

From: wes [REDACTED]
To: Wells, Anika (MP)
Cc: aviationconsumer
Subject: Nundah Constituent Comments RE Catherine King Consultation Process - "Boarding call for comments on aviation consumer protections"
Date: Sunday, 28 September 2025 11:00:07 AM

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The Hon Anika Wells, Member for Lilley

28 September 2025

Nundah Constituent Comments RE Catherine King Consultation Process - 'Boarding call for comments on aviation consumer protections'

Dear Anika,

I refer you to the 08 September 2025 Media Release from the Hon Catherine King, Minister for Transport - **Boarding call for comments on aviation consumer protections** <https://minister.infrastructure.gov.au/c-king/media-release/boarding-call-comments-aviation-consumer-protections>

I write to you now as a constituent of the Electorate of Lilley. And as a member of the travelling public.

I know that the Brisbane Airport is a massively important employer and economic driver for the Electorate of Lilley.

But there has to be some balance here ie between commercial interests, which at present are unbounded and unchecked, and the interests of the community and the interests of the customers ie the travelling public. The direction that the Government is moving in is 100% the right direction, but I fear that the Government remains fairly beholden to the Airlines and that some of the provisions being proposed by Minister King don't go nearly far enough to support community and consumer interests.

Aircraft Noise: I strongly support the proposed separation out of Aircraft Noise Ombudsman, away from Airservices Australia

As a secondary and lesser concern for me, I do note the following, to be found on page 35 of the Consultation Paper:

The ANO currently exists as a non-statutory office within Airservices Australia and reports to the Board of Airservices Australia or the Chief of Air Force as appropriate. This reporting arrangement creates the potential for conflicts in the ombudsman's role and could undermine public confidence in its findings and recommendations. Submissions to the AWP process from community groups, airlines and airports raised concerns about the current ANO's perceived independence. The AWP committed to the appointment of an independent Aircraft Noise Ombudsperson.

There are many in the community, who feel that Airservices Australia absolutely prioritises commercial interests over the rights and interests of the community and residents of Brisbane. Once again, this is a very widely held view and one that I strongly share.

So, the separation out of Aircraft Noise Ombudsman, away from Airservices Australia, is

one small but important step in the right direction.

The Proposed Consequences for Airlines Cancelling Flights for Purely Commercial Reasons Are Akin to Being Slapped With a Wet Paper Towel.

I have today lodged a submission online, as part of this current consultation process. In my submission today I have written as follows:

I write this short submission as a member of the travelling public.

The focus for my submission is the following section, to be found on page 48:

"It is proposed that a situation would be considered to be within an airline's control when disruptions, cancellations and delays are primarily caused by any the following situations: a. Commercial decisions including: i. overbooking flights ii. consolidating or cancelling flights with low passenger demand, or iii. similar actions undertaken for commercial reasons. b. Day-to-day operations including: i. staff scheduling and availability for all flight services including check-in ii. flight preparation activities like cleaning, baggage loading and aircraft fuelling c. Scheduled maintenance including any subsequent repairs or required activities. d. Knock on disruptions, delays and cancellations to other airline services operated by a regulated entity due to a situation within the regulated entity's control. "

The first point I would like to make is that, at present, such matters are entirely, completely and wholly opaque and are the very opposite of transparent in any way. I apologise if I have not studied the documentation closely enough. But how, and by whom, are these decisions [regarding causation and responsibility] proposed to be made. Certainly the airlines themselves surely cannot be the arbiters of such decisions and surely there must be some entirely independent investigative function by an external entity.

Secondly, I note the section on pages 46 and 47 ie 3. Flight disruption, unreasonable delay, cancellation requirements. I note sections a- e therein.

Well, talk about being slapped by a wet paper towel!!

Once again, there is no transparency at present and members of the public, like myself, are left guessing. But it is my strong suspicion that at present Airlines frequently make commercial decisions to cancel flights- purely on commercial grounds.

And it is far from clear to me how the proposed range of consequences, as set out on pages 46 and 47:

- are any stronger than what is already the case under general consumer protection legislation, rights and current general practice; and
- are in any way a commercial disincentive to airlines to cease this frequent practice of cancelling flights for purely commercial reasons.

What is proposed does appear to be wholly inadequate and, as above, appears akin to being slapped with a wet paper towel.

As I wrote in my online submission, it is far from clear to me how what is proposed will in fact act as any material disincentive to Airlines to cease or curtail their all too frequent practice of cancelling flights for purely commercial reasons.

Kind Regards

Wes



