

OFFICIAL



Quarterly Report

April-June 2022

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1 Overview

The Aircraft Noise Ombudsman (ANO) carried forward 33 complaints on 1 April 2022. During this quarter (April-June 2022), the ANO received 222 new complaints, closed 242 complaints, and therefore carries forward 13 complaints to July 2022. Of the open cases carried forward to July 2022, the oldest complaint was received in February 2022.

During this quarter, the ANO has seen an increase in complaints across a variety of airports, reflecting the increase in aircraft operations across Australia. However, the bulk continued to relate to Brisbane Airport with 161 complaints.

The ANO continued to monitor Airservices Australia's (Airservices') community engagement processes in line with clause 71 of the ANO Charter, including in relation to the Post Implementation Review (PIR) process for the flight paths associated with the Sunshine Coast and Brisbane airports. Regular monthly meetings have been ongoing between the ANO senior advisors and Airservices senior community engagement staff. The ANO will also continue to review and suggest improvements to the NCIS' existing complaint handling processes and hold monthly meetings with the NCIS' Line Leader.

In this quarter, the ANO received three Defence complaints and closed one of these cases. Three Defence case remained open at the end of the quarter as the ANO was awaiting responses from Defence before it could commence its review.

2 Complaint handling

2.1 Complaints managed in quarter

During the quarter, the ANO received 222 complaints - 215 relating to Airservices, 3 related to Defence. A further 4 complaints had no agency identified due to either insufficient information provided by complainants, or the complaint related to an agency other than Airservices or Defence¹. Figures 1 and 2 below show the number of complaints received by agency and that the complaints received have increased noticeably compared to the previous quarters.

