



Quarterly Report
July – September 2015

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1 Introduction

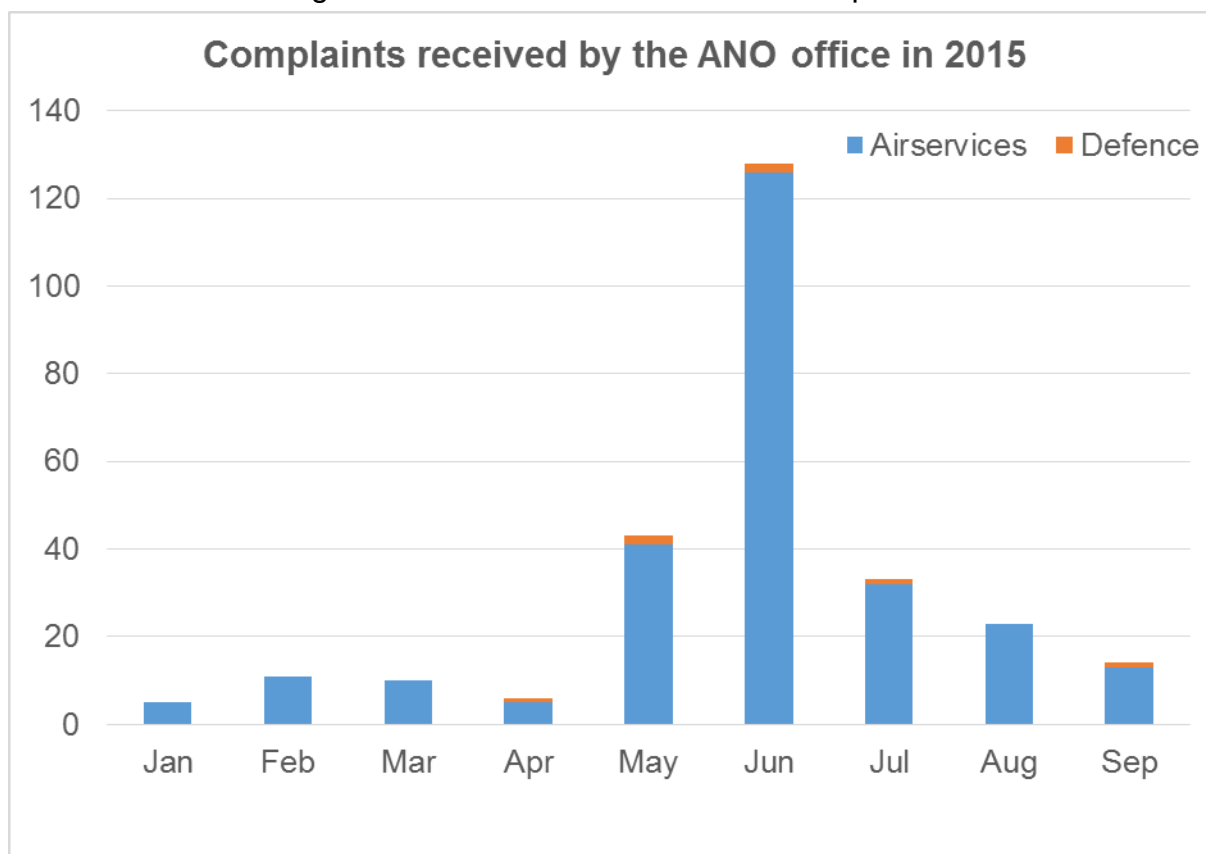
- 1.1 This report includes complaint statistics and a summary of ANO activities during the July to September 2015 quarter. It is structured around the three key functions of the ANO, these being review and monitoring of Airservices Australia's and the Department of Defence's:
- a. complaint handling
 - b. consultation and
 - c. provision of information about aircraft noise.

