



Quarterly Report  
July – September 2020

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# 1 Overview

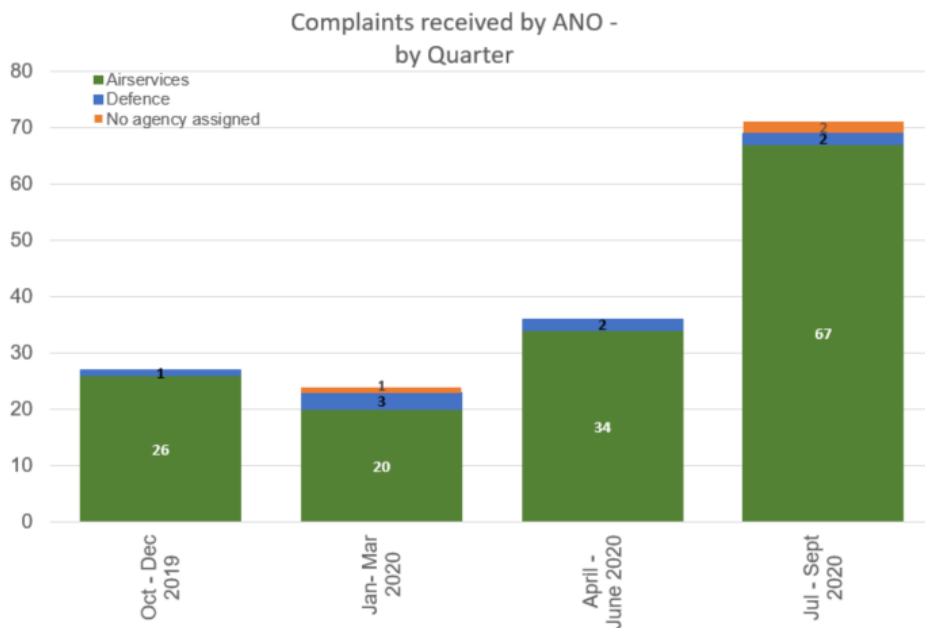
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- 1.1 The ANO carried forward 35 complaints from the previous quarter. During this quarter, the ANO received 71 new complaints and closed 70 complaints and therefore, carries forward 36 complaints to the next quarter.
- 1.2 Airservices has responded to the ANO's recommendations arising out of two reports released last quarter – *Investigation into complaints about the introduction of new flight paths in Sunshine Coast* report and *Review of Airservices Australia's systems for community engagement - Final Report*, and Defence has responded to recommendations from the ANO's *Compliance Audit of Australian Super Hornet Flying Operations at RAAF Base Amberley*. This report evaluates the implementation of the recommendations.
- 1.3 There has been intensive and constructive interaction with Airservices in the development and documentation of its community engagement framework and third party framework.
- 1.4 This quarter the ANO's office welcomed new team member, Lara Baker, in the role of Senior Advisor.
- 1.5 The ANO office has had in place arrangements for all staff to continue to work from home during the COVID-19 pandemic in line with Government guidance. As the office is based in Canberra, it continues to review the best options for ANO staff.