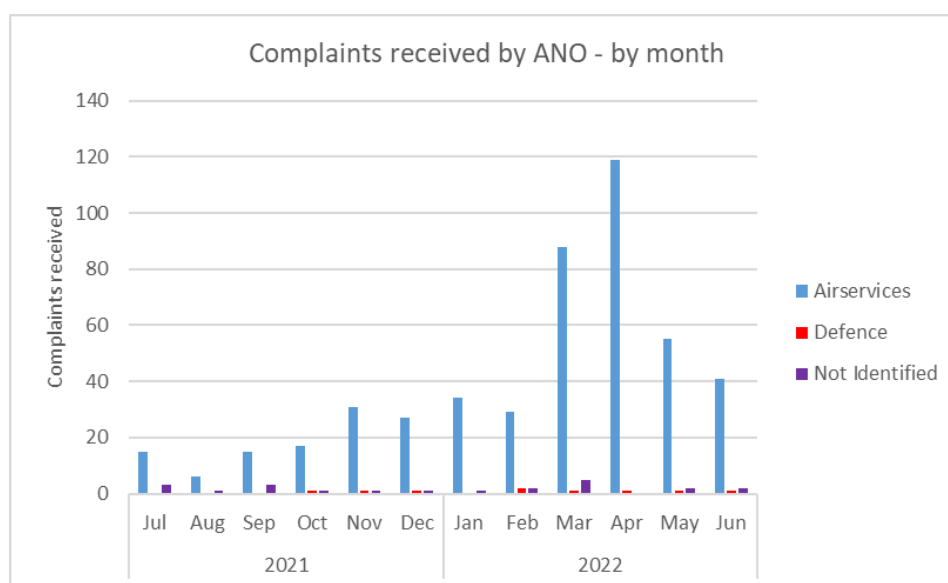


Figure 1 – Complaints received by ANO by month, July 2021 - June 2022

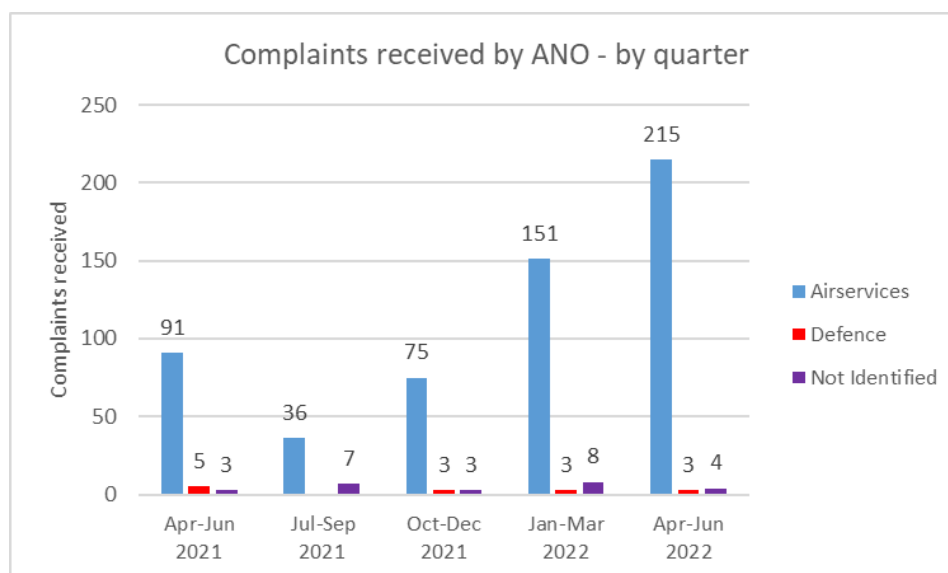


Figure 2 – Complaints received by ANO by quarter, April 2021 – June 2022

¹ Where complaints are received about other agencies which sit outside of the ANO Charter, the ANO redirects complainants to the responsible agency.

Figure 3 below charts the average number of complaints over the past 3 years. Complaints made during this quarter were higher than the 3-year average, with this being the second busiest quarter for complaints received by the ANO over the past 3 years. Only January-March 2021 was busier, which coincided with increases in traffic and community awareness of the effects of the new Brisbane Airport runway opening.

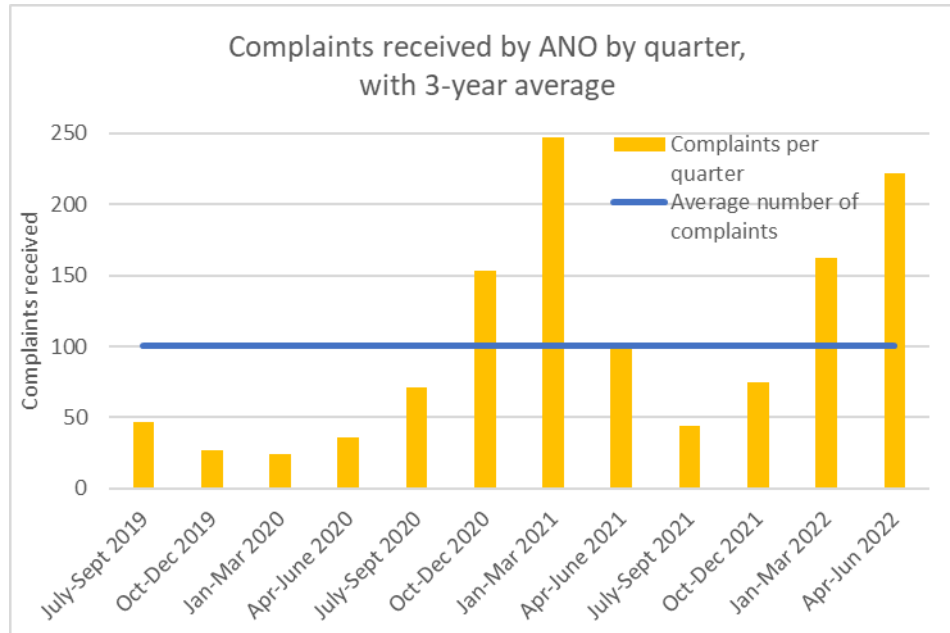


Figure 3 – Complaints received by ANO by quarter, with 3-year average for complaint trends.

