



Annual Report

2014-2015

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1 From the Ombudsman

1.1 Alongside our active monitoring of some bold noise improvement initiatives by Airservices Australia (Airservices), the 2014-15 period involved an expansion of our Charter. The Aircraft Noise Ombudsman (ANO) role now encompasses the management of military aircraft noise by the Department of Defence (Defence).

1.2 Our key achievements in 2014-15 include establishing the relationship with Defence, undertaking a major review of Defence's compliance with the conditions of Approval for Super Hornet operations at RAAF Base Amberley (report to be published soon), Airservices' finalisation of all outstanding review recommendations, seeing the finalisation and publication of the revised Australian Standard AS2021-2000: *Acoustics — Aircraft noise intrusion — Building siting and construction*, and engagement in a range of industry and community forums across the country in both the military and civil space.

“Taking on the Defence role has been an exciting development”

1.3 I am pleased that three noise improvements initiated as a response to complaints handled by the ANO office have been implemented in these past 12 months. This includes what has become known as the Roleystone change – the trial of which was concluded and implemented permanently during the second half of 2014. There was also a change to departure procedures in response to complaints from Chidlow residents and a change to Fly Friendly arrangements at Camden Airport so that ‘practice engine failures’ avoid residential areas. The opportunity for a similar improvement at Point Cook Airport has also been identified and is currently under consideration by Defence and the relevant stakeholders. One further improvement opportunity was investigated, which related to general aviation departures headed to the south-west from Jandakot Airport, however it was found not to be viable.

1.4 I am particularly pleased to see Airservices' continued efforts in identifying, pursuing, and (where practical) implementing, noise improvement opportunities without our intervention. This has seen a number of important noise improvements implemented, either permanently or initially as a trial. It has also led to some challenging consultation activities, which the ANO has monitored closely. Initiatives in Perth and the Gold Coast have absorbed a lot of ANO attention in the second half of the 2014-15 period. We published an article about consultation on changes to air traffic arrangements to reflect this focus.

“This year has seen a number of important noise improvements implemented”



1.5 The ANO provides independent administrative reviews of Airservices' and Defence's management of aircraft noise issues, specifically focussed on three areas:

- Complaint handling
- Consultation
- Information provision

Our work with Airservices and Defence is consequently structured around these three areas, so I will briefly summarise the year for each below.

Complaint handling

1.6 The number of complaints to the ANO office increased dramatically during 2014-15, due in small part to the new role with Defence (five complaints

“ANO complaints increased dramatically in the last quarter of 2014-15”

received to date) and in large part to a spike in complaints in the last quarter resulting from community reaction to Airservices' proposal for a night-time respite trial in Perth. **Attachment 1** provides a summary of the ANO complaint statistics for 2014-15 and **Section 2** includes analysis of ANO complaint data.

1.7 The trial proposed in Perth was among a suite of three changes Airservices announced in March 2015 for implementation by the end of 2015 that were aimed at improving noise outcomes for Perth. One change was implemented at the end of May, one is scheduled for implementation in September and the final of these (the trial) has now been cancelled before implementation commenced. These change initiatives have sparked a significant complaint load for Airservices in the period since they were announced, and the ANO has also received a high number of complaints.

1.8 The ANO has noted that there are lessons to be learnt from the way these changes have been considered and the way that the consultation and environmental assessments were being managed. Nonetheless, we congratulate Airservices on its efforts to find aircraft noise improvements in Perth and across the country. Significantly, many more of these stem from Airservices' own investigations and fewer from complaints handled by the ANO office. All opportunities identified through complaints to the ANO are reported in the ANO quarterly reports and a summary is available in **Attachment 2**.

1.9 Airservices finalised its implementation of our *Case Studies in Complaint Management Review* recommendations during the period and has continued to take important steps forward in its management of complaints. We look forward to this progress continuing with the support of an improved complaint management database capability. We have generally been impressed with the improvement in Airservices' responses to complainants and the genuine effort made in investigating complaints.

“Airservices implemented our Case Studies in Complaint Management recommendations”

1.10 **Attachment 3** outlines the ANO's assessment of action on each recommendation.

Consultation

1.11 ANO staff attend a variety of community and industry forums across Australia to monitor Airservices' and Defence's consultation and information provision and to gather information about emerging aircraft noise issues.

“ANO staff attend community and industry forums across Australia”

1.12 We have not made any formal recommendations to either Defence or Airservices on their consultation activities in the 2014-15 period. However, we have been monitoring Airservices' consultation activities associated with proposed changes in Perth and the Gold Coast. We have provided feedback as appropriate in an informal way and included discussion of such in our quarterly reports. We will address any specific concerns with formal recommendations where necessary and anticipate a report on the Perth noise initiatives will be completed before the end of 2015.

Information provision

1.13 Information provision is an important component of managing aircraft noise issues and a key focus for the ANO.

1.14 During the 2014-15 period, Airservices completed actions to address the one outstanding recommendation from our *Assessment of Aircraft Noise Issues: Sydney, February 2012*. **Attachment 3** outlines the ANO's assessment of action on each recommendation that was open during 2014-15.

“The ANO's review of Super Hornet operations at Amberley was completed”

1.15 The ANO's review of Defence's compliance with the conditions of Approval for Super Hornet operations at RAAF Base Amberley was completed recently and submitted to the Chief of Air Force. It includes 12 recommendations including the improvement of information provision.

