon Airport Masterplan highlighted a divergent opinion as to the future use of the land on which Essendon Airport is located by Commonwealth, State and Local Governments.

It is difficult to formulate a safeguarding policy for any airport where different tiers of Government can take differing positions on the future of an airport. Critical to effective safeguarding is agreement by all tiers of Government on permissible land uses (particularly residential) in the proximity of airports and along principle flight corridors. Such agreement needs to be binding on all tiers of Government.

As an example the current Victorian Planning Scheme (used by State and Local Government) does not mention Essendon Airport and that the Airports (Protection of Airspace) Regulations 1996 operates at this location.

For Essendon Airport this oversight has (in the first portion of 2009 alone) resulted in construction commencing on a house which would have penetrated Prescribed Surfaces and the sale of land located at the end of a runway by a Victorian Government Agency to a developer to construct 37 townhouses. A number of these townhouses would have penetrated Prescribed Airspace if constructed.



Any agreement struck between the levels of Government on safeguarding should be for the remainder of the lease term of privately leased airports. A process of review should exist, but occur not more frequently than at the time of preparation of every second Master Plan (10 year interval) for the Airport concerned.

### **Public Safety Zones**

As an Airport encroached by urban expansion, implementation of a public safety zone (in our case) would be almost entirely accommodated by properties external to the airport. We concur with the discussion papers view that implementation of new conditions on properties external to the airport site would not be well received.

Focus on controls external to the airport boundary is appropriate to prevent planning decisions which increase residential population density and building heights on runway approaches. Essendon Airport does not support the compulsory acquisition of land in public safety zones as the development and speculative acquisition of land in these areas for medium and high density living has occurred with the purchasers being aware of the airports presence.

The design of a public safety zone should be risk based and specific to the airport in question.

### **Planning for compatible development**

#### *ANEF*

EAPL recognises that ANEF is not perfect but believes that no modelling method that attempts to identify an “acceptable” line for aircraft noise will be successful.

This is because all aviation noise models forecasting future noise impacts are based upon assumptions (eg, noise level of aircraft, type of aircraft, number of movements, and time of day of aircraft movement). In addition the definition of what is an acceptable level of noise intrusion by the community has and will continue to change over time.

EAPL supports the continued use of ANEF as a suitable method of assessing aviation noise impacts upon the community. An ANEF map read in conjunction with Table 2 Current Australian Standard AS2021 is quite clear as to which development types should be considered acceptable, marginal, or unsuitable.

EAPL does not support the use of N70 (a count of the number of noise events above 70dbA) as this undermines the concept of ANEF (to show the impact that aviation noise has on the utility of a site) with a variable which is a reading that lacks context. ANEF is the accumulation of noise events so N70 is already being presented.

Town Planning is based upon the utility of any given site for a range of purposes. N70 does not achieve this and therefore may cause confusion when making land uses decisions.

We suggest that ANEF and a line which shows the circuit area surrounding an aerodrome would be sufficient for the average person to determine which locations have their utility affected by aviation.

### *OLS-PANSOPS Provision to Council*

As GIS/CAD is present in all Council Planning Departments it means the provision of data to allow Council Planning Officers to verify if a development could infringe airspace reserved for aviation as part of the assessment process is technically possible.

To achieve this, a national standard for the presentation of critical aviation surfaces (land and air) needs to be developed and adopted by Commonwealth, State, and Local Government Planning Authorities, and a Government Department nominated as the custodian and distributor of this information.

Shielding (MOS 139 Section 7.4) should not be considered by the national layer but merely added as commentary. A keen developer will investigate this option in the same manner as any other challenge associated with development.

Consideration does need to be given to requiring residential developers to provide a buffer beneath Prescribed Surfaces and their proposed residential development to cater for the addition of structures and features following the building's establishment. Structures include antennas, satellite dishes, solar hot water systems, photovoltaic cells and trees planted in gardens by property owners. Provision of a buffer would ensure that airports do not need to increase their level of vigilance further and property owners can make minor additions to the top of their building without needing to seek approval, thereby reducing policing and regulatory costs to Government.

### *Balloons*

Essendon Airport notes that there are a significant number of large roof mounted advertising balloons within 4000m of the airport promoting various businesses despite Civil Aviation Regulation 1988 Regulation 260. The regulation requires these balloons to have approval prior to use. This is an element which requires consideration in a safeguarding strategy.

### *Windshear*

At present CASA's Manual of Standards for Aerodromes Part 139 (MOS 139) provides for building setbacks and height limits to ensure aircraft can manoeuvre safely. Essendon Airport is of the view that these specifications have served well to provide separation between aircraft activity on runways / taxiways and development parallel to runways and current arrangements should remain in place unaltered.

With regards to the Dutch trigger for undertaking an assessment (slope of 1:35) Essendon Airport has a number of structures parallel to runways that would trigger such an assessment if they were proposed under such a regime for referral. As these buildings have been present for many years (some more than 50 years) at Essendon and there isn't a record of these structures causing problems to aviation, research should be undertaken that confirms that MOS 139 isn't already achieving safe runways with regards to turbulence prior to the implementation of new aerodrome planning guidelines.

Essendon Airport does support a mandatory requirement to undertake windshear / turbulence risk assessments by experts for building / large structures that would penetrate OLS or PANS-OPS surfaces in reasonable proximity to a runway as there isn't a demonstrated history for this type of activity.

## **Wind Turbines**

The discussion paper is focused upon the establishment and operation of wind farms in rural areas. Essendon Airport is aware that the final stages of approval are occurring for the establishment of a wind farm on top of a building in the Melbourne CBD.

Essendon Airport suggests that consideration of the risks posed by wind farms established within urban areas requires consideration particularly if it can affect radar, or could limit the ability of rotary wing aircraft to provide emergency services within metropolitan areas.

## **Wildlife Hazards**

Essendon Airport supports measures that ensures development proposals which have the potential to increase animal hazards to aircraft are assessed. We would support an approval methodology similar to that for prescribed airspace for development proposals which are recognised high risk (such as landfills containing putrescible waste).

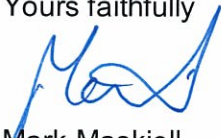
## **Lighting & Reflective Surfaces Hazards**

Guidance as to what types of lighting and reflective surfaces are suitable in proximity to airports and along approach and departure routes to airports would be of assistance to the airport and development proponents.

Government legislation that controls who can purchase high powered laser pointing devices and laws restricting the use of laser light remains important.

Should you have any questions regarding this submission please contact Essendon Airport's Operations Manager Mr Andrew Croft on (03) 9948 9300.

Yours faithfully



Mark Maskiell  
**Chief Executive Officer**