## 2 Complaint handling

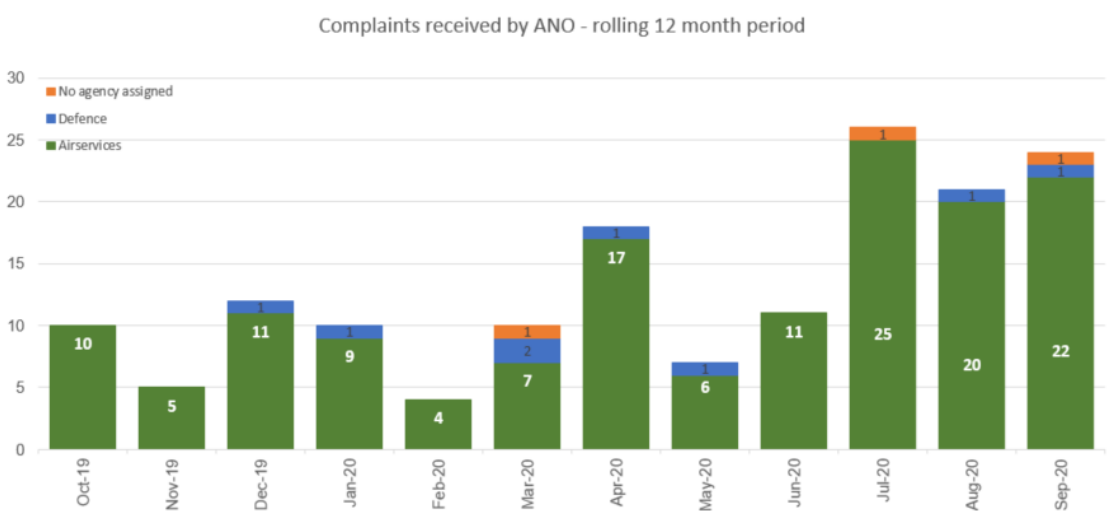
2.1 During the quarter, the ANO received 71 complaints comprising 67 relating to Airservices, 2 relating to Defence and 2 where the relevant agency responsible was not identified.

2.2 **Figure 1** below shows cases received by quarter over the last 12 months, which indicates a sharp increase in complaints received in the current quarter.



**Figure 1: Complaints received by ANO – by Quarter**

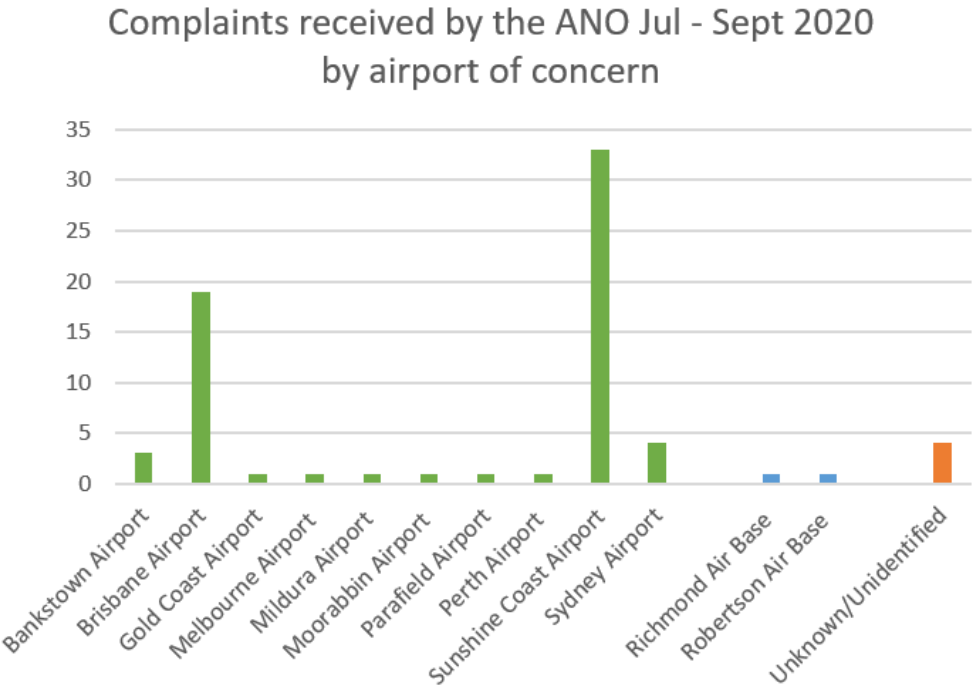
2.3 **Figure 2** below shows the monthly number of cases received this quarter have been consistently high.



**Figure 2: Complaints received by ANO – rolling 12-month period – by month**

2.4 The rise in complaints about Airservices every month this quarter can be attributed to the opening of two new runways in Queensland. Of the 67 complaints received regarding Airservices, 33 relate to Sunshine Coast Airport, which opened its new runway on 14 June 2020 and 19 relate to Brisbane Airport, specifically the flight paths associated with the opening of the new Brisbane Airport parallel runway on 12 July 2020.