1.16 The ANO has led development of a Standards Australia handbook about aircraft noise information provision which is nearing completion. The purpose of the handbook is to provide guidance on alternative ways to describe aircraft noise to assist the public to better understand the possible impact of that noise.

Final remarks **“Five years on, there is much to be proud of”**

1.17 Five years on, since creation of the ANO office, there is much to be proud of. This includes tangible reform in the way noise complaints are handled in Airservices, which has seen the organisation move a good way down the path of effective complaint handling. I look forward to the next evolution that will follow from the enhanced complaints database system that Airservices will shortly implement.

1.18 The move by Defence to engage the ANO as an independent review mechanism for their management of aircraft noise issues is in part a recognition that the ANO can contribute to effective improvements in aircraft noise management and, through this, to delivering better noise outcomes to the community.

1.19 The cultural shift that sees Airservices now identifying and actively pursuing opportunities to improve noise outcomes is also a step-change from five years ago. In support of this, the ANO complaint statistics for 2014-15 show that no complaints to the ANO in this financial year led to a change by Airservices. This suggests that Airservices is no longer missing opportunities to identify noise improvements when handling the complaints in the first instance. While recent initiatives in Perth point to important issues with the process for managing community engagement, environmental assessments and decisions about potential noise improvements, the intent by the organisation to strive for better outcomes reflects a genuine change that is to be commended.

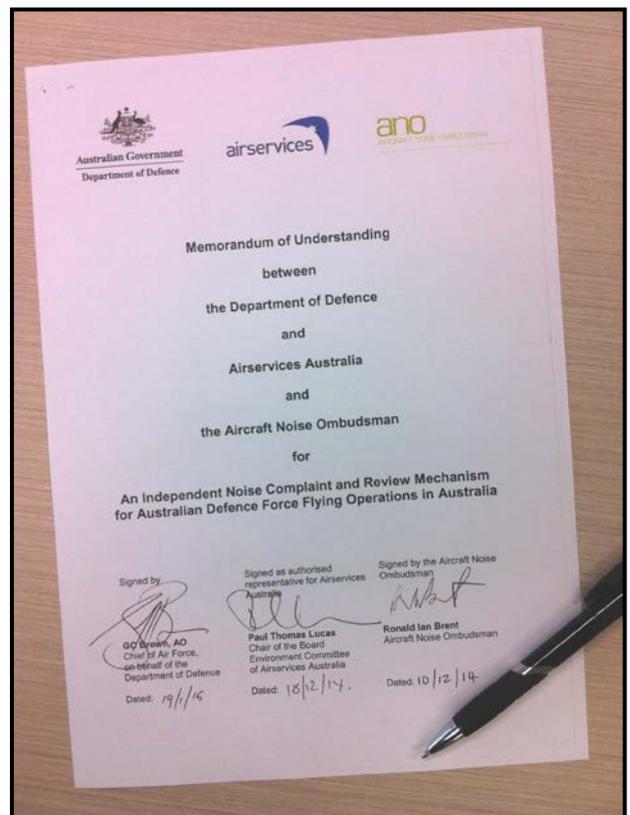
1.20 I have also been pleased to see that, over time, the broader aviation industry (particularly airports) and other stakeholders (such as state/territory and local government departments) have increased their attention to aircraft noise issues and their level of engagement with the ANO. My view is that increased knowledge and a more collaborative whole-of-government and whole-of-industry approach to aircraft noise issues will deliver better outcomes for all stakeholders and the community.”

1.21 Certainly the second half of the 2014-15 financial year has been particularly eventful, including a significant review of Defence activities coinciding with some major undertakings by Airservices that have resulted in a large increase in workload for the office. It is a credit to my small team that we have accomplished as much as we have through this demanding time.

1.22 Finally, I wish to thank the staff of Airservices and Defence, with whom we work day-to-day, as well as the leadership teams that support an open and cooperative working relationship. I am also motivated and inspired by the insights and contributions of community members, through both their complaints and participation at community forums. Without their generous efforts to engage on issues that matter to them, we could not contribute as insightfully or effectively to the improvement of aircraft noise management.