The majority of complaints this quarter continue to be attributed to the opening of the new runway for Brisbane, with 161 complaints (73%) relating to Brisbane Airport. Many of the complaints from Brisbane were generated by inclusion of the ANO on a mailing list published by a community group encouraging people to voice their dissatisfaction about the impact of the new runway.

Figure 4 below shows the breakdown of complaints by airport, where it could be identified.

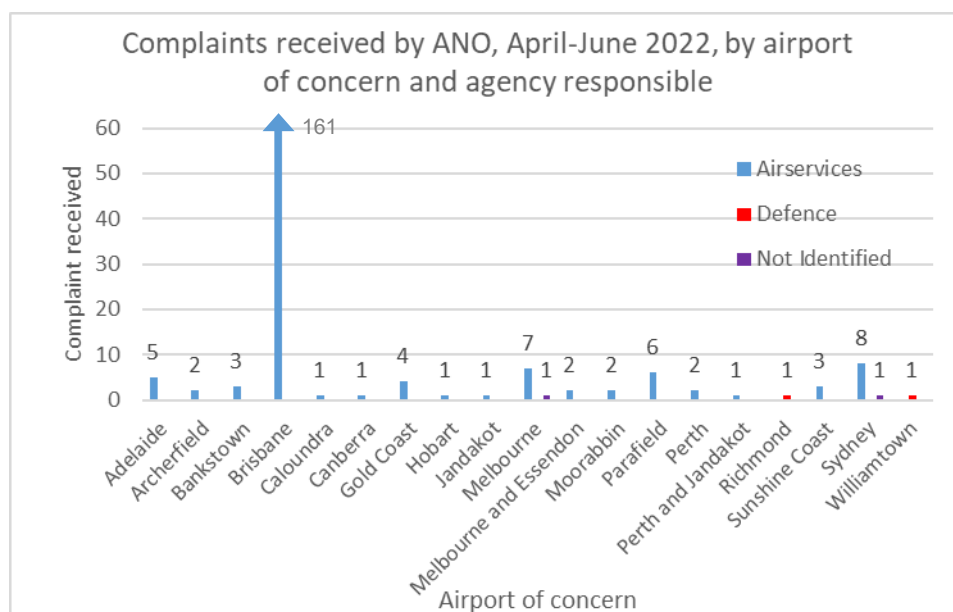


Figure 4 - Complaints received by ANO by Airport of concern, April – June 2022.

In addition to the airport specific complaints above, a further 8 complaints did not include sufficient information to identify the airport it related to. This includes helicopter operations due to the range of potential helipads a helicopter may operate from.

Closed cases

The ANO closed 242 cases for the quarter, 237 relating to Airservices, 1 relating to Defence and 4 without an agency identified.

Of the outcomes possible for the 237 cases relating to Airservices, 204 were closed as the complainants had either not yet complained to or finalised their complaint with Airservices. Of the 204, 98 were related to Brisbane's new runway, and related to the Airservices' post-implementation review or ongoing trials. Seventeen resulted in no change possible; and two resulted in a change being adopted by Airservices. Four complaints were outside of the ANO's Charter, with a further 10 cases closed due to the complainant not providing additional information to enable an investigation to progress.

Of the outcomes possible in relation to the closed Defence case from this quarter, this complaint was referred to Defence to respond to directly.

As of 1 June 2022, 13 complaints remain open. This includes 5 complaints related to the ANO's ongoing Gold Coast multi-complaint review, and one Defence case received in late February 2022 which remained on-hold while Defence attempted to resolve the complainant's concerns. One complaint received on 30 June 2022 required referral to Airservices, with the remaining 6 cases were received between mid-May and the end June 2022 and were either awaiting review or in the process of being reviewed by the ANO office.

Full complaint data for the quarter is presented in Attachment 1.

