



Quarterly Report
April – June 2021

Version Control

Version	Date	Change description
1.1	26/07/2021	Number of carry-over cases at 1 April 2021 updated from 262 to 264.

Table of Contents

Table of Contents	2
1 Overview	3
2 Complaint handling	4
Multi Complainant Reviews – Brisbane	6
Hobart investigation	6
East Melbourne investigation	7
ANOCs	7
Liaison with Noise Complaints Information Service (NCIS)	7
3 Community Engagement and Noise Information Provision	8
Sunshine Coast	8
ANO Monitoring Activities	8
Attachment 1 Complaint Statistics	9
Attachment 2 Outstanding ANO recommendations	10

1 Overview

- 1.1 The Aircraft Noise Ombudsman (ANO) carried forward 264 complaints from the previous quarter. During this quarter, the ANO received 99 new complaints, closed 81 complaints, and therefore, carries forward 282 complaints to July 2021.
- 1.2 The ANO commenced a multiple complaints review into the flight paths at Brisbane Airport after an influx of complaints from the community, in December 2020. This investigation has been ongoing through the quarter.
- 1.3 Both the East Melbourne and Hobart investigations were completed during the quarter. The outcome of the Hobart review was provided to the complainants on 10 May 2021. The East Melbourne report published on the ANO website, on 19 July 2021, and also provided to the complainants.
- 1.4 The ANO continued its interaction with Airservices Australia (Airservices) in the monitoring of Airservices' community engagement processes, in particular in relation to the Post Implementation Review (PIR) process for the Sunshine Coast flight paths. A regular monthly meeting has been initiated between the ANO senior advisors and Airservices senior community engagement staff to facilitate more productive and timely communication between the ANO and Airservices including monitoring of community engagement processes.
- 1.5 The ANO continued its regular liaison with Defence over the quarter. There were 5 new Defence complaints of which one complaint remains open as at 1 July 2021. As all recommendations relating to the ANO's *Compliance Audit of Australian Super Hornet Flying Operations at RAAF Base Amberley* were closed in the July-September 2020 reporting period, there are currently no outstanding Defence recommendations.
- 1.6 The ANO office has completed recruitment during this quarter, with Bradley Currie (Senior Advisor) and Janet Goodhew (Investigative and Administrative Officer) joining the office. The office has now returned to a full complement of staff.
- 1.7 A major upgrade of the ANO complaint management system was completed on 30 June 2021. The upgrade will not only improve efficiency for the ANO office but will also see enhanced reporting for the next quarter.

2 Complaint handling

2.1 During the quarter, the ANO received 99 complaints - 91 relating to Airservices and 5 relating to Defence. A further 3 complaints had no agency identified due to the complaints either being related to an airport operator, or insufficient information provided.