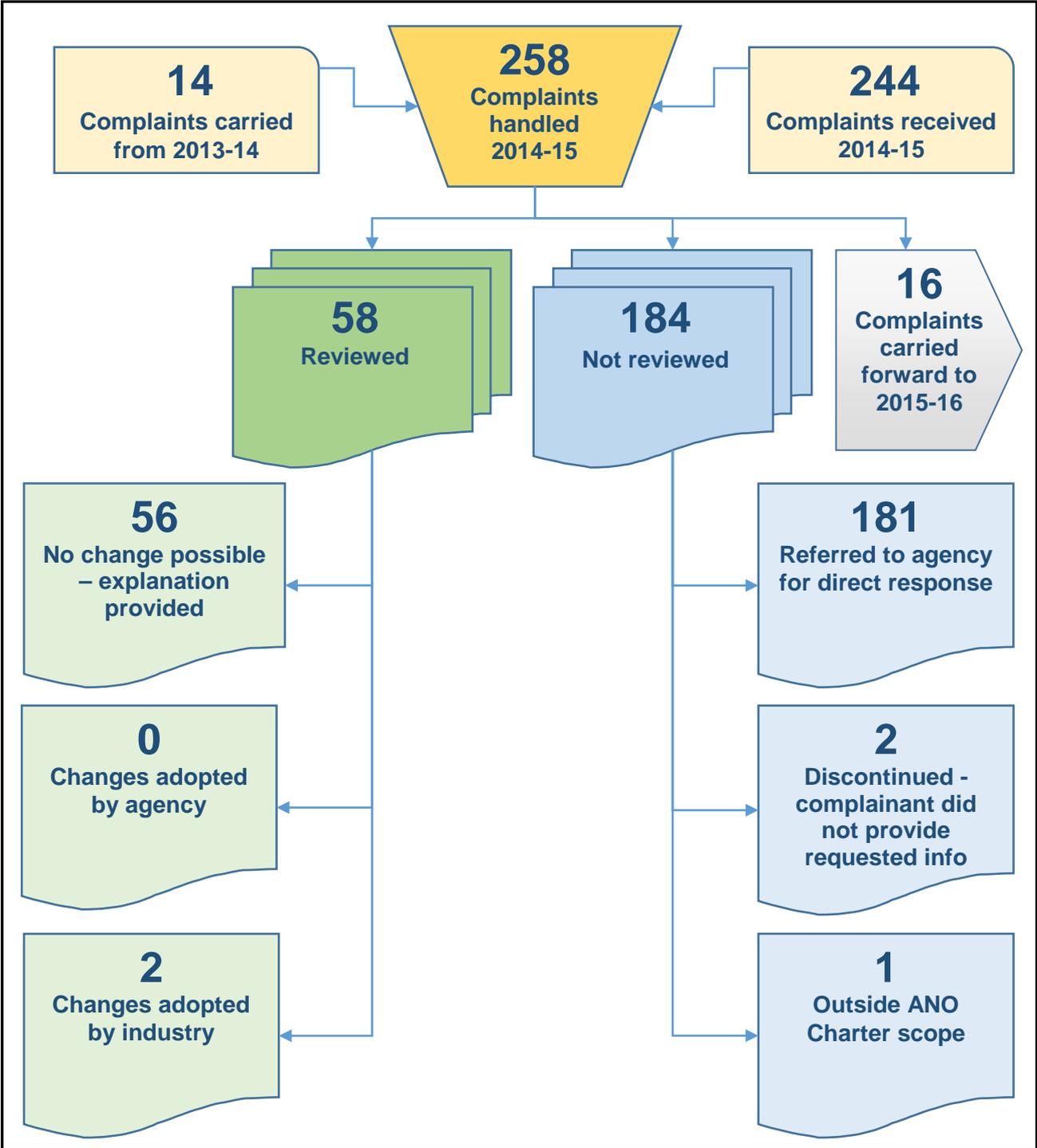
Ron Brent
Aircraft Noise Ombudsman
27 August 2015



2 Complaints

Complaint statistics

2.1 The ANO received more complaints in 2014-15 than in any of the previous years. The following graphic shows how we handled them.



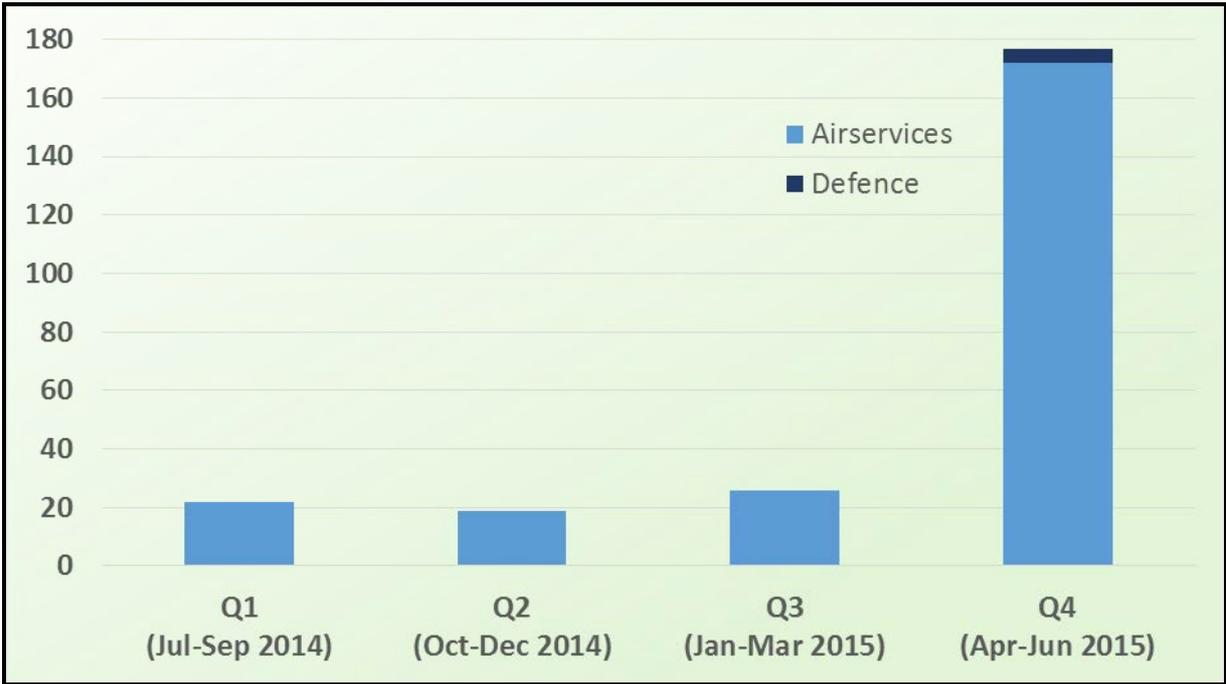
2.2 The table below shows the changes in the annual and per month average for complaints received over time.

