

Submission to

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

Draft Community Aviation Consultation Group (CACG) Guidelines

I welcome this opportunity to make a submission to the draft Community Aviation Consultative Group Guidelines. The focus of my submission is from resident perspective, I have served on the Melbourne Airport CACG between 2014-2017, have involvement with a number of community groups.

Since the first Community Aviation Consultative Group Guidelines in 2011, there has been a drift away from the concept of bringing together airport operators and local residents to work collaboratively to address issues of aircraft noise, air pollution, loss of amenity, health impact and wellbeing.

The task of coming together is compounded by broadening the CACG membership to include residents, representatives from local schools, Union Bodies, specific interest groups, urban and transport planners and related businesses as well as statutory offices from local municipalities. Having such a diverse group of people with such a wide range of competing interests does not achieve the purpose of the CACG.

Loss of Trust in CACG

Residents living in the suburbs around Melbourne Airport and who are impacted by aircraft noise, air pollution, transport congestion etc. have little faith in the CACG.

The success of Community Aviation Consultation Groups is enhanced by simplifying the process.

Membership to CACG should be for representatives from impacted residents and municipal offices.

Urban Planning, Environmental Consultants, Unions and other interested groups are matters which are part of airport planning and are consulted separately by the airport operator in accordance with the Airports act 1996.

The CACG has opportunity to seek advice from experts in the relevant matters under consideration with in the terms of reference.

The Melbourne Airport CACG submission to the Inquiry into the Impact and mitigation of Aircraft Noise (Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport References Committee) April 2024, identified:

- Aircraft noise was not well researched in Australia.
- The noise complaints system is narrow, not user-friendly and does not achieve any tangible ameliorative outcomes.
- Community mis-trust in noise monitoring
- Focus appears to be kept to informing the community, rather than listening and responding to their concerns.

Local residents well understand the matters identified and their consequences.

To my knowledge there have been no recommendations from the CACG to the airport operator.

Unfortunately, the CACG process have evolved into avoiding community contact, since 2017 the CACG meetings at Melbourne are closed to the public.

There is an abundance of noise studies and assessments, world-wide upon which to draw from. Airports are not unique to Australia and similar aircraft types fly the world over.

Urban Planning

Most residential urban development around Melbourne Airport were established well before it opened in 1970.

Our state and local government planning schemes are at the core of the noise problems for residents and airports. Town planners have competing responsibilities, they may have been mis-guided by airport noise contours which may have contributed to the approval of residential housing non-compliant to the Australian Noise standard AS2021:2015.

Airport Operations Safeguarding

From a community perspective there is too much emphasis in trying to explain and communicate aircraft noise. Explanation of highly technical matters has little relevance for community when the evidence of aircraft noise disturbance can be heard. As humans we all know how it feels when our sleep is constantly disrupted. The emphasis should be to address the outcome of aircraft noise, that's what CACG is for.

The National Airport Safeguarding Framework principles and planning overlays, implemented to safeguard airport operations have not been adhered too, which leaves the curfew-free status for Melbourne Airport at risk.

Opportunity

When residents raise concerns they are ignored, there is an un-willingness to discuss at all levels of government and CACG,

- Curfews
- Noise Amelioration
- Property acquisition⁷⁷⁷
- Home Noise Insulation
- Compensation for loss of amenity
- Compensation for impact to human health
- Airport Alternatives
- Airport Capacity

Despite being unpalatable for governments and airport these discussions need to take place.

In my view the draft CCAG guidelines should have a focus to:

- Adopt areas of aircraft noise significance
- Less reliance of ANEF contours, they are not relevant to local communities.
- Keep things simple.
- Regain community Trust
- Open CACG meeting to the public
- Airport management to attend CACG meetings and participate in discussions.
- Foster a collaborative approach and less reliance on consultants.
- Avoid community consultation during times of leisure and family outings, like fetes, sporting events etc.

Yours Sincerely
Frank Rivoli
For Community