2 Overview

- 2.1 The finalisation and implementation of noise improvement initiatives in Perth this quarter continued to generate a relatively high number of complaints to the ANO office. Airservices' decision in early August not to proceed with a proposed night respite trial and the subsequent cancellation of scheduled community consultation sessions in Canning Vale led to many contacts during August. Two changes that are intended to deliver noise improvements were implemented in May and September.
- 2.2 Last quarter we applauded Airservices for its efforts in seeking better noise outcomes for Perth and noted the importance of rigour in its consideration processes for such changes. Airservices' made its decision not to proceed with the night respite trial because it would not deliver a better overall noise outcome. The cancellation was always going to be unpopular with those communities that stood to gain from the shifting of the night-time departure path. In our view, based on the information available, the decision is correct, although we consider there are lessons to be learned. In response to the complaints we have received, we have commenced a review of the three noise initiatives pursued by Airservices this year. We aim to finalise this review and provide a report to the Board of Airservices later this year.
- 2.3 As previously advised, the ANO has been unable to form a view as yet on whether the two changes that Airservices has implemented in Perth do actually provide a better noise outcome. Unfortunately, in our view, the material provided by Airservices to date does not make a clear case. Airservices intends to conduct post-implementation reviews in 12 months' time. We will continue to seek further information to address our ongoing questions and concerns about these changes and will monitor Airservices' post-implementation analysis.
- 2.4 In August, the ANO presented its final report to Defence on its compliance with the noise related Conditions of Approval for Australian Super Hornet flying operations at RAAF Base Amberley, QLD. Defence has welcomed the report and is developing an implementation plan to address the 12 recommendations and the two suggestions for improvement made.

3 Complaint handling

3.1 In the quarter the ANO received 71 new individual complaints, down from our peak last quarter which reflects the decision by Airservices not to proceed with the night respite trial in Perth. Of these 71 complaints, just two were about Defence aircraft noise management. The following graph depicts complaints received per month this year, illustrating the dramatic spike last quarter and the trend of returning to the more usual number over this quarter.



3.2 At the end of the quarter 30 complaints were open (including two about Defence). 57 complaints were closed in the period with 25 reviewed in detail by the ANO.

3.3 More detailed complaint statistics to the end of September 2015 are included at **Attachment 1**.

Seeking noise improvement opportunities

3.4 A core focus of our investigations into complaints is to look for the potential to improve noise outcomes. During this quarter, there were no noise improvement opportunities identified through ANO investigations, although two led to improvements in complaint handling (see below). Airservices' willingness to consider noise improvement opportunities will necessarily and appropriately reduce the opportunities for the ANO to identify such improvements.

3.5 Table 1 (below) outlines those matters that the ANO is monitoring in response to complaints or initiatives closed since our last report. These are matters that are long-term or involve ongoing work by Airservices. The ANO complaints have been closed on the basis that Airservices is managing the matter but we are monitoring Airservices' handling of the issues until they are completed.

Table 1: Noise improvement opportunities – ANO monitoring Airservices' management

Complaint received by ANO	Description of initiative	Current status
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?	<p>Airservices examined the option of a noise sharing approach, where a single departure track is replaced with multiple tracks to enhance noise sharing.</p> <p>Airservices identified that such an arrangement has not been trialled previously in Australia; however Airservices intends to consider this approach in the future.</p> <p>Trials of this approach are not likely to be held in Brisbane initially due to the operational constraints of the airport. Airservices had previously advised that it would use the proposed night time respite path in Perth to test the validity of additional tracks. As the trial is now not proceeding, we are awaiting advice on the status of this initiative.</p>
May 2014	Gold Coast: flights over NSW residences during daylight saving hours	<p>The ANO 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. Airservices has added this opportunity to their Strategic Noise Improvement Plan. Airservices identified that the change “adds some complexity but is feasible”. Although initially committing to investigating the matter in the first half of 2015, Airservices has now advised that a timeframe for further consideration will be determined after a decision is made about implementing the Gold Coast ILS. The ANO is disappointed that Airservices has again delayed consideration of this issue given it was first raised some 16 months ago.</p>
Aug 2014	Camden: removing practice engine failures from residential areas	<p>The ANO asked Airservices to look into whether procedures for 'practice engine failures', similar to those employed at Jandakot Airport, could be applied at Camden to avoid doing this practice over residential areas. Airservices consulted with relevant stakeholders and the airport has now updated their 'fly friendly' arrangements accordingly. The new arrangements were endorsed at the July 2015 Community Aviation Consultation Group meeting. The updated fly friendly procedures were published on the website on 29 September. This item is now closed.</p>

Seeking improvements in aircraft noise complaint handling

3.6 ANO consideration of two complaints led to changes in the way Airservices present the electronic error message to complainants when their online form is unavailable. The message now provides information about alternative complaint lodgement methods that are available until such time as the online complaint service can be restored.