Table 1: Comparative complaints received by financial year

	Total fin. year	Ave per month	% Change
Sep 2010-Jun 2011 (10 mths)	101	10.1	
Jul 2011-Jun 2012 (12 mths)	109	9.1	↓ 10.1%
Jul 2012-Jun 2013 (12 mths)	88	7.3	↓ 19.3%
Jul 2013-Jun 2014 (12 mths)	106	8.8	↑ 20.5%
Jul 2014-Jun 2015 (12 mths)	239	19.9	↑ 125.4%

2.3 This significant increase was almost entirely due to community reactions in quarter four to a number of flight procedure changes proposed by Airservices. We also started to receive complaints (five) about Defence in the fourth quarter. See the graph below for the per quarter spread.

Graph 1: Complaints received by the ANO by quarter 2014-15



2.4 We started the financial year with 14 open complaints and received a further 244 during the year, making the total number of complaints handled in the financial year 258. Of these, over half (181) were closed by referral back to Airservices or Defence to respond to directly. A further 58 were closed following detailed investigation. Of these, most (56) did not identify any practical change opportunities that could be pursued and were closed with a detailed explanation provided to the complainant.

2.5 The table below shows the outcome of complaints reviewed.

Table 2: Outcome of complaints reviewed by the ANO in 2014-15

Complaints reviewed and closed:	58	
No change possible - explanation provided	56	96.5%
Change adopted by Airservices or Defence	0	0%
Change adopted by Airport operator	1	1.7%
Change adopted by Operator	1	1.7%

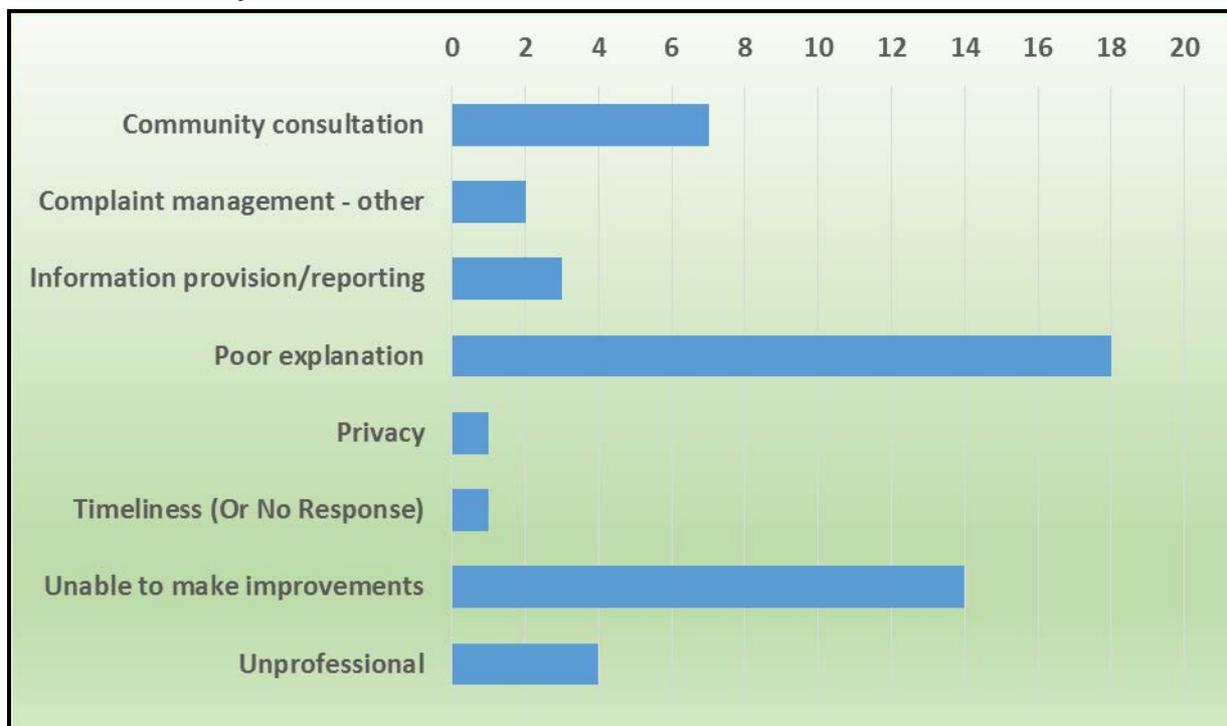
2.6 The statistics above relate to those complaints raised with the ANO. Although no complaints raised with the ANO led directly to Airservices or Defence adopting a change, both agencies have actively pursued noise improvement changes across the country and complaint handling improvements as appropriate, in response to community feedback and through internal review and improvement practices. Two changes were adopted by the industry more broadly, facilitated by Airservices and the ANO in response to complaints to the ANO.

2.7 **Attachment 1** provides a summary of ANO complaint statistics for 2014-15.

Complaint analysis

2.8 From the start of the 2014-15 financial year, the ANO has recorded issues raised by complainants against a range of issues categories. Issues were recorded only for those complaints that were reviewed by the ANO and reflects what the complainant reported as the main issue(s) with their dealings with the agency. The aim in collecting this data was to allow the ANO to better identify systemic issues. The following graph shows the reported issues for complaints about Airservices that were reviewed and closed in the 2014-15 financial year.