2.5 The complaints received by Airport for the quarter are shown in **Figure 3** below:



**Figure 3: Complaints received by the ANO – July – September 2020 by Airport of concern**

2.6 The ANO closed 70 cases for the quarter, 67 relating to Airservices, 2 relating to Defence and 1 unidentified. Of the 67 cases relating to Airservices, 4 were outside the ANO’s scope; 4 resulted in no change possible; 53 were closed as the complainants had either not yet complained to, or finalised their complaint with, Airservices and 6 resulted in a change being adopted by Airservices. Of the 6 cases that resulted in a change being adopted by Airservices, 3 related to the recommendations accepted in relation the ANO’s Sunshine Coast Report and 3 were closed as a result of Airservices undertaking to provide further information to complainants or improve its publicly available information on its website.

2.7 As at 1 October 2020, 36 complaints remain open. These include long standing complaints about Hobart flight paths which are under investigation.

2.8 Full complaint data for the quarter is presented at **Attachment 1**.

## Sunshine Coast

- 2.9 The ANO made two recommendations in the report of its *Investigation into complaints about the introduction of new flight paths in Sunshine Coast*. During the quarter, the ANO has engaged intensively with Airservices regarding their implementation.
- 2.10 One of the ANO's recommendations was that Airservices use its post-implementation review (PIR) process to re-engage with communities and consider community-suggested alternatives to the implemented flight paths. During this quarter Airservices developed the terms of reference for the PIR process and has engaged with community members, community groups, local councils and other interested parties. As the terms of reference for the PIR are currently under community consultation, this recommendation remains open.
- 2.11 The other ANO recommendation related to Airservices developing a framework for third party proposed airspace changes. Airservices has now provided sufficient information demonstrating it has met this recommendation and it is considered closed.
- 2.12 A summary of the ANO's assessment of the recommendations is at **Attachment 2**.

## 3 Community Engagement and Noise Information Provision

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### Review of Airservices' community engagement systems

- 3.1 This quarter the ANO continued to work with Airservices on the 6 recommendations arising out of its *Review of Airservices Australia's systems for community engagement – Final report* that was published on 30 June 2020.
- 3.2 Airservices has now provided sufficient information demonstrating it has met all of the ANO's recommendations and they are now considered closed.
- 3.3 A summary of the ANO's assessment of the recommendations is at **Attachment 2**.

### Compliance Audit of Defence's Super Hornet Operations at Amberley

- 3.4 The ANO continued to monitor Defence's response to the 9 recommendations arising out of its audit of Defence's compliance with the Conditions of Approval for its Australian Super Hornet Flying Operations at RAAF Base Amberley that was finalised in late October 2019.
- 3.5 Defence submitted further evidence demonstrating that it had addressed all the outstanding recommendations made by the ANO. The ANO worked constructively with Defence to ensure all evidence supporting the meeting of recommendations was provided. The ANO has now closed all 9 recommendations.
- 3.6 A summary of the ANO's assessment of the recommendations is at **Attachment 2**.

## ANO monitoring activities

- 3.7 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.
- 3.8 The ANO has worked extensively with Airservices this quarter by advising on policies and procedures as they are developed and liaising with Airservices staff on particular engagement projects as they are delivered. In particular, the ANO has been involved in approximately 50 substantial interactions with Airservices this quarter on Airservices' policies and procedures including:
- Airservices' draft public Community Engagement Framework (CEF) documents, including the *Community Engagement Overview, Commitment to Community Engagement* and the *Community Engagement Approach*
  - Airservices' draft internal CEF document - *Community Engagement - Aircraft Operations Procedure ENV-PROC-0011, Version 2*
  - Airservices' documents relating to ANO recommendations arising out of its two recent reports including:
    - Sunshine Coast PIR – terms of reference
    - Airservices' *Third Party Proposed Flight Path and Airspace Change – Environmental assessment and Community engagement procedure.*
- 3.9 The experience of working with Airservices in this way has contributed to the development of agreed terms of reference to govern this activity, which will be separately submitted to the Board.

