

A Flight Operators point of view reference Perth airport

The time has come for the Government to consider the relocation of Perth airport.

As a pilot that has been flying into Perth since 1974 I have seen massive growth in the utilisation of Perth airport, to a point where it has outgrown it's present location where it is virtually impossible to expand to meet the growth.

There are severe restrictions today with respect parking of aircraft preparing to embark and disembark passengers at the domestic terminals and restrictions due to there generally being only one runway used at a time for landings and take-offs which hampers on time schedule departures. The airport layout makes improvement in these areas difficult for Air Traffic Control (ATC) and restrictions are applied to operators at certain times of the day to ease the congestion. The State government have a contract with WAC to run Perth airport for 90 years! Aircraft haven't been around much more than that! What's Perth going to be like in that time??

The proximity of Jandakot airport to the south and RAAF Pearce to the north also provide challenges to ATC for traffic flow. The ILS's into Perth are barely legal due to the tightness of the approaches to those aids. Residential areas are against the boundaries of the airport, this will limit expansion and limit the future use of some runways. The proposed parallel runway 21 will place that runway closer to the hills to the east, DANGER from the proximity of the terrain and its associated turbulence.

The RAAF have large volumes of airspace reserved for their training purposes to the north, south and west of their base at Pearce. This causes airlines, both regional and international, to divert from their preferred direct tracking, particularly to the north along the coast to Geraldton and beyond to Asia, Indonesia etc, to avoid these airspaces which is reserved for RAAF training flights. Sometimes tracking through this reserved airspace is granted, but generally departures and arrivals have to be planned by the airline's pilots to assume the avoidance of these RAAF airspaces is going to be required. This can cause some 50 seat aircraft bound for Geraldton for example to add a margin of up to 15 minutes of extra flying for a nominal 1 hours flight whilst diverting either over or around these training airspaces, which means extra fuel is consumed, delays are created, and exhaust and noise pollution of the airspace over Perth is caused.

The hills to the east provide other challenges to the present airport. The easterly winds which generally prevail cause turbulence as wind disturbed by the presence of the hills forms windshear over Perth airport for aircraft preparing to land and immediately after take-off. This can be severe on some occasions and generally uncomfortable for the thousands of passengers. At times it can cause aircraft pilots to abort their landing. Check out the skid marks on the runways!

A solution that should be considered is the re-location of Perth airport. As many cities around the world have found, their airports gradually become inadequate as air traffic volumes grow and they are forced to re-locate to accommodate future growth. Perth is a perfect candidate for that consideration, for reasons stated above.

I believe that all stake-holders should meet to discuss this option. There is talk of improving facilities and access to Perth airport, but the closeness of both Jandakot and Pearce, the hills, the RAAF training airspace spell out a loud and clear message, **MOVE PERTH AIRPORT TO THE NORTH. Do not waste any more money developing the current airport!!!**

The stake-holders with issues would include RAAF, Airlines both regional and international, ATC, Government both state and federal, Environment Protection Authority, local residents to name but a few. The redevelopment of the current site would raise funds towards the re-siting project.

A preferred location would probably be to the north of Pearce around the Gin Gin area.

This vacant land could be zoned for this use in the future, adjacent land zoned non-residential and the existing north-bound railway be extended to provide public access to the airport, allowing access from all over the city without the need for huge carparks. This area is clear of hills, away from other airports, en-route for southbound flights without the need to fly over and pollute Perth city airspace and will be clear of the RAAF training airspace.

If we all procrastinate for too long then the vacant land will not be available due to residential expansion and the problems at the current Perth airport site will prove to be impossible in ten to twenty years time. **It is entirely inadequate now!!**

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