Graph 2: Reported agency issues for complaints reviewed by the ANO in 2014-15 – Airservices only



2.9 The above graph identifies that there are two stand-out areas of concern for complainants who escalate their concerns to the ANO:

- **Poor explanation:** includes when complainants identify that questions have not been answered or fully addressed, that they could not understand the explanation provided, that too much jargon and/or technical data was used in the response, or that staff didn't seem to know the answers.
- **Unable to make improvements:** includes when complainants identify that the agency can't or won't resolve the problem, is just recording complaints but can't act to fix the problem, isn't willing to try to help and just fobs complainants off.

2.10 Commonly the ANO provides a detailed explanation to the complainant that includes our assessment of the Airservices response and whether or not it could have better responded to the questions or issues raised by the complainant. The ANO provides this feedback (positive and negative) to the Noise Complaints and Information Service Manager on each complaint that we review and close.

2.11 Further, our responses will identify our assessment of whether or not Airservices could reasonably have done more to resolve the problem. As the statistics for ANO complaints show, none of the complaints reviewed by the ANO in the 2014-15 period led to a change by Airservices and only two generated change in the broader industry. In most cases, therefore, our responses to complainants have supported the view that Airservices cannot do anything in the circumstances, and that we too have independently assessed the case and been unable to identify any practical noise improvement opportunities that might be pursued in the short to medium term. In some cases Airservices might have better explained the constraints on their ability to change the noise situation, and this feedback is provided to Airservices. However, sometimes complainants are just seeking independent confirmation of this from the ANO and are satisfied (or at least a little more accepting) when this is provided.

3 Noise improvement opportunities

- 3.1 Investigations into noise improvement opportunities that stem from an ANO review or ANO attendance at community consultation meetings are tracked in our quarterly reports with brief descriptions of the change opportunity and the current status. These reports are available on our website.
- 3.2 **Attachment 2** summarises the noise improvement opportunities considered in the 2014-15 period. It should be noted that there is no direct correlation between the number of noise improvement opportunities explored and the number of complaints closed with a “Change adopted” outcome. This is due to a number of factors such as:
- Several complaints can relate to the same issue and each will be closed when a change is made.
 - Some noise improvement opportunities are identified at community consultation meetings, rather than from a complaint to the ANO.
 - Some noise improvement opportunities, despite detailed exploration of the potential, prove not to be feasible in the short to medium term. In these cases the complaint(s) will be closed with a “No change possible” outcome.
 - Some complaints are specifically about information provision, complaint handling or consultation systems and processes. A change to improve in these areas will not change the noise outcome in a particular area. However, the complaint in this case would be closed with a “Change adopted” outcome, reflecting the change to procedures or systems.

C Adopting best practice from other locations

A In February 2012, following an ANO investigation into a complaint from a resident near Jandakot Airport, new procedures were introduced at that airport that meant simulated engine failure practice would be conducted over Airport land rather than residential areas. This delivered a noticeable noise improvement for residents.

S Following the success of this noise improvement, Airservices included an item on their Strategic Noise Improvement Plan (SNIP) to consider “can procedures for practicing engine failures near general aviation airports be changed (or standardised to align with the procedures currently in practice at Jandakot)?”

T When the ANO received a complaint from a resident near Camden Airport, the ANO asked Airservices to look into whether similar procedures for ‘practice engine failures’, as employed at Jandakot Airport, could be applied at Camden to avoid doing this practice over residential areas.

U Airservices consulted with relevant stakeholders and the airport has now updated their ‘fly friendly’ arrangements accordingly.

D Defence is now investigating if a similar change can be undertaken at Point Cook airport.

Y

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The ANO encourages Airservices and Defence to pursue the possibility of similar noise improvements at other general aviation and RAAF airports, as appropriate. – Ron Brent

4 Community engagement and information provision

4.1 ANO staff have attended community and aviation industry meetings across Australia during the past twelve months. Attending such meetings enables the ANO office to gain a first hand perspective of community and industry issues, monitor Airservices' information presentation and consultation activities, and identify emerging issues. It also provides an opportunity to increase public awareness of the ANO role, our recent activities, and the opportunities we are pursuing to improve noise outcomes.

“By attending community and aviation industry meetings, the ANO can gain a first hand perspective of community and industry issues”

4.2 This year ANO staff attended 17 Airport Community Aviation Consultation Group (or equivalent) meetings. Additionally, we attended various industry meetings, including the major annual conferences of the Australian Airports Association (AAA), the Regional Aviation Association of Australia (RAAA), the Australian Mayoral Aviation Council (AMAC), the combined AAA-Airservices Aircraft Noise Forum and the International Sustainable Aviation Forum.

4.3 Taking a broader role in seeking to improve aircraft noise information, the ANO also chaired the committee that has drafted the Standards Australia handbook about aircraft noise information provision, which is nearing completion, and assisted in a local council's planning requirements for a proposed residential area near Point Cook Airport (see Case Study 2 below).

C ANO provides independent advice to planning agency

A Following a presentation at the Point Cook Community Group meeting by the ANO Senior Adviser, a representative of Wyndham City Strategic Planning sought the advice of the ANO office about the planning of a new residential estate in the vicinity of the Point Cook Airport.

S The representative saw the opportunity to learn from the ANO's experience of seeing the various approaches to other such planning activities for residential areas near to an airport, and sought ANO guidance on the best approach to ensuring information is provided to potential buyers and residents.

S The ANO was pleased to be able to supply examples of ways that other developments have presented information about the potential for aircraft noise impacts at new residential areas.