Kieran Pehm  
Aircraft Noise Ombudsman

3 November 2020

## Attachment 1 Complaint Statistics

The following tables summarise the complaint statistics for the quarter.

<b>AIRSERVICES</b>	<b>July 2020</b>	<b>Aug 2020</b>	<b>Sept 2020</b>	<b>Total for quarter</b>
Complaints received:	25	20	22	<b>67</b>
Complaints closed:	28	19	20	<b>67</b>

Total complaints closed - not reviewed:	24	18	15	<b>57</b>
Complainant did not provide further information	0	0	0	<b>0</b>
Outside charter scope	2	1	1	<b>4</b>
Referred to Airservices to respond directly	22	17	14	<b>53</b>

Total complaints closed - reviewed:	4	1	5	<b>10</b>
No change possible - explanation provided	1	0	3	<b>4</b>
Change adopted by Airservices Australia	3	1	2	<b>6</b>
Change adopted by Airport operator	0	0	0	<b>0</b>

<b>DEFENCE</b>	<b>July 2020</b>	<b>Aug 2020</b>	<b>Sept 2020</b>	<b>Total for quarter</b>
Complaints received:	0	1	1	<b>2</b>
Complaints closed:	0	1	1	<b>2</b>

Total complaints closed - not reviewed:	0	0	0	<b>0</b>
Complainant did not provide further information	0	0	0	<b>0</b>
Outside charter scope	0	0	0	<b>0</b>
Referred to Defence to respond directly	0	0	0	<b>0</b>

Total complaints closed - reviewed:	0	0	0	<b>0</b>
No change possible - explanation provided	0	1	1	<b>2</b>
Change adopted by Defence	0	0	0	<b>0</b>

	<b>Airservices</b>	<b>Defence</b>	<b>No agency assigned*</b>	<b>Total</b>
Complaints carried forward on 1 July 2020	33	2	0	<b>35</b>
Complaints received	67	2	2	<b>71</b>
Complaints closed	67	2	1	<b>70</b>
Complaints open at 1 October 2020	33	2	1	<b>36</b>



## 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.

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

Ongoing recommendations	ANO assessment of agency response
<p><b>Recommendation 1</b> – Airservices should develop a framework for third party proposed changes that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>provides robust and dependable governance arrangements to manage its early and ongoing engagement with third parties</li> <li>establishes clear lines of accountability and documents these arrangements as they evolve</li> <li>ensures an effective consultative process, which includes monitoring the adequacy of any third party consultations being relied on.</li> </ol>	<p><u>Closed</u>: Airservices has produced a Third Party Framework. This included review of the structure and first draft by the ANO and provision of the final draft.</p> <p>The procedure provides:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>robust and dependable governance arrangements to ensure effective management of interface between Airservices and third party proponents</li> <li>mechanisms to establish clear roles and responsibilities to deliver the change proposal</li> <li>provision of guidance documentation and criteria to support third party planning and delivery of environment and community elements of the change</li> <li>process for assurance reviews to ensure the adequacy of third party actions in meeting Airservices' environmental assessment and community engagement obligations.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Recommendation 2</b> – 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> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>consideration of identified community-suggested alternatives</li> <li>a community engagement process that provides for genuine opportunities for community contributions to influence decisions</li> <li>application of the latest version of Airservices' National Operating Standard (NOS) Environmental Management of Changes to Aircraft Operations (AA-NOS-ENV-2.100).</li> </ol>	<p><u>Ongoing</u>: Airservices has drafted Terms of Reference (TOR) for the PIR and an extended community review period has been agreed to.</p> <p>The draft TOR included specific inclusions from community submissions and ANO feedback on the proposed scope and internal review of PIR requirements. This was taken to the community for discussion at a 4 hour Community Meeting held on 19 September 2020 on the Sunshine Coast. Representatives from community groups, Sunshine Coast Airport, Sunshine Coast Council and Noosa Shire Council attended the meeting. The ANO observed the proceedings.</p> <p>The PIR TOR (including updates based on community meeting feedback) were prepared by 30 September 2020 and the 4 week public comment and industry consultation period commenced.</p>