4 Consultation

4.1 The ANO office attended a number of airport consultative meetings and other industry forums during the quarter, in line with our role of monitoring Airservices' and Defence's consultation and information provision. These included:

Airservices: Darwin Community Aviation Consultation Group and Planning Coordination Forum, Gold Coast Community Aviation Consultation Group, Perth Airport Community Forum, Annual CACG Chairs forum (Department of Infrastructure and Regional Development)

Defence: Darwin Community Aviation Consultation Group and Planning Coordination Forum

4.2 Since the start of the calendar year, the ANO has received several complaints about Airservices' consultation for the noise improvement initiatives it is considering in Perth and at the Gold Coast. We are monitoring Airservices' consultation about these initiatives and reviewing their management of community feedback, with a view to providing constructive input as appropriate. In summary:

- Gold Coast trial flight path change for runway 14 departures: The trial commenced in January 2015 and continues, despite no resolution as yet to address the unexpected concentration of flight tracks over Farrant's Hill. We understood that Airservices would be analysing the noise monitoring results and acting quickly to determine the best approach to address the unintended impacts at Farrant's Hill. Unfortunately this is still not finalised. The ANO is concerned that Airservices has raised expectations with some Farrant's Hill residents and we encourage Airservices to progress this work as soon as practicable.
- Perth Noise Initiatives 2015: At the Perth Airport Community Forum on 5 March, Airservices announced a suite of three noise improvement initiatives that it proposed to implement during 2015, subject to community consultation and environmental assessment processes being completed. On 7 August, Airservices announced its decision not to proceed with the most significant of the initiatives, the night respite trial, a decision that the ANO supports.

When Airservices announced its decision to cancel the night respite trial in Perth, the ANO released a statement, which is available on our website: http://www.ano.gov.au/news/docs/2015_08_07_ANO_Statement_PerthNoiseInitiatives_FINAL.pdf.

We also contacted all Canning Vale residents (an area that stood to be disadvantaged by the trial) who had raised their concerns with our office to advise them that Airservices had cancelled the community consultation sessions planned for the following week.

Earlier, on 28 May 2015, Airservices had introduced the first of the three changes, a change to its Noise Abatement Procedures, that altered the preferred runway arrangements at Perth. Although the ANO office has since been provided with a copy of the environmental assessment document, we continue to have concerns about the noise impacts and benefits that result from this change. We are monitoring the effects of the change and have sought further information from Airservices.

On 17 September 2015, Airservices implemented a smart tracking path into Perth from the south-east. The ANO has not been convinced by the material provided to date by Airservices that this change provides a better noise outcome. We will be monitoring the effects and seeking additional information from Airservices to address our concerns.

Airservices has committed to review the two changes introduced following 12 months of operation. This allows for any seasonal effects to have played out. We will be monitoring Airservices' analysis of these changes. In addition, we have separately initiated a review in response to complaints to the ANO office that will also look at Airservices' consultation, complaint handling and information provision associated with all three Perth noise improvement initiatives of this year. We anticipate reporting to the Board of Airservices later this year.

5 Information Provision

- 5.1 The ANO continues to review and monitor Airservices' information provision, particularly in relation to changes in Perth and the trial in the Gold Coast.
- 5.2 Defence has welcomed our Review of the Super Hornets at RAAF Base Amberley, and is developing an implementation plan to address the findings. **Attachment 2** summarises progress against the 12 recommendations of the report.

6 Conclusions

- 6.1 Again our focus this quarter has been largely on Airservices' initiatives aimed at improving noise outcomes. We strongly endorse Airservices' courage in deciding not to introduce a trial departure path in Perth when the detailed analysis did not support a case for change, despite public pressure. We do, however, have some concerns about the changes that have been made and we will be following up with Airservices about these.
- 6.2 We have also initiated a review of the Perth noise improvement initiatives in response to the complaints received by this office and with a view to identifying opportunities to improve future noise-driven change initiatives by Airservices. Our report will be available later this year.
- 6.3 For Defence, we were pleased to submit the final report on our Super Hornet Review and note the timely manner in which they intend to respond to the recommendations.