T In line with the ANO article *The Truth about Aircraft Noise*, the ANO office suggested wording for publications about the new development and for inclusion on the title of all residential properties. Similar wording will be included as requirements in the proposed Memorandum of Common Provisions and Design Guidelines for the proposed residential development near Point Cook Airport.

If developments are to occur in these areas [near airports] I would like to see the possible impact of the noise emphasised rather than downplayed so that potential buyers can make an informed decision. – Ron Brent

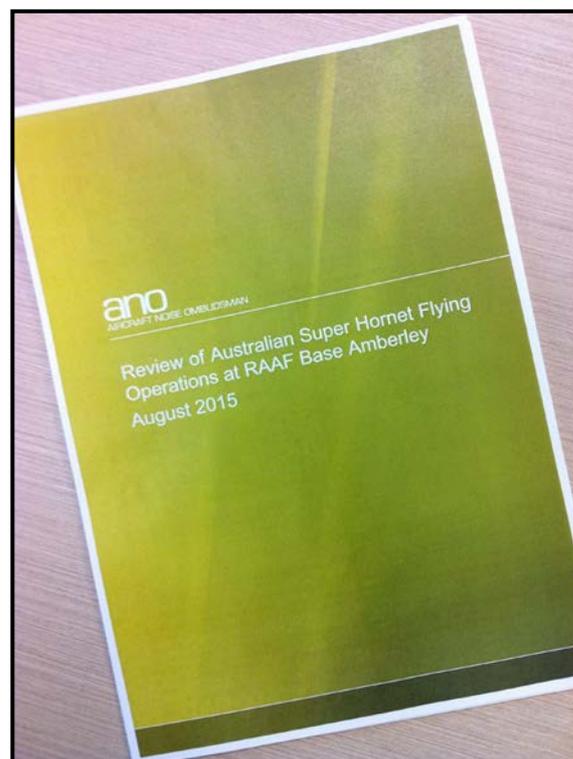
5 ANO reviews

Airservices

- 5.1 During 2014-15, Airservices finalised its implementation of all outstanding recommendations from our *Case Studies in Complaint Management review (January 2014)* and the one remaining recommendation that carried into this financial year from the *Assessment of Aircraft Noise Issues: Sydney (February 2012)*.
- 5.2 As we commence the 2015-16 financial year, the ANO is considering how best to feed into the learning process following Airservices' recent efforts to introduce noise improvement changes in Perth. It is likely that this will be presented in coming months in the form of a short review.

Defence

- 5.3 In January 2015, the ANO, Defence and Airservices signed a Memorandum of Understanding, which established the ANO as an independent review and complaints mechanism for Defence's aircraft noise management.
- 5.4 As a first priority, Defence requested that the ANO undertake an audit of Defence's compliance with the Conditions of Approval for Australian Super Hornet Flying Operations, RAAF Base, Amberley, QLD (EPBC 2008/4410), as varied by Ministerial approval in April 2014 (Conditions of Approval).
- 5.5 This was the first major review that the ANO has undertaken of any Defence noise management activity. The ANO considered that Defence not only complied with the intent of the Conditions of Approval, but had also demonstrated a commitment to going beyond the stipulated Conditions in managing the aircraft noise impacts of its flying operations on the community. Defence had shown it is open to new ideas and willing to make changes to improve its management of aircraft noise.
- 5.6 The report, which sets out the detailed review, ANO findings and makes twelve recommendations, was substantially completed in the 2014-15 financial year. Although finalised and provided to the Chief of Air Force in mid-August 2015, it is appropriate that this major piece of work is recognised as part of this 2014-15 Annual Report. We look forward to Defence's formal response and to working with them in the coming year to implement the recommendations.



6 ANO publications

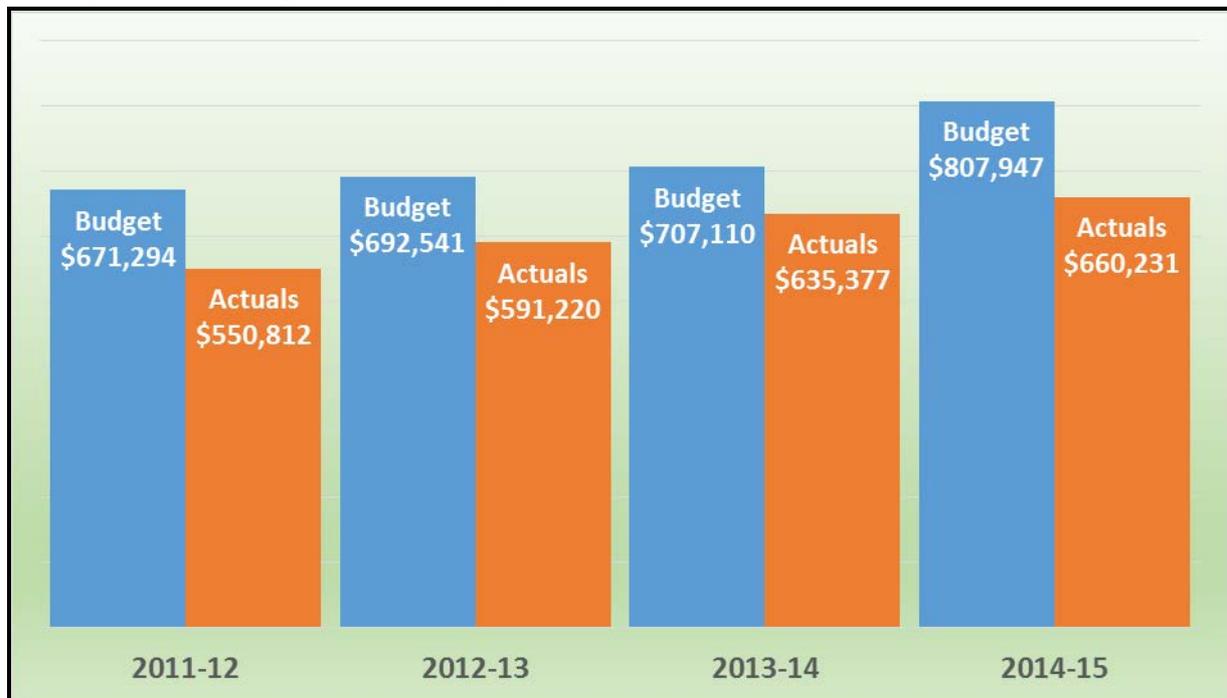
- 6.1 On 19 January 2015 the ANO Charter was updated to reflect the extension of the ANO role to include providing an independent complaint and review mechanism for Defence's aircraft noise management. The updated Charter was published on the ANO website at this time.
- 6.2 In addition to our quarterly reports and last year's annual report the ANO published the following on our website during 2014-15:
- 27 January 2015 - Aircraft Noise Ombudsman to review Defence aircraft noise
 - 24 February 2015 - Embracing Aircraft Noise Complaints for a Sustainable Aviation Future
 - 4 May 2015 - Consultation on Changes to Air Traffic Arrangements

