

NANCY-BIRD WALTON, A.O.,O.B.E.,Hon.D.Sc.,Hon.M.E.

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The Hon Anthony Albanese MP
Minister for Infrastructure, Transport,
Regional Development and Local
Government
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

The Hon Anthony Albanese

NATIONAL AVIATION POLICY
ISSUES PAPER April 2008

Thank you for your letter dated 05 May 2008 enclosing the Issues Paper April 2008.

As Patron of the Australian Women Pilots' Association I have forwarded a copy of the Issues Paper to each State and Territory President and appreciate the promptness with which your staff, Ritchie Hollands, forwarded copies to me.

I would like to put forward the following three main points for Infrastructure Australia to consider in regard of aviation.

Firstly, that within the portfolio a **specific representative for aviation** be appointed. Previous Labour governments have had a Minister for Aviation which is most preferable. This enables a more direct link with the Department and facilitates communication.

Secondly, I would like to see **aviation being taught as a subject in all senior schools**. This would mean that by Year 12, students would have their licence which is the first step to a career in aviation either commercially or with the Services, be it Army, Navy or Air Force.

An example of this is St Kevin's College in Toorak, Victoria which will have delivered twenty fully licensed pilots by mid 2008. I understand that Kent Street Senior High School in Victoria Park, Western Australia also teaches aviation with great success.

Thirdly, to cease selling airports to developers and to take into consideration the fact that originally the Federal Government granted land to the States for its specific use as airports with runways, flying schools, terminals and supporting infrastructure.

Today airports are being sold to developers and consequently flying schools are closing as well as business associated with the airport facility.

There is no grant of land or replacement for them in the same areas, forcing those wishing to learn to fly to travel long distances to whatever airports remain.

This lack of training facilities is contributing to the acute shortage of pilots Australia is now experiencing.

We need more airports, not less.

I have tried to keep these points salient as I realise there will be a big response from all sectors of your portfolio. I would be very willing to elaborate on these and other points with the independent statutory advisory council that is being set up.

I cannot emphasise enough how important aviation is to Australia and it must be given serious consideration within the integrated transport sector.

*Kindest regards.
Dorothy Bird Walker*