2.2 Issues raised in complaints

The ANO captures and reports on issues raised by complaints during the quarter. It is expected that the number of issues raised per quarter will be greater than the number of complaints, as complainants normally raise a number of issues per complaint.²

Complaints received during this quarter are classified by the ANO office under one of three themes - Agency-specific issues (which are set out in more detail below), aircraft noise issues and other issues outside of the remit of the ANO. Figure 5 shows the distribution of the issues raised during the quarter. As would be expected, the most common issue raised with the ANO office are aircraft noise related concerns.

² For each complaint, the ANO office identified the main issues raised in the complaint. This will generally be an average of three issues per complaint.

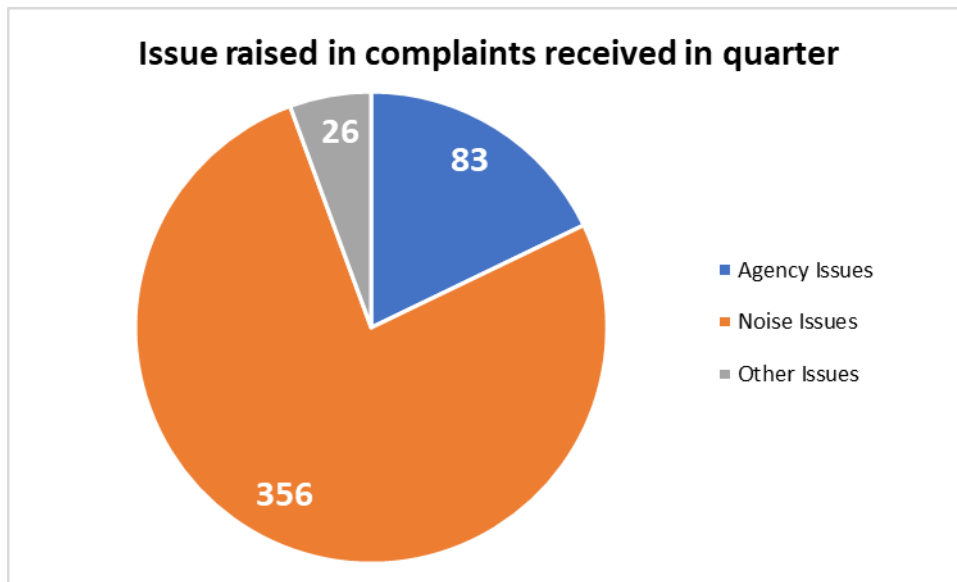


Figure 5 – Issues raised in complaints received by the ANO, April 2022-June 2022

As shown in Figure 6 below, complaints about Airservices management of complaints included 37 about its community engagement. It is anticipated that complaints about community engagement will increase as Airservices develops its practice in this area. In this quarter, these concerns related predominantly to a combination of concerns about activities prior to the opening of the new Brisbane Runway, with a smaller number focussed on the Sunshine Coast and Brisbane PIRs.

During the quarter, the ANO office also received 18 complaints about the difficulty of accessing information; the division of responsibilities between various bodies agencies and the lack of a single authoritative information source.