2.2 Figure 1 and Figure 2 below show that the number of complaints received has reduced since the peak last quarter.

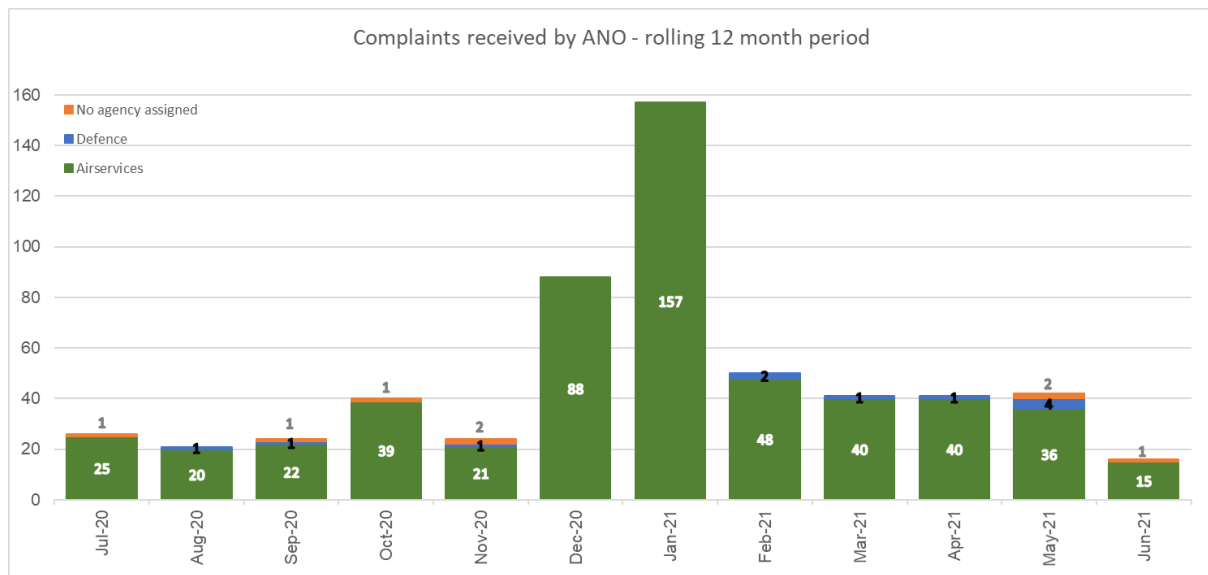


Figure 1 – Complaints received by month by the ANO, July 2020 – June 2021

Note: One additional complaint has been added to all December 2020 statistics, due to an administrative error.

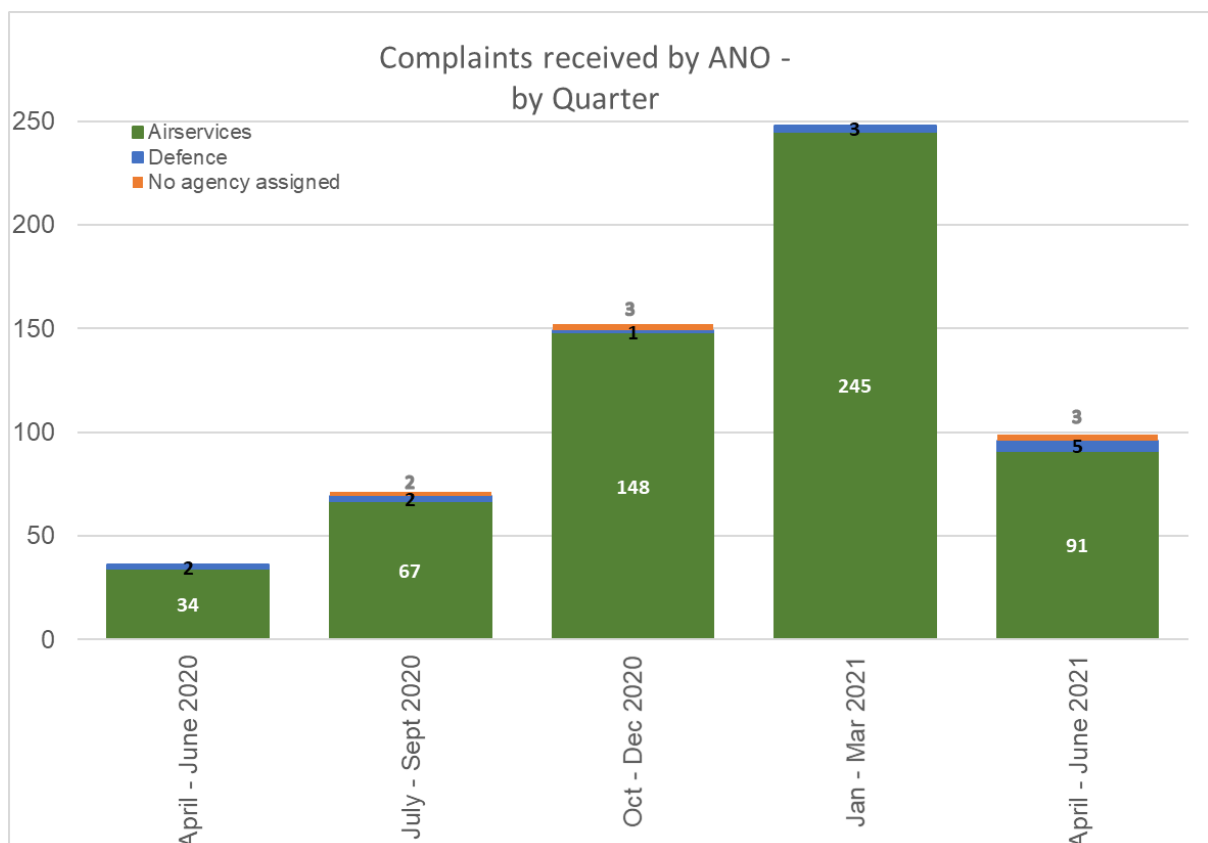


Figure 2 – Complaints received by quarter, April 2020 – June 2021

2.3 The majority of complaints continue to be attributed largely to the opening of two new runways in Queensland, with 52 complaints relating to Brisbane Airport and 8 relating to the Sunshine Coast Airport in the period April – June 2021.

