



Regulatory and policy responsibilities relating to aircraft noise

Summary for the Brisbane Airport Community Airspace Advisory Board (AAB)

May 2025

Aircraft noise is an inevitable by-product of aviation activity. However, the level of aircraft noise experienced by communities is affected by a range of factors, including:

- planning and development decisions at airports
- design of flight paths
- use of noise abatement procedures
- types of aircraft
- volume of air traffic
- land use planning and building standards in areas surrounding airports.

There is no single entity with responsibility for all of the factors that contribute to aircraft noise levels. Different parts of the aviation industry, and different government entities, have a range of responsibilities that can influence the various factors. This factsheet outlines the roles and responsibilities of relevant Australian Government departments and agencies.

Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communication, Sport and the Arts

The Minister for Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government regulates planning, development and some elements of environmental protection at 22 Leased Federal Airports (LFAs) under the *Airports Act 1996* (the Act).

The Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications, Sport and the Arts administers the Act and supporting regulations. The minister is the decision maker under the Act for “airport master plans” (Master Plans) and “major development plans” (MDPs).

The department advises the minister on the approval of airport master plans and MDPs, consistent with the requirements of the Act.

The department is also responsible for activities such as: administration of curfew legislation at certain airports and demand management legislation at Sydney (Kingsford-Smith) Airport; chairing the National Airports Safeguarding Advisory Group (NASAG); and supporting groups such as the AAB and the Sydney Airport Community Forum.

Airservices Australia

The department administers the *Air Services Act 1995* which establishes Airservices as the Australian Government agency responsible for air navigation service provision. Airservices is a Corporate Commonwealth Entity and part of the Transport portfolio. It ensures the safety, regularity and efficiency of air navigation in Australian administered airspace. Air navigation service provision includes air traffic services, aeronautical information service, aeronautical radio navigation service and aeronautical telecommunications service.

Airservices is responsible for:

- Flight path design and operation at Australian airports where it considers it necessary to ensure the safety of air navigation, consistent with section 8 of the *Air Services Act 1995*, or where it is engaged by an Airport Lessee Company (ALC), airport operator, or other entity to undertake this work.
- Designing noise abatement procedures where engaged by an ALC or airport operator to undertake flight path design.
- Operating a Noise and Flight Path Monitoring System (NFPMS) at Brisbane, Cairns, Canberra, Gold Coast, Sydney, Melbourne, Essendon Fields, Adelaide and Perth airports.
- Operating a Noise Complaints and Information Service (NCIS), where individuals can make complaints (via webform, phone or post) about aircraft noise and Airservices community engagement activities. Airservices uses complaints and enquiries to identify areas of concern and possible operational improvements which may be considered in a Post Implementation Review.
- Under a direction from the minister, endorsing the technical accuracy of noise exposure forecasts (ANEFs) produced by ALCs as required for airport Master Plans under the *Airport Act 1996*.
- Issuing noise certificates for aircraft that comply with International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) noise standards and assessing aircraft whose owners wish to apply for an exemption to operate within Australia.

Aircraft Noise Ombudsman

The Aircraft Noise Ombudsman (ANO) conducts independent reviews of Airservices Australia's and the Department of Defence's management of aircraft noise-related activities, including:

- The handling of complaints or enquiries made to Airservices Australia (for civil aviation) or Defence (for military aviation) about aircraft noise
- Community consultation processes related to aircraft noise
- The presentation and distribution of aircraft noise-related information.

Civil Aviation Safety Authority

The department administers the *Civil Aviation Act 1988*, which establishes the Civil Aviation Safety Authority (CASA), and the *Airspace Act 2007* which establishes CASA as the administrator and regulator of Australian-administered airspace. CASA is an independent statutory authority and part of the Transport portfolio.

CASA is responsible for the regulatory approval of flight procedures designed under *Civil Aviation Safety Regulation (CASR)* Part 173, and the certification of aerodromes under CASR Part 139.

CASA is responsible for administering and regulating Australia's airspace. CASA considers and approves changes to airspace through the Airspace Change Proposal (ACP) process. Anybody can submit an ACP, but the requests are often made by Defence, airspace users, or Airservices. The CASA airspace functions are governed by the *Airspace Act 2007*, Airspace Regulations 2007 and the Australian Airspace Policy Statement (issued by the Minister for Transport), and apply to all airspace in Australia.