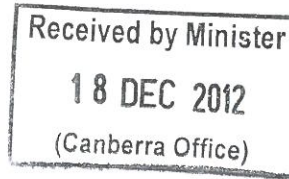




Premier of New South Wales



2012/15665

The Hon Anthony Albanese MP
Minister for Infrastructure and Transport
PO Box 6022
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

13 DEC 2012

Dear Minister Albanese

Thank you for your letter regarding Infrastructure NSW's State Infrastructure Strategy and the Joint Study on Aviation Capacity in the Sydney region. The NSW Government has now released its response to Infrastructure NSW's report, including our response to recommendations relating to Sydney's aviation capacity.

As you know, the most important recommendations in the Joint Study relate to efficiency and operational capacity improvements at Kingsford Smith Airport.

Measures identified in the Joint Study include increasing the movement cap from 80 to 85 movements per hour during peak periods and increasing movements in the curfew shoulder to the level allowed in the *Sydney Airport Curfew Act 1995*.

These are matters of policy that the Commonwealth Government can act upon to immediately improve aviation capacity, and the NSW Government would support this. However the NSW Government does not support removal of the curfew, changes to protections for existing regional flights, or further expanding or reconfiguring the runway capacity.

The Joint Study and Infrastructure NSW's report also made recommendations relating to improvements to surface transport linkages to the airport, including major motorways, roads and rail.

I believe the better utilisation of Kingsford Smith Airport including both aviation and surface transport capacity is best progressed through a working group including the Federal Government, the State Government and the Sydney Airport Corporation. I seek your support in establishing this working group.

The NSW Government does not agree to the recommendations in the Report that relate to the establishment of a new second airport in the Sydney Basin or the opening of Richmond RAAF Base to limited civil operations.

Instead, the use of high speed rail to better support regional airports should be further investigated as an option to provide long term supplementary capacity for the Sydney region.

I am advised that Phase 1 of the Commonwealth's high speed rail study concluded that the journey time between Canberra and Sydney would be around 1 hour and that it would offer a competitive ticket price. I am also advised that work on the second and final phase has commenced and is scheduled for completion by the end of 2012.

I strongly encourage you to release the Phase 2 report as soon as possible. This should inform and progress the future development of regional aviation capacity.

Mr Chris Eccles, Director General, NSW Department of Premier and Cabinet would be pleased to coordinate work with the Secretary of your Department to progress a joint approach to aviation capacity and infrastructure issues.

Yours sincerely



Barry O'Farrell MP
Premier