## Airservices – Review of Airservices Australia's systems for community engagement – Final Report (April 2020)

Ongoing recommendations	ANO assessment of agency response
<p><b>Recommendation 1</b> – Airservices should finalise its internal review and restructure of its Environment and Community Group including establishing a fully developed and settled suite of procedures and policies for community engagement, with a scheduled review and evaluation mechanism.</p>	<p><u>Closed</u>: Airservices has advised that its review and restructure of the Environment and Community Group was completed in March 2020 with the appointment of the new Environment and Community Manager. The Flight Path Design Manager, Airports and Environment Manager and Community Engagement Manager report to this role.</p> <p>Airservices has updated the following documents and supporting templates reissued prior to 30 September 2020:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>ENV-PROC0011 - Community Engagement Procedure</i> - Complete rewrite to incorporate feedback from the ANO Systems and Sunshine Coast reviews</li> <li>• <i>C-TEMP0350 - Community Engagement Plan Template</i></li> <li>• <i>C-TEMP0351 - Community Engagement Report Template</i></li> <li>• <i>C-TEMP0352 - Social Impact (Hot Spot) Analysis Template</i></li> <li>• <i>ATS-MAN-0010 – Airspace Design Manual</i> – updated to include application of Flight Path Design Principles.</li> </ul> <p>Airservices has finalised its review of its Flight Path Design Principles after a national consultation and public comment period. The principles took effect from 1 October 2020 and will apply to all flight path changes initiated from that date. Airservices will report publicly on how the principles have been considered.</p>

Ongoing recommendations	ANO assessment of agency response
<p><b>Recommendation 2</b> – Airservices should continue to strive to ensure its community engagement practice is in line with modern standards and methods of community engagement and draws on experience in other industries and countries. In particular, Airservices should consider emerging methods of community engagement such as ‘deliberative engagement’ as an effective tool on the broader spectrum of community engagement.</p>	<p><u>Closed</u>: Airservices has advised that its Community Engagement Framework (CEF) was developed with reference to the International Association for Public Participation Australasia (IAP2) Core Values for the Practice of Public Participation and Quality Assurance Standard. It also references the Australian Public Service Framework for Engagement and Participation which provides a benchmark for Airservices in terms of the spectrum of engagement for Australian government agencies and defines the following four levels of engagement: Share, Consult, Deliberate, Collaborate.</p> <p>The CEF provides a series of commitments to the community through which Airservices will deliver best practice engagement. This is actively being applied to current projects.</p> <p>With reference to deliberative engagement, Airservices has committed through the CEF and related procedures:</p> <p><i>‘Where appropriate, we deliberate with community and other stakeholders throughout a complex change management process to ensure that the range of stakeholder concerns are consistently understood and considered, and that competing values and trade-offs associated with concept and final flight paths are examined. We may use avenues such as Stakeholder Panels and/or focus groups.’</i></p>
<p><b>Recommendation 3</b> – Airservices should meet with the ANO on a quarterly basis in relation to its community engagement activities and its presentation and distribution of aircraft noise related information.</p>	<p><u>Closed</u>: The ANO meets quarterly with Airservices’ Chief of Customer Experience and Strategy, and with the CEO. Airservices’ Community Engagement Manager engages regularly with the ANO regarding community engagement activities to provide briefings, updates and to seek advice on Airservices’ approach to engaging on more complex changes or in sensitive communities.</p> <p>The ANO and Airservices’ Environment and Community Manager meet often and regularly to discuss emerging issues and other matters of interest.</p>