2.4 Complaints received by Airport for the quarter are shown in Figure 3 below:

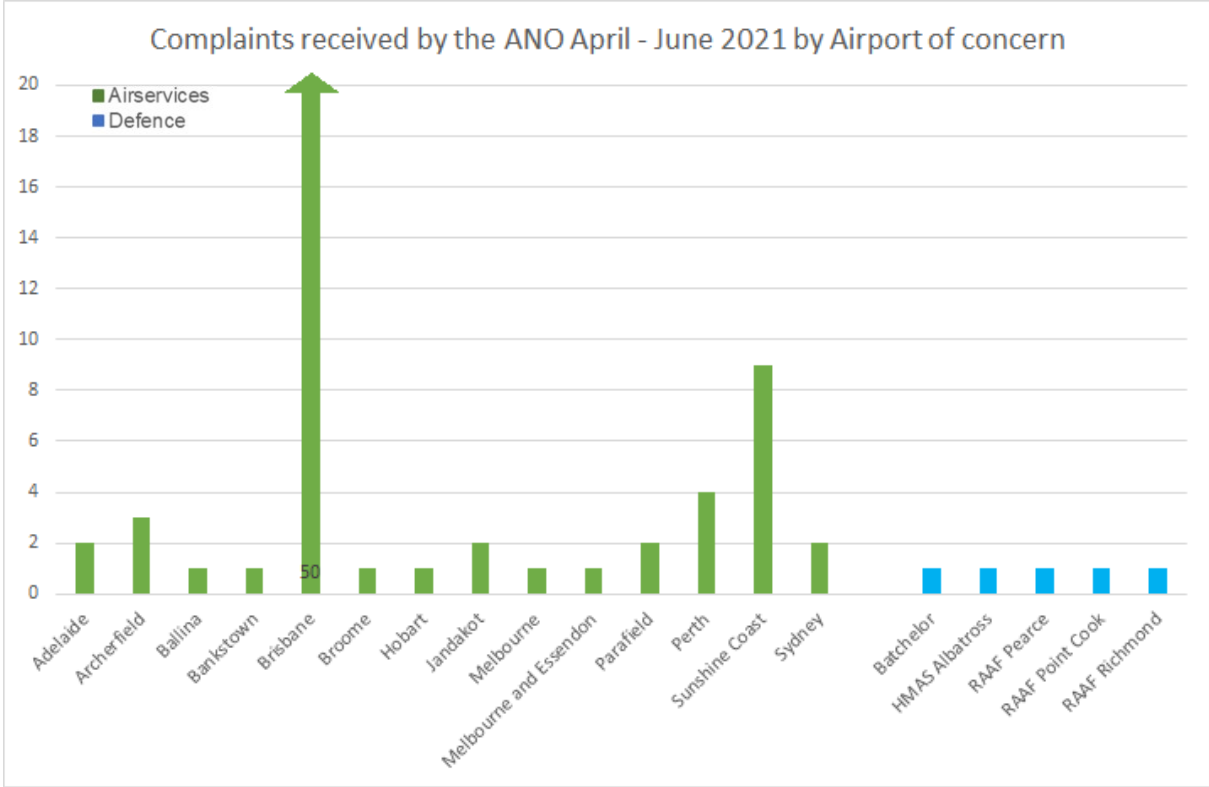


Figure 3 - Complaints received by the ANO April – June 2021 by Airport of concern

2.5 In addition to the airport specific complaints above, a further 14 complaints related to unidentified airports. This included complaints related to helicopter operations, drone operations, community engagement processes and where the complainant either did not identify their location or it was unclear which airport, aircraft operations related to.

2.6 The ANO closed 81 cases for the quarter, 74 relating to Airservices, 4 relating to Defence and 3 without an agency identified. Of the 74 cases relating to Airservices, 2 were outside the ANO’s scope; 22 resulted in no change possible; 48 were closed as the complainants had either not yet complained to, or finalised their complaint with Airservices and 2 resulted in a change being adopted by Airservices.

2.7 The two cases that resulted in a change being adopted by Airservices were closed as a result of Airservices:

- accepting feedback from the ANO’s office as part of reviewing their phone line availability,
- accepting feedback from the ANO’s office and undertaking to engage with the specific complainant regarding a proposed noise improvement.