Ron Brent
Aircraft Noise Ombudsman
6 October 2015

Attachment 1 Complaint Statistics

The following table summarises the complaint statistics both for the quarter and also since the establishment of the ANO.

AIRSERVICES	Jul 2015	Aug 2015	Sep 2015	Total for quarter	Total from 1 Sep 10 to 30 Sep 15
Complaints received:	32	23	14	69	712
Complaints closed:	30	15	9	54	684
Total complaints closed - not reviewed:					318
Complainant did not provide further information					19
Outside charter scope					20
Referred to Airservices to respond directly					279
Total complaints closed - reviewed:					366
No change possible - explanation provided					317
Change adopted by Airservices Australia					13
Change adopted by Airport operator					25
Change adopted by Aircraft operator					11

DEFENCE	Jul 2015	Aug 2015	Sep 2015	Total for quarter	Total from 19 Jan 15 to 30 Jun 15
Complaints received:	1	0	1	2	7
Complaints closed:	2	1	0	3	5
Total complaints closed - not reviewed:					2
Complainant did not provide further information					0
Outside charter scope					0
Referred to Defence to respond directly					2
Total complaints closed - reviewed:					3
No change possible - explanation provided					3
Change adopted by Defence					0

Attachment 2 Outstanding ANO recommendations

The following table sets out the outstanding recommendations made by the ANO and the ANO's assessment of action against each.

Super Hornet Review (August 2015)

Ongoing recommendations	ANO assessment of agency response
Recommendation 1 – Defence should adopt appropriate record management practices to ensure identified gaps in record-keeping are addressed.	Defence has advised that it is developing an implementation plan
Recommendation 2 – Defence should work with the NFPMS supplier to improve the accuracy and reliability of the data captured by the NFPMS and presented in reports.	Defence has advised that it is developing an implementation plan
Recommendation 3 – Defence should ensure that requirements in Standing Instructions and similar documents are aligned with the Super Hornet Conditions of Approval and associated plans and strategies.	Defence has advised that it is developing an implementation plan
Recommendation 4 – Defence should as soon as possible <ol style="list-style-type: none"> conduct a review of the state of implementation against the recommendations of the Vipac report completed in 2011. report the findings of this review to the Commonwealth Environment Department in accordance with the Conditions of Approval. 	Defence has advised that it is developing an implementation plan
Recommendation 5 – Defence should: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> update the Noise Management Plan and delete the requirement for a copy to be provided to the Ipswich Library, or provide a copy to the library update the Noise Management Plan to correct the telephone number for obtaining a copy of the Plan. 	Defence has advised that it is developing an implementation plan
Recommendation 6 – Defence should review the reporting requirements in the Noise Management Plan and establish systems to ensure adherence to the requirements.	Defence has advised that it is developing an implementation plan
Recommendation 7 – Defence should routinely review and update (as required) the Noise Management Plan in line with the documented requirements. Defence should document the review process and outcomes.	Defence has advised that it is developing an implementation plan
Recommendation 8 – Defence should ensure that future quarterly reports include information to support the requirements of the current version of Noise Monitoring and Complaints Handling Strategy.	Defence has advised that it is developing an implementation plan
Recommendation 9 – Defence should publish reports and meeting minutes in a reasonable timeframe.	Defence has advised that it is developing an implementation plan

Ongoing recommendations	ANO assessment of agency response
<p>Recommendation 10 – Defence should expedite establishment of an online complaint lodgement capability.</p>	<p>Defence has advised that it is developing an implementation plan</p>
<p>Recommendation 11 – Defence should routinely review and update (as required) the Australian Super Hornet Noise Monitoring and Complaints Handling Strategy in line with the documented requirements. Defence should document the review process and outcomes.</p>	<p>Defence has advised that it is developing an implementation plan</p>
<p>Recommendation 12 – Defence should routinely review and update (as required) the Australian Super Hornet Noise Mitigation and Complaint Resolution Strategy in line with the documented requirements. Defence should document the review process and outcomes.</p>	<p>Defence has advised that it is developing an implementation plan</p>