Ongoing recommendations	ANO assessment of agency response
<p><b>Recommendation 4</b> – Airservices should finalise and publish its <i>Community Engagement Framework</i> as a matter of priority to reflect its improved community engagement processes including (but not limited to) better planning and timing, reach and reasons for decisions.</p>	<p><u>Closed</u>: Airservices has demonstrated that the CEF was finalised on 30 June 2020 and released on its Engage Airservices website on 17 August 2020. It consists of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community Engagement Overview</li> <li>• Our Community Engagement Commitment</li> <li>• Our Community Engagement Approach.</li> </ul> <p>Airservices consulted the ANO on the draft CEF.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 5</b> – Airservices should use its existing network of aviation industry meetings and groups to engage and coordinate more with the aviation industry on planned community engagement activities, in particular accessing the industry’s knowledge of local conditions and concurrent community engagement activities.</p>	<p><u>Closed</u>: Airservices has advised its Environment and Community Manager now attends the following industry forums to provide updates on the current flight path change program and to seek feedback on industry involvement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Major Airport Development Project Control Group (internal Airservices meeting to discuss projects at major airports across the country)</li> <li>• National Operations Services Enhancement Forum (involves airlines and major airports)</li> <li>• Industry Operations Forum (General Aviation and regional airports)</li> </ul> <p>In addition, the Customer Engagement Manager and Environment and Community Manager meet weekly to discuss current flight path change proposals and associated engagement requirements. Early engagement with industry (airlines) is being undertaken as part of the Williamstown Traffic Management Plan.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 6</b> – Airservices should develop a framework for third party proposed changes that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) provides robust and dependable governance arrangements to manage its early and ongoing engagement with third parties</li> <li>b) establishes clear lines of accountability and documents these arrangements as they evolve</li> <li>c) ensures an effective consultative process, which includes monitoring the adequacy of any third party consultations being relied on.</li> </ol>	<p><u>Closed</u>: This recommendation was considered so important that it was also made in the ANO’s Sunshine Coast report and its implementation is reported on above.</p>

**Defence - Compliance Audit of Australian Super Hornet Flying Operations at RAAF Base Amberley (October 2019)**

Ongoing recommendations	ANO assessment of agency response
<p><b>Recommendation 1</b> – Defence should establish robust administrative systems that ensure it obtains the required approvals for changes to its activities prior to implementing those changes. These systems should ensure annual reviews are conducted that would enable the identification and early rectification of any non-compliances.</p>	<p><u>Closed</u>: Defence has demonstrated that it has established the Australian Super Hornet Conditions of Approval tracking spreadsheet to track items of compliance and required approvals which enables a central location and consolidated repository for all Australian Super Hornet compliance requirements relating to noise management. This spreadsheet includes an annual Review Schedule for Australian Super Hornet Documents.</p> <p>Defence also provided evidence that it has established a website publication tracker to ensure that records are saved to show compliance with the publication of plans, strategies and reports on the Defence Aircraft Noise website.</p> <p>Defence has also provided evidence that it has developed guidance documents to support these administrative systems.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 2</b> – Defence should re-instate or adopt new or additional record management practices to ensure it can demonstrate its compliance with the Conditions of Approval and the requirements of the plans and strategies required by these Conditions</p>	<p><u>Closed</u>: Defence has demonstrated it has put in place an internal audit process of its Aircraft Noise Management including reviewing the Australian Super Hornet Noise Management Plan and sub plans and advised that record management associated with the ASH Plans and Sub plans will be audited to ensure compliance with the Conditions of Approval.</p>