2.8 In relation to the four Defence cases closed this quarter, the complainants had either not yet complained to, or finalised their complaint with Defence.

2.9 As at 1 July 2021, 280 complaints remain open. These include complaints that have formed part of the ANO's multi complaint review of the Brisbane flight paths, which are under investigation and long-standing complaints about East Melbourne flight paths, which were closed in July 2021.

2.10 Full complaint data for the quarter are presented at **Attachment 1**.

Multi Complainant Reviews – Brisbane

2.11 In December 2020, the ANO commenced a multiple complaints review as provided for in clause 47 of the ANO Charter. This review was instigated due to the large number of complaints the ANO's office received about Airservices since the opening of the new runway and the new flight paths at Brisbane Airport. The scope of this review will include the following in so far as they relate to aircraft noise:

- Airservices' environmental assessment of the impact of the flight paths associated with the new runway at Brisbane Airport
- Airservices' engagement with the community as part of the flight design process.

2.12 A draft report has been provided to Airservices for a response under clause 59 of the ANO Charter. The ANO anticipates that the review will be finalised during the next quarter.

Hobart investigation

2.13 The ANO completed its investigation into complaints about Airservices' implementation of new flight paths at Hobart Airport during 2018/19. This investigation was finalised during this quarter and the outcome provided to the complainants. No recommendations were made to Airservices, as a result of the investigation.

East Melbourne investigation

- 2.14 The ANO completed its assessment of these complaints in October 2020 and referred it to Airservices to attempt resolution. The matter could not be resolved and the ANO finalised its report to the Airservices Board.
- 2.15 Airservices Board accepted all 3 recommendations of the ANO. A summary of the recommendations are provided in **Attachment 2**. Reporting against these recommendations will be addressed in the next quarterly report.

ANOCs

- 2.16 During the past quarter, the ANO Complaints System (ANOCs) had a major software upgrade. This upgrade includes transitioning from Version 6 to Version 11 of the software, with general improvements in functionality reflecting technological developments over recent years. Further to this, the upgrade included tailored modifications to enable:
- registering of complaints based on whether a complaint was part of a multi complaint review or an individual complaint,
 - tracking and reporting against agreed key performance indicators (KPIs)
 - improved workflows to increase the efficiency of the ANO office, particularly in times of high demand.
- 2.17 The ANOCs upgrade included rigorous User Acceptance Testing (UAT) with additional modifications identified as essential to achieve the required functionality improvements during this process. These additional modifications were implemented prior to the completion of the upgrade on 30 June 2021.
- 2.18 The completion of the ANOCs upgrade has enabled the ANO office to commence KPI tracking as of 30 June 2021. Reporting against the ANO KPIs, approved by the Airservices' Board in May 2021, will commence from the next quarterly report.

Liaison with Noise Complaints Information Service (NCIS)

- 2.19 In June 2021, the ANO office and Airservices' NCIS team had scheduled a day-long workshop. Due to the current COVID outbreak, this workshop was changed to an online meeting. This meeting identified opportunities for greater collaboration between the ANO office and the NCIS team, including aligning both agencies procedure's for more effective, smoother information transfer. The NCIS' also requested additional informal feedback from the ANO on opportunities to further improve their communication with complainants. This feedback is in addition to formal outcomes which the ANO office issues, as identified from investigating complaints.

3 Community Engagement and Noise Information Provision

Sunshine Coast

- 3.1 The ANO made 2 recommendations in the report of its *Investigation into complaints about the introduction of new flight paths in Sunshine Coast* (released on 30 June 2020). The one recommendation that remains outstanding relates to Airservices' Post-Implementation Review (PIR) process, included in **Attachment 2**
- 3.2 Airservices has developed a much more comprehensive PIR process than previously applied including extensive opportunities for community engagement. The ANO has no concern about the time taken and indeed believes it necessary in order to establish good faith with the affected community. A summary of the recommendation is at **Attachment 2**.