On 7 August 2015, we also released a statement on the Airservices' Perth Noise Initiatives.

7 Financial Results

- 7.1 The ANO operates autonomously in managing its financial accountabilities. In line with the ANO Charter, the ANO independently determines how funds and resources are allocated, within the budget provided by Airservices and Defence.
- 7.2 As with previous years, the ANO has managed its budget effectively, with actual costs again well within the annual budget. In 2014-15, the total operating expenditure of the office was \$660,231 against a budget of \$807,947 (including the Defence allocation from 19 January 2015).
- 7.3 Costs include all staff salaries and entitlements, travel, and administrative overhead costs. The increase in costs from last year largely reflects the additional load from taking on the Defence role. However, this has been offset somewhat as we have been able to make savings in staff and travel costs through combining trips to serve both civil and military work objectives.

Graph 5: ANO budget and actual expenditure 2011-12 to 2014-15



Attachment 1 ANO Complaint Statistics

The following summarises the ANO complaint statistics for 2014-15.

	Total	Airservices	Defence
Complaints carried forward from 2013-14	14	14	0
Complaints received 2014-15	244	239	5
Total complaints handled in 2014-15	258	253	5

<u>Closed complaints - reviewed</u>			
No change possible - explanation provided	56	56	0
Change adopted by Airservices Australia	0	0	0
Change adopted by Airport operator	1	1	0
Change adopted by operator	1	1	0
Total complaints reviewed and closed	58	58	0

<u>Closed complaints - not reviewed</u>			
Referred to Airservices to respond directly	181	179	2
Complainant did not provide further information	2	2	0
Outside Charter scope	1	1	0
Total complaints not reviewed and closed	184	182	2

Complaints closed during 2014-15	242	240	2
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Complaints carried forward to 2015-16	16	13	3
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The statistics above relate to those complaints raised with the ANO. Although no complaints raised with the ANO led directly to Airservices or Defence adopting a change, both agencies have actively pursued noise improvement changes across the country and complaint handling improvements as appropriate, in response to community feedback and through internal review and improvement practices.

Attachment 2 Noise improvement opportunities

One of the core focuses of our investigations into complaints is to look for the potential to improve noise outcomes. The following table summarises the noise improvement opportunities stemming from complaints received by the ANO that were considered or part of ongoing ANO monitoring during the 2014-15 financial year.

Noise improvement opportunities considered during 2014-15

Complaint received by ANO	Description of initiative	Current status
Nov 2010	Perth – Can the flight path over Roleystone be relocated to an area that does not affect so many residences?	In Aug 2013, Airservices commenced a 12 month trial of an alternative flight path. Following the success of this trial, Airservices made the decision to permanently implement the change, which was announced to the community in March 2015.
Apr 2012	Brisbane – Can some northbound and westbound departures from runway 19 depart on additional tracks to reduce the concentration of noise over current areas?	Airservices examined the option of a noise sharing approach, where a single departure track is replaced with multiple tracks to enhance noise sharing. Airservices identified that such an arrangement has not previously been trialled in Australia, however, Airservices will consider this approach in the future. Trials of this approach are not likely to be held in Brisbane initially due to the operational constraints of the airport. This item remains a part of Airservices' Strategic Noise Improvement Plan and the ANO is monitoring to ensure it does receive attention in time.
May 2012	Perth – What is the plan to address the numerous issues and change requests associated with Chidlow?	Airservices investigated several opportunities, including one that has led to a trial of a changed departure procedure. The trial ended in March 2014 and following analysis of the results Airservices has permanently adopted the changed departure procedure, effective March 2015.
May 2014	Gold Coast – flights over NSW residences during daylight saving hours	The ANO has asked Airservices to look into whether a better noise outcome can be achieved for NSW residents affected by flights departing Gold Coast Airport prior to 11pm QLD time (that is, prior to the curfew commencing), when the two states are on different zones. The difference means aircraft fly over NSW homes after 11pm NSW time. Airservices has advised that while this is a relatively small change and it does seem to be feasible, they will not consider further progressing this at the current time because of the complexity of doing so with other changes underway at the Gold Coast. The ANO will continue to pursue this with Airservices when other activities at the Gold Coast have concluded.
August 2014	Camden – Opportunity to reduce aircraft noise at Camden airport by modifying practice engine failure procedures.	The ANO asked Airservices to look into whether best practice procedures employed at other general aviation airports could be applied at Camden. Specifically, this relates to 'practice engine failures' and whether they can be avoided over residential areas. Airservices consulted with relevant stakeholders and the airport has updated its 'fly friendly' arrangements.

