



ANO assessment of Airservices
Australia's response to the
Perth Aircraft Noise Information Review

November 2012

1 Overview

- 1.1 This report outlines the Aircraft Noise Ombudsman's (ANO) assessment of progress in implementation of recommendations arising from the ANO's *Review of Aircraft Noise Information Presentation and Complaint Resolution: Perth*.
- 1.2 In the review, released in November 2011, the ANO made seven recommendations, all of which were accepted by Airservices Australia (Airservices). The review emphasised the need for clear and accurate information about aircraft noise issues to enable the public to engage in debate about the issues, and to understand the outcomes of decisions and actions.
- 1.3 The ANO is pleased that Airservices continues to pursue improvements in noise information and complaint resolution for Perth and across Australia. It is no simple matter to present information about aircraft noise in a form that is easy to understand. The aviation industry around the world has been grappling with this problem for decades. Nevertheless it is important that Airservices should provide better material than it has in the past.
- 1.4 One year on, six of the seven recommendations in our report have been actioned by Airservices with work well progressed on the remaining one. **Attachment 1** records the ANO's assessment of action against the recommendations, which is summarised in Table 1 below.

Table 1: ANO's assessment of progress against the *Perth Aircraft Noise Information Review* recommendations

Actioned and complete	2
Actioned, but ANO monitoring implementation before closing	4
Action underway	1
Total	7

- 1.5 For four of the recommendations, the ANO office continues to monitor the successful implementation of new processes and initiatives, and for one recommendation we have recorded the status as 'action underway'. Airservices has made significant progress against these five remaining recommendations and is working hard to 'complete' implementation.
- 1.6 We understand the limitations on Airservices in responding to our recommendations as quickly as we would like. We consider improved information is a vital part of improving the management of aircraft noise in Australia and that the work remaining to action these items is not great, and could therefore be completed soon. Accordingly, we encourage Airservices to give priority to the remaining actions required. Progress on recommendations that are incomplete or require further monitoring is reported in the ANO's quarterly reports.

- 1.7 There has been significant improvement in complaint reporting, with the recent release of the new quarterly Aircraft Noise Information Report for the Perth basin. Notably this report consolidates noise monitoring and complaints data into one easy to read report. It incorporates more discussion and analysis, and reflects Airservices' move away from reporting the number of contacts from complainants as 'complaints', to reporting on the number of complainants with emphasis placed on the issues raised. This has taken the focus away from cases where individuals have contacted Airservices repeatedly, and indeed excessively, on a single issue.
- 1.8 Unfortunately there has been some publicity lately for a few individuals who have made an excessive number of contacts on their issues. We encourage Airservices to accelerate a complete shift away from reporting the number of contacts made by complainants. This will assist Airservices to continue building its public accountability for managing aircraft noise issues. With this accountability will come increased public confidence in Airservices' management of aircraft noise complaints and the issues they raise.
- 1.9 While it may seem a small change to some, this recent change in reporting (which must keep evolving and improving over time) is an important step in Airservices visibly accepting greater accountability for its management of aircraft noise issues. The ANO office continues to review and support Airservices in its efforts to investigate complaints, pursue practical opportunities to improve aircraft noise outcomes, and develop effective public information resources on aircraft noise management issues.

Ron Brent
Aircraft Noise Ombudsman
21 November 2012

Attachment 1 - ANO Report on Perth Noise Information Review Recommendations

Recommendation	ANO assessment of Airservices' response
<p>Perth Review Recommendation 1:</p> <p>In its ongoing development of public reports on aircraft noise, Airservices should review the reports with the aim of making the reports as easy as possible to understand. This should include using 'plain English' in place of technical terminology, considering the usefulness of averages in cases of a wide spread of data, incorporating some analysis of the data, and establishing a simple system for obtaining public feedback on reports.</p>	<p>Actioned by Airservices</p> <p>The ANO will now monitor the application of the new processes.</p>
<p>Perth Review Recommendation 2:</p> <p>Airservices, in addition to implementing the recommendations from the ANO's Complaint Handling Review, should continue to improve information provided to the public and industry, through an increased focus on complaint issues and identifying opportunities for possible improvements in noise outcomes. Public and industry reporting on complaints should provide analysis in addition to the data.</p>	<p>Actioned by Airservices</p> <p>The ANO will now monitor the application of the new processes.</p>
<p>Perth Review Recommendation 3:</p> <p>Airservices should undertake regular reviews of the information provided on its website and in printed material to ensure that the material is current, relevant to the audience, and responds to feedback from stakeholders.</p>	<p>Actioned by Airservices</p>
<p>Perth Review Recommendation 4:</p> <p>Airservices should further develop its capacity to provide comprehensive information on all aspects of aircraft noise through NCIS as well as via fact sheets, and its website. This could include such matters as explaining flight paths and why planes fly where they do, explaining changes in air traffic over time (even where there has been no specific action to bring about that change), and explaining the processes for determining the location of aircraft noise monitors and the role of those monitors. It should also include a process for reporting publicly on initiatives to improve noise outcomes, including cases where those initiatives result in a conclusion that improvements cannot be achieved.</p>	<p>Actioned by Airservices</p> <p>The ANO will now monitor the application of the new processes.</p>
<p>Perth Review Recommendation 5:</p> <p>Where complaints/enquiries relate to matters for Government, Airservices should advise complainants of this and, where possible, refer to available material which presents the Government's position. Where complainants wish to pursue their complaints with the Department, Airservices should assist in transferring the complainant directly to the Department.</p>	<p>Actioned by Airservices</p> <p>The ANO will now monitor the application of the new processes.</p>
<p>Perth Review Recommendation 6:</p> <p>Airservices should develop an information package that presents an accurate aircraft noise information picture for Perth, and make this available on its website and in other formats as appropriate.</p>	<p>Actioned by Airservices</p>
<p>Perth Review Recommendation 7:</p> <p>Airservices should ensure that it has a clearly defined assessment process for considering possible changes to improve noise outcomes, which should include appropriate public reporting. Such reporting could encompass the WARRP Post Implementation Review.</p>	<p>The ANO notes that action is underway.</p>