Ongoing recommendations	ANO assessment of agency response
<p><b>Recommendation 3</b> – Defence should:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>review its draft version 4.0 Noise Management Plan in light of the findings of this audit report, the questions and comments made to date by the Department of the Environment and Energy, and in consideration of any other changes or assumptions that may be now relevant;</li> <li>ensure the revised Noise Management Plan retains a level of detail that is appropriate to its purpose as a public account of Defence’s planned noise management activities and includes an appropriate requirement to regularly review the plan in light of any outcomes of its Noise Monitoring Program;</li> <li>set out clearly the changes compared to the version 3.0 Noise Management Plan and outline the reasons for these; and</li> <li>re-submit the revised version 4.0 Noise Management Plan for approval in line with Condition 8 of its approval</li> </ol>	<p><u>Closed</u>: Defence advised the Noise Management Plan (NMP) v4.0 has been reviewed and rewritten in consultation with the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment (DoAWE). The NMP V4.0 has been updated to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a sufficient level of detail about Defence’s planned noise management activities</li> <li>a review mechanism to review the NMP on an annual basis</li> <li>a table that details and compares changes between the current and new version of the NMP</li> </ul> <p>Defence has re-submitted the revised version to the DoAWE for approval.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 4</b> – Defence should regularly review its Noise Management Plan, with consideration to be given to relevant matters, including but not limited to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>any foreseeable variations approved by the SADFO-Amberley;</li> <li>any changes to Super Hornet flying operations limitations or planning assumptions, which occur as a result of evaluation of the noise monitoring outcomes and the complaints process detailed in the Noise Monitoring and Complaints Handling Strategy; and</li> <li>the results of audits of compliance with its Conditions of Approval for Australian Super Hornet Flying Operations</li> </ol>	<p><u>Closed</u>: Defence advised the NMP v4.0 has been reviewed and rewritten in consultation with the DoAWE.</p> <p>Defence has advised that all reviews of the NMP will give consideration to all relevant matters and auditable criteria contained within the plan will be tracked via the Australian Super Hornet Conditions of Approval spreadsheet.</p> <p>Defence has submitted it to the DoAWE for approval.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 5</b> – Defence should use its Annual Super Hornet Noise Reports to explicitly evaluate noise outcomes against the noise modelling undertaken for the Public Environment Report 2009, and also for any subsequent approved noise modelling undertaken</p>	<p><u>Closed</u>: Defence has provided the 2019 Annual Noise Report for the Australian Super Hornet. The Report includes an evaluation of the noise modelling from the 2009 Public Environment Report as well as the numbers within the updated ANEF.</p> <p>This report is publicly available on the <a href="#">Defence Aircraft Noise</a> page of the Department of Defence website</p>



Ongoing recommendations	ANO assessment of agency response
<p><b>Recommendation 6</b> – Defence should table its Annual Super Hornet Noise Reports at the Amberley Consultative Working Group (ACWG) meetings and ensure this is minuted</p>	<p><u>Closed</u>: The ANO has closed this recommendation on the basis that Defence has committed to tabling the Australian Super Hornet Annual Noise Reports at the first available Amberley Consultative Working Group meeting. Due to COVID-19, the ACWG is postponed until further notice.</p> <p>This report is publicly available on the <a href="#">Defence Aircraft Noise</a> page of the Department of Defence website.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 7</b> – Defence should regularly review its Noise Monitoring and Complaints Handling Strategy, with consideration to be given to relevant matters, including but not limited to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. any changes to the Noise Management Plan and Noise Mitigation and Complaints Resolution Strategy;</li> <li>b. those arising through the complaints process detailed in the Noise Monitoring and Complaints Handling Strategy; and</li> <li>c. the results of audits of compliance with its Conditions of Approval for Australian Super Hornet Flying Operations.</li> </ol>	<p><u>Closed</u>: Defence has conducted its annual review of its Noise Monitoring and Complaints Handling Strategy and has published it on its website.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 8</b> – Defence should identify and implement an effective method for publicly reporting on its actions in response to recommendations made in relation to its Conditions of Approval for Australian Super Hornet Flying Operations.</p>	<p><u>Closed</u>: Defence has conducted its annual review of its Noise Monitoring and Complaints Handling Strategy and has published it on its website.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 9</b> – Defence should regularly review its Noise Monitoring and Complaints Handling Strategy, with consideration to be given to relevant matters, including but not limited to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. any changes to the Noise Management Plan and Noise Monitoring and Complaints Handling Strategy;</li> <li>b. those arising through the complaints process detailed in the Noise Monitoring and Complaints Handling Strategy; and</li> <li>c. the results of audits of compliance with its Conditions of Approval for Australian Super Hornet Flying Operations.</li> </ol>	<p><u>Closed</u>: Defence has conducted its annual review of its Noise Monitoring and Complaints Handling Strategy and has published it on its website.</p>