

Diamond Creek
Victoria 3089
June 25, 2008

Submission to the Development of a National Aviation Policy Statement Review

I have been flying for thirty years, am an airline pilot and have a total of over 17,000 flying hours and would like to comment on Essendon Airport. I worked out of Essendon between 1986 and 1988 and now have no connections whatsoever with the airport.

I am of the belief that this facility should remain open due to the services that it provides to the community. Two important organisations exist here, the Victoria Police Air Wing and the Royal Flying Doctor Service. The Police Air Wing also provides medical evacuation and search and rescue functions. There is no facility that is available to these two organisations that is so convenient to major hospitals. If they were forced to use Moorabin Airport (which does not have a precision approach that allows aircraft to approach for a landing and become visual at a lower altitude) or Melbourne Airport that has many more aircraft movements, people's lives will be placed in jeopardy.

It would appear that the people who want the airport closed are only acting in their own self interest ie. Higher real estate values. As the airport has been established for over eighty years, why would they move there knowing full well about its location? I emailed their lobby group asking this question some five weeks ago. I'm still awaiting their response. I live under the flight paths for runways 27 and 34 into Melbourne Airport and we have jets flying over our house at relatively low altitudes constantly. We have learned to live with it and have more aircraft flying over than those in the surrounds of Essendon Airport.

If the airport were to be closed, the grounds would not be suitable for anything anyway owing to the contaminants contained within the soil.

One of the complaints of those wanting this airport closed is the alleged fume's. I see that they are not protesting to have the Tullamarine Freeway closed which would put out a lot more fumes than Essendon Airport would ever be capable of.

One must also consider the economic interests of the state. If the airport were to be closed, many people would be placed out of work. Some airport based

business's would relocate but many wouldn't be able to afford to do so placing people on to unemployment benefits (at a further burden to taxpayers). Many of these people live locally and this unemployment would have to affect local business's as well as loss of taxation revenue at both State and Federal government level. There would also be a great loss of technical skills which the Australian community is already short of

This airport is too important to the community via its economic input and location to the central business district of Melbourne and associated hospitals to be closed.

I ask of you that no consideration be given to closing Essendon Airport.

Sincerely,

Clayton Simmons.