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Australian Aircraft Noise Ombudsman, Ron Brent, has congratulated Airservices Australia on its efforts to find aircraft noise improvements in Perth even though their most recent initiative won't go ahead.

Airservices has announced that it will not proceed with a trial to change the way night-time departures to the south of Perth Airport are managed. The organisation had hoped that an alternative departure route at night would reduce the noise over parts of Perth while not making the situation significantly worse for any other group.

Since announcing the proposal, Airservices has been engaging with the affected communities and undertaken data analysis and modelling. Unfortunately the noise contours are much larger than initially expected, and therefore the number of people potentially affected is greater than when the proposal was first conceived. Communities that would have been negatively impacted by the change are already heavily affected by aircraft noise and the move would not result in a net benefit.

"Airservices' attempts to deliver a major improvement in managing the noise from night-time aircraft departures over Perth have not been successful. Nevertheless I congratulate Airservices on having put every effort into what had earlier looked like a promising opportunity" the Aircraft Noise Ombudsman said.

Since 2010, Airservices has changed its approach to managing aircraft noise in response to earlier reports from the Aircraft Noise Ombudsman. These changes have delivered improved noise outcomes around Australia, including Perth. In total Airservices has now investigated some 31 possible improvements for Perth, which has led to 10 improvements that have been, or are being, implemented.

The Aircraft Noise Ombudsman's office has been monitoring the consultation and assessment processes and congratulated Airservices on listening to community feedback and carefully considering the environmental impact of the proposed changes.

"We are proud of the changes in the way aircraft noise complaints, information and consultation are handled by Airservices as a result of our recommendations" the Aircraft Noise Ombudsman said "even though on this occasion the result was that no better option could be found for the night time departures from Perth Airport."

The Aircraft Noise Ombudsman nevertheless noted that there are lessons to be learnt from the way this change was considered and the way that the consultation and environmental assessment were being managed. The Aircraft Noise Ombudsman's office will assist Airservices to implement improvements in how such proposals are developed, considered and pursued in the future.

For further information please contact:

Ron Brent
Aircraft Noise Ombudsman
ano@ano.gov.au or 1800 266 040