

Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government.

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**SUBMISSION REGARDING THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE NATIONAL  
AVIATION STATEMENT**

**From:**

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This is a private submission to the National Aviation Policy Statement.

My concern is with airports located in suburban residential areas, particularly that situated at **Moorabbin** in Victoria.

When this airport was opened in 1949 only a few aircraft were actually based there, and doubtless people visited the site to watch the novelty of small aircraft taking off and landing.

The first landing, ironically, was an emergency, which is a stark reminder of the safety risk inherent in basing airports in residential areas.

Today Moorabbin Airport houses some 350 aircraft. Most of these are fixed wing, single engine, but there are a number of twin engine aircraft, and an increasing number of helicopters. Small jet aircraft now also use Moorabbin.

I am told that currently there are now some **360,000 movements per annum** at Moorabbin, which means on average **more than 1,000 each and every day** of the year. And that is not a true indicator as many of these aircraft fly back and forth and/or fly in circuits.

**I want to impress deeply upon you that airports like Moorabbin are totally incompatible with residential areas and should never have been located there in the first place.**

Imagine, if you will, putting forward a proposal today to establish an airport in any residential area with a projected 360,000 movements pa. Can you imagine the public opposition? Such an outrageous proposal would not even get to a feasibility stage!

Yet by insidious growth over nearly sixty years this is what we now have - and Moorabbin Airport Corporation (MAC) have the aim, as part of its Final Master Plan 2004, to extend this even further with a "vision..to develop..a fully functioning airport..of significance". Oxymoronically, this is to be.."with full regard to the environmental considerations of neighbouring commercial and residential areas".

At the same time it looks like MAC will not be renewing the lease to Kingston Council to operate a public golf course on land at the periphery of the airport. Instead it wants to develop this land for offices. So much for environmental and neighbourhood considerations.

**The truth is no "environmental consideration" that can offset the impact aircraft noise has on the quality of life in residential areas subject to aircraft traffic. Yet the MAC web site encourages people to "stop dreaming - start flying". Bad luck about the citizenry on the ground trying to enjoy their property in quiet possession, which is their basic and fundamental right.**

Well, enough is enough.

Do you - or anyone involved in civil aviation, for that matter - have any idea of what it is like to:

\* have a continual stream of light aircraft flying overhead at relatively low altitudes (minimum height is set at 1,000 feet for fixed wing aircraft flying over residential areas.)

\*have this punctuated by twin engine aircraft which emit double the noise by flying low and hard , and by helicopters which thump around at even lower altitudes.(Minimum of 700 feet for helicopters over residential areas.)

\*have groups of up to four fixed wing aircraft flying overhead in tight formation. (How this can be regarded as a safe practise is anything but clear.)

Here is the reality. On any given day the noise can be continuous and annoying: on weekends it is usually worse, and over the summer holiday period it is virtually intolerable. The only relief is from bad weather, such as fog, which slows down activity and/or closes the airport

My residence is in bayside Mentone, some five kilometres from Moorabbin airport. Unhappily it is also one of the closest points to the coast line of Port Philip Bay, a favoured playground for pilots it would seem, as they not only fly to and fro from the airport, but also up and down parallel to the coast line, but slightly inland rather than out over the water.

Aircraft noise can not be likened to living near a major road or railway. Aircraft come and go in different directions, at varying heights, at different speeds, perform different manoeuvres - not confined like motor vehicles or trains to road or rail.

There is also a safety issue here which should be a major concern for any one involved in civil aviation. Inevitably there will be a crash, perhaps a mid-air collision. There have, for example, been three crashes involving helicopters in recent months (one at Moorabbin), yet we still have these high risk machines flying over dense residential areas.

**Here are some specific proposals:**

**1. Sell off all of Moorabbin airport**, not just resume the public golf course. Bite the bullet now rather than allow further expansion apropos the MAC master plan. There is a precedent for this: Maylands airport in Perth was originally located in a populous inner suburb. The site was recognised as inappropriate (just as is Moorabbin), and the airport relocated to Jandakot, which at the time was in a remote, non residential area. Creeping urbanisation has now reached Jandakot, but the difference is the airport was there first. The same can not be said about Moorabbin - it grabbed a residential foothold and then expanded it's operations.

**2. In the interim,ban unnecessary flights (ie non emergency) west of Nepean Highway where the highest residential density exists.**

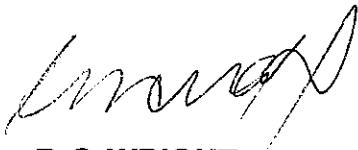
**3. If not, ban flights parallel to the bay within two kilometres of the foreshore. If pilots must fly by the coast let it be offshore, not along the residential strip.**

I urge you to take these proposals seriously as we have now reached the point where public concern outweighs the usual public apathy. Reactions like: "You get used to it", "Hardly hear them now", or more telling, "Can't do anything about it!", are done and dusted. People now talk to are more likely to say: "Its never ending", "Its driving me mad", and worryingly, "I hope one doesn't crash here"!

Unless there is relief from the noise and disturbance aircraft traffic causes, you will surely see a groundswell of anti-aircraft sentiment.

Hopefully this doesn't manifest itself in any thing as stupid or dangerous as the current surge of laser attacks in Sydney (weekend of 7 & 8 June), but frustrated people have been known to react in outlandish ways.

**However, you need to understand, realise, and take on board, that recreational flying has come to be a licence for the few to intrude upon, annoy and endanger the many, and this must change. Leisure flying should be like any other recreational activity - conducted so it does not effect the right of others to enjoy their life styles.**



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