Complaint received by ANO	Description of initiative	Current status
October 2014	Jandakot – Opportunity to reduce aircraft noise at Seville Grove and nearby suburbs by moving the general aviation flight path south-west.	The ANO presented the option to the Jandakot CACG meeting, generating a productive discussion by aircraft operators, Jandakot Airport management and air traffic control (ATC). All representatives were keen to explore opportunities for noise improvement. However, concerns about how close the proposed new route would be to the inbound track as well as concerns about making changes in an already recognised danger ‘hot spot’ meant that the proposal was not viable on safety grounds.
April 2015	Point Cook – Opportunity to reduce aircraft noise at RAAF Base Williams, Point Cook, Victoria by modifying practice engine failure procedures.	Following ANO attendance at the Point Cook Community meeting, the ANO asked Defence to look into whether best practice procedures employed at other general aviation airports could be applied at Point Cook. Specifically, this relates to ‘practice engine failures’ and whether they can be avoided over residential areas. Defence is consulting with relevant stakeholders to determine what can be done to improve noise outcomes.

It should be noted that there is no direct correlation between the number of noise improvement opportunities explored and the number of complaints closed with a “Change adopted” outcome. This is due to a number of factors as discussed in section 3.2 of this report.

Attachment 3 ANO assessment of action on recommendations

During the 2014-15 financial year the ANO closed the remaining recommendation from the *Assessment of Aircraft Noise Issues: Sydney, February 2012*, and all of the outstanding recommendations from the *Case Studies in Complaint Management: January 2014* review. The ANO considered that action taken by Airservices met the intention of each of the recommendations listed below:

Sydney Issues Recommendation 7:

Airservices should explore the provision of a more timely (as well as historical) method for complainants to understand why a particular Runway Mode was in use, or why a preferred Runway Mode (noise sharing) was not able to be used at that time.

Case Studies Recommendation 1:

Airservices should:

- a. amend its contact acknowledgement and reference numbering system. Complainants should not be notified of a new reference number for each and every contact made. Complainants advised that responses will not be made on a particular issue, should not be responded to on that issue. Airservices should clarify what the reference number provided to complainants actually means
- b. acknowledge the lack of timeliness, apologise and provide a brief explanation for the delay where service delivery standards are not met
- c. be mindful of balancing the resource burden with the value to the complainant when considering the provision of ongoing information, particularly if similar information has already been provided. Procedures or guidelines should be established to assist staff with making these decisions.

Case Studies Recommendation 2:

Airservices should:

- a. as far as practicable, assign complaints to an airport, rather than a generic category
- b. provide reports to airports that provide sufficient detail to help identify meaningful issues and avenues for potential improvements
- c. be clear to complainants about what is, and is not, provided to airports about their complaint
- d. ensure that information provided to complainants is accurate and does not potentially misrepresent the situation, or contradict other information published by Airservices on their website
- e. consider opportunities to take the lead in consulting various stakeholders as part of the process to identify noise improvement outcomes, rather than refer complainants to those stakeholders with the expectation that the complainant will manage that consultation process.

Case Studies Recommendation 3:

Airservices should:

- a. develop and implement processes to ensure all appropriate information about complainants is passed to other authorities when undertaking a transfer of a complaint
- b. clarify when a response will be provided. Information linked to the complaint form should explain that a response will be provided where specifically requested, where a question has been asked or where a response can provide useful and relevant information. The exception to this rule should be when a complainant has explicitly requested no response or when a complainant has been advised previously that the particular issue has been dealt with to finality.

Case Studies Recommendation 4:

Airservices should:

- a. store all correspondence relating to a complaint in a single repository, accessible to all complaint handlers and, to the extent practicable, accessible through the relevant NCMS database record
- b. ensure complaint records are managed in compliance with the National Archives Act 1983 as well as relevant Australian Standards and Australian Government recommended practices.
- c. standardise the salutations, introductory text and sign-off styles used for correspondence with complaints
- d. carefully consider the expectations created by encouraging further contact and only do so when appropriate
- e. use other means to contact clients whenever details have been provided and the primary means of contact fails.

Case Studies Recommendation 5:

Airservices should routinely analyse complaints to identify common issues not yet addressed by the current suite of fact sheets and develop fact sheets or standard responses for residents raising the same issues.

Case Studies Recommendation 6:

Airservices should:

- a. establish clear protocols for when residents are to be referred directly to an external authority
- b. review its Guide and Protocols documents and current practices to ensure that documented procedures for managing unreasonable complainant behaviour are followed in practice, including consistent and timely application of management plans for persistent complainants, and ensuring that it is cases of unreasonable behaviour that are subject to 'formal restriction' not complainants
- c. check compliance with its Guide and Protocols in an internal audit/review process for complaint management.