

Nicholas Dowie
Planning Policy and Environment Section
Airports Branch
Dept of Infrastructure
GPO Box 594
Canberra ACT 2601

Dear Sir

In response to your invitation for public comment on airport noise we wish to make the following objections.

Currently Canberra Airport is proposing to operate a 24-hour freight hub at Canberra. The effect of this is likely to be significantly more frequent, noisier and bigger planes landing at all hours at the airport.

At a meeting attended by us at the Jerrabomberra Community Centre in April 2009 a representative of the Airport stated that this was the intention of the freight hub, and that while the airport encouraged planes to utilise an approach to the runway that minimized the noise impact on local residents, the pilots were not obliged to use this course and in fact frequently do not do so. It is unlikely that this will change if the airport is allowed to operate 24 hours per day and I do not see anywhere in the Airport proposals that this has been guaranteed. The Canberra and Queanbeyan communities have the right to know prior to this plan proceeding, the impact that the proposed changes will have on our homes and our well-being as a community.

Lack of sleep is known to have significant health impacts on individuals. This is stated clearly by the World Health Organisation. We currently have planes flying overhead at 11.30 pm routinely and this already impacts on the sleep patterns in our household. Any later at night or earlier in the morning will have a major negative impact on our quality of sleep. The airport is claiming that the existing noise protection measures will adequately protect residents in the future from the increase in aircraft and noise emitted. We have no confidence in these claims and feel that there has been no real evidence provided to support these claims. Residents of Sydney and other capital cities have their sleep protected by an enforced curfew from 11 pm – 6 pm and as equal citizens of Australia we expect the same standards to be applied in the Canberra region. The Managing Director of Canberra Airport has already stated on an ABC interview in May that “the reason we want a 24 hour freight hub at Canberra Airport is so that we can be part of relieving the noise at Sydney airport.” This again reflects the disregard this organization has for the residents of Queanbeyan and Canberra and is no valid reason for allowing this 24 hour operation to go ahead. Should this action be taken in order to appease Sydney residents while ignoring the health and well-being of those in this region? Any solution to Sydney airports noise issues should not impact negatively on other communities if it is to be a correct and appropriate long term solution to the problem.

It is apparent that the Canberra Airport has little regard for the community when it continues to state that no residents in the ACT will be exposed at any time to noise levels above 65 decibels, however the new Hackett noise monitor has recorded existing 737 aircraft regularly generate noise at this level or above in Hackett. The noise monitor in the Jerrabomberra area is certainly not

located at our home and there are numerous occasions when large aircraft fly over and generate very significant noise. While we don't know what the actual noise level is we do know that we are unable to use our back deck area for having barbeques or outdoor events in summer as the noise generated by planes landing overhead throughout the evening and night impacts on our ability to have an uninterrupted conversation with any one there. We are regularly woken by the plane that lands at the airport around 11.20 at night and travels directly over our roof.

We are very concerned that with the expansion to the airport to an international destination, planes that do not land in Sydney by the time of the curfew in that city will land in Canberra if no restriction is applied. This will also severely impact on our sleep as these planes will be the larger passenger carrying aircraft, likely generating significant noise.

In summary we would like to request at a minimum that the following be implemented:

- A night time curfew on all aircraft movements at Canberra airport from 11.00pm – 6 am
- No 24 hour freight hub located in Canberra or second Sydney airport
- Recognition of the WHO standards regarding sleep disturbance
- Recognition that everyone is entitled to a good nights sleep and minimal risk of developing health related problems due to noise that can be prevented



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