

22 October 2025

Improved Airport Planning
Domestic Aviation and Reform Division
Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications, Sport and the Arts

By email: AVPOL@infrastructure.gov.au

RE: Draft Community Aviation Consultation Group (CACG) Guidelines 2025

Airport Development Group (ADG) welcomes the opportunity to provide feedback on the draft Community Aviation Consultation Group (CACG) Guidelines.

ADG owns and operates Darwin International Airport, Alice Springs Airport and Tennant Creek Airport, as well as strategic and diverse assets across the Territory including hotels and resorts, utilities and a significant property portfolio. ADG has been part of the Northern Territory community for over two decades and is one of Northern Australia's largest companies.

ADG's legislative obligations require a CACG for both Darwin International Airport and Alice Springs Airport. The CACGs for these airports have been in place since 2011 and are well established. They have proven to be effective channels for engagement between the airports and their local communities.

ADG offers the following comments on the draft guidelines:

- Each CACG is unique, one size does not fit all: The draft guidelines rightly acknowledge that each airport and its community are unique and as such the guidelines are intended to be applied with consideration for local circumstances. However, some provisions within the draft guidelines risk being overly prescriptive, for example:
 - limiting the extent of presentations from the airport operator
 - limiting airport operator management representation at the meeting.

Since their inception, ADG's CACG meetings have consistently been engaging, collaborative and respectful. Imposing rigid requirements in the guidelines could shift the tone of these meetings and make them unnecessarily adversarial. We have observed that our CACG members value the direct engagement with ADG's CEO and senior management team at these sessions, appreciating the opportunity for open and meaningful dialogue.

- Department attendance at CACGs: ADG notes the draft guidelines state officers of the department are not required to attend CACG meetings and may do as appropriate. While this aligns with previous versions of the guidelines, it is worth noting that from 2011 through to mid-2024 department representatives consistently attended all ADG's CACG meetings (in person or online), offering valuable updates to the group while reinforcing the importance the department places on these forums.

ADG acknowledges that departmental attendance has never been mandated and appreciates the significant resourcing challenges involved. However, ADG respectfully requests the department commits to attending the Darwin International Airport and Alice Springs Airport CACG meetings once a year to provide a formal update. This continued presence would reaffirm to our CACG members the value and importance the department places on these groups.

- Diversity in membership: The draft guidelines recognise the importance of diversity within CACG membership that is related to the unique characteristics of the airport. ADG suggests the list of potential membership is broadened to include Traditional Owners.
- Annual report preparation: ADG commits to preparing annual reports for the CACGs at both Darwin International Airport and Alice Springs Airport.
- Integration of Planning Coordination Forum (PCF): As with CACGs, ADG believes there is no one-size-fits-all approach to PCFs. In 2021, ADG invited its PCF members into the Darwin International Airport CACG meetings with an optional closed planning session held following the CACG, if required. This approach has been well received by both CACG and PCF members, resulting in more efficient meetings and increased opportunities for information sharing and consultation. As the closed planning session has rarely been utilised, ADG intends to update the Terms of Reference for both groups to formally integrate PCF members into the Darwin International Airport CACG.

Thank you again for the opportunity to engage with the Department in this process. Should you have any questions about ADG's feedback, in the first instance please contact [REDACTED]

Yours sincerely,



Rob Porter
Executive General Manager – Airports