ANO Monitoring Activities

- 3.3 The ANO Charter requires the ANO to monitor and report on Airservices' and Defence's community engagement processes and the presentation and distribution of aircraft noise related information.
- 3.4 The ANO continued to work with Airservices this quarter liaising with Airservices staff on engagement projects as they are delivered. The ANO has been involved in approximately 2 substantial interactions with Airservices, in relation to Airservices' Sunshine Coast PIR process and Terms of Reference. In addition, the ANO and Airservices communicated frequently during the quarter to receive point-in-time updates on specific engagement activities and to identify opportunities for complaint resolution by Airservices.
- 3.5 A regular monthly meeting has been initiated between the ANO senior advisors and Airservices senior community engagement staff to ensure timely communication between the ANO and Airservices, including regular updates on ongoing community engagement processes and actions undertaken by Airservices, based on the ANO's feedback. Furthermore this meeting enables both agencies to share insights on emerging issues or concerns. Of the 81 cases closed during this quarter, 59% of those contacts were referrals back to Airservices or Defence. This high referral rate makes an understanding of emerging issues critical to ensure that the ANO office can quickly identify a complainants concern and redirect complainants to the correct team within Airservices.

Kieran Pehm
Aircraft Noise Ombudsman

22 July 2021

Attachment 1 Complaint Statistics

The following tables summarise the complaint statistics for the quarter.

AIRSERVICES	Apr 2021	May 2021	June 2021	Total for quarter
Complaints received:	40	36	15	91
Complaints closed:	27	42	5	74

Total complaints closed - not reviewed:	24	21	5	50
Complainant did not provide further information	-	-	-	-
Outside charter scope	1	1	-	2
Referred to Airservices to respond directly	23	20	5	48

Total complaints closed - reviewed:	3	21	-	24
No change possible - explanation provided	1	21	-	22
Change adopted by Airservices Australia	2	-	-	2

DEFENCE	Apr 2021	May 2021	June 2021	Total for quarter
Complaints received:	1	4	-	5
Complaints closed:	1	2	1	4

Total complaints closed - not reviewed:	1	2	1	4
Complainant did not provide further information	-	-	-	-
Outside charter scope	-	-	-	-
Referred to Defence to respond directly	1	2	1	4

Total complaints closed - reviewed:	-	-	-	-
No change possible - explanation provided	-	-	-	-
Change adopted by Defence	-	-	-	-

	Airservices	Defence	No agency assigned*	Total
Complaints carried forward on 1 April 2021 (beginning of quarter)	264	-	-	264
Complaints received	91	5	3	99
Complaints closed	74	4	3	81
Complaints open at 1 July 2021 (first day of next quarter)	281	1	-	282

Attachment 2 Outstanding ANO recommendations

The following tables set out the status of outstanding recommendations made by the ANO and the ANO's assessment of action against each. Recommendations that were previously reported as complete have been removed.

Airservices – Investigation into complaints about the introduction of new flight paths in Sunshine Coast (April 2020)

Ongoing recommendations	ANO assessment of agency response
<p>Recommendation 2 – Airservices should, as soon as practicable, design an effective post-implementation review (PIR) process for the Sunshine Coast flight path designs, that does not perpetuate design constraints requiring alignment with EIS concepts, and which encompasses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) consideration of identified community-suggested alternatives b) a community engagement process that provides for genuine opportunities for community contributions to influence decisions c) application of the latest version of Airservices' National Operating Standard (NOS) Environmental Management of Changes to Aircraft Operations (AA-NOS-ENV-2.100). 	<p>Ongoing: After considerable community engagement, Airservices finalised the terms of reference for the PIR on 1 February 2021.</p> <p>Airservices has updated and finalised the Community Engagement Plan (CEP) for the PIR process, including a realigned PIR timeline.</p> <p>Airservices has advised that it has completed the short-term noise monitoring site feasibility study and engagement with the community on appropriate locations. Community suggested alternative submissions to the flight paths will be open from 23 August until 19 November 2021</p>

Airservices – Investigation into complaints about flight paths over East Melbourne (July 2021)

Ongoing recommendations	ANO assessment of agency response
<p>Recommendation 1 – I recommend Airservices continue its efforts to engage with the complainants to resolve their complaints including careful consideration of the alternate flight path suggested by them.</p>	<p><i>Reporting of the status of these recommendations will be addressed in the next quarterly report.</i></p>
<p>Recommendation 2 – Airservices provide a copy of this report to Essendon Airport and invite it to review the community membership of its Community Aviation Consultation Group and consider the adequacy of the representation of communities affected by aircraft noise.</p>	
<p>Recommendation 3 – As part of its regular attendance at other airports' CACG meetings, or equivalents, Airservices should present the findings of this report and invite the CACGs to review the adequacy of their representation of their community membership given that the aircraft noise from "smart tracking" flight paths and sightseeing operations affects areas at considerable distances from airports.</p>	