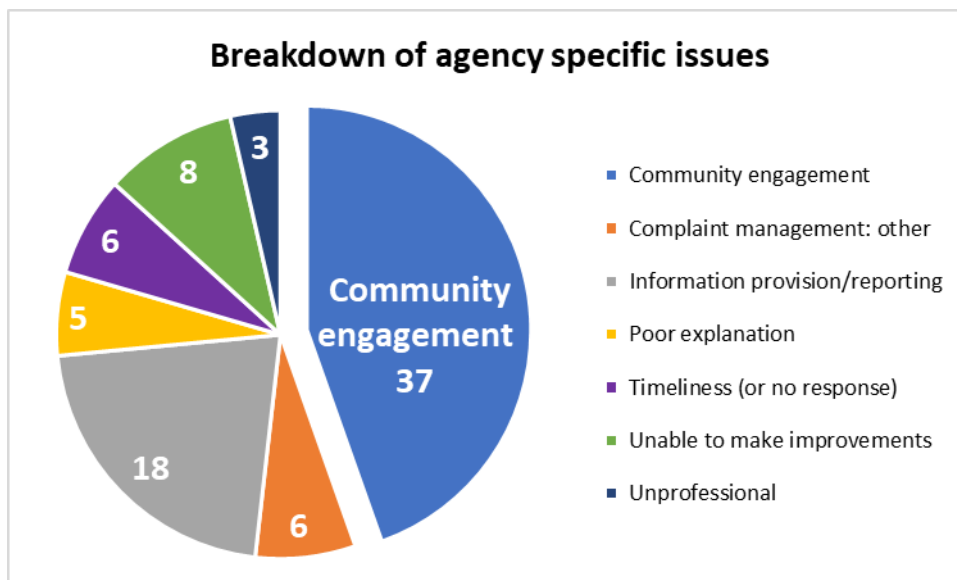


Figure 6 – Agency specific issues raised in complaints received by the ANO, April 2022 - June 2022

Figure 7 breaks down noise complaints by the most common issues raised. Flight path changes and their impacts on health continue to be dominant issues. Health concerns, which include impacts upon sleep, mental health, and stress, have been dominant themes during the quarter. Additionally, the further health concern about aircraft emissions has been raised more frequently in this quarter than the previous quarter. The ANO has also seen an increase in complaints about night operations for 8 airports in this quarter, including

requests for curfews or complaints about non-compliance. Brisbane Airport, with a total of 19 accounted for most of the 27 complaints in this area where curfew/night operations were identified as a key concern.

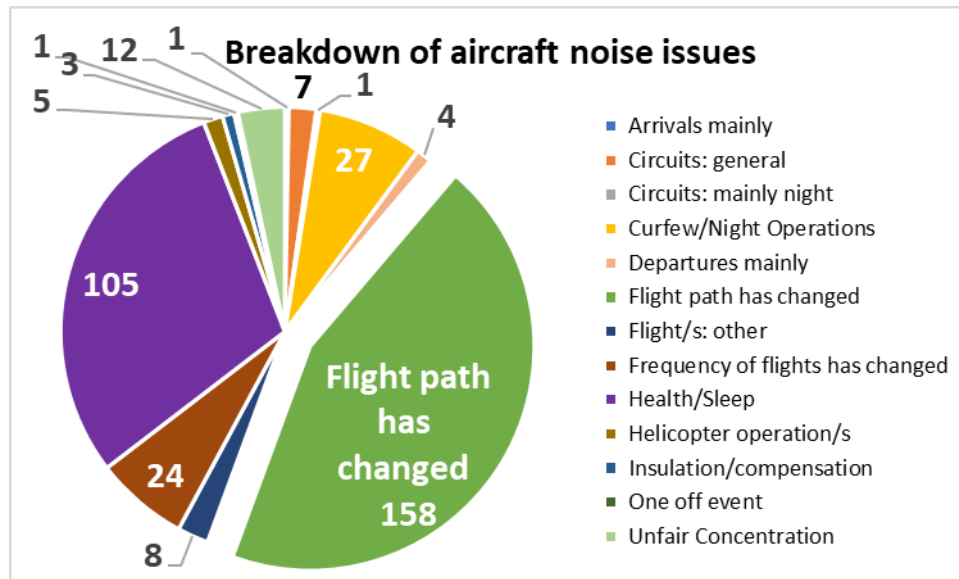


Figure 7 – Aircraft noise related issues raised in complaints received by the ANO, April 2022 – June 2022

Figure 8 below shows other issues raised by complainants that were outside the remit of the ANO. Similar to last quarter, the majority of other issues raised related to requests for greater regulation, or dissatisfaction with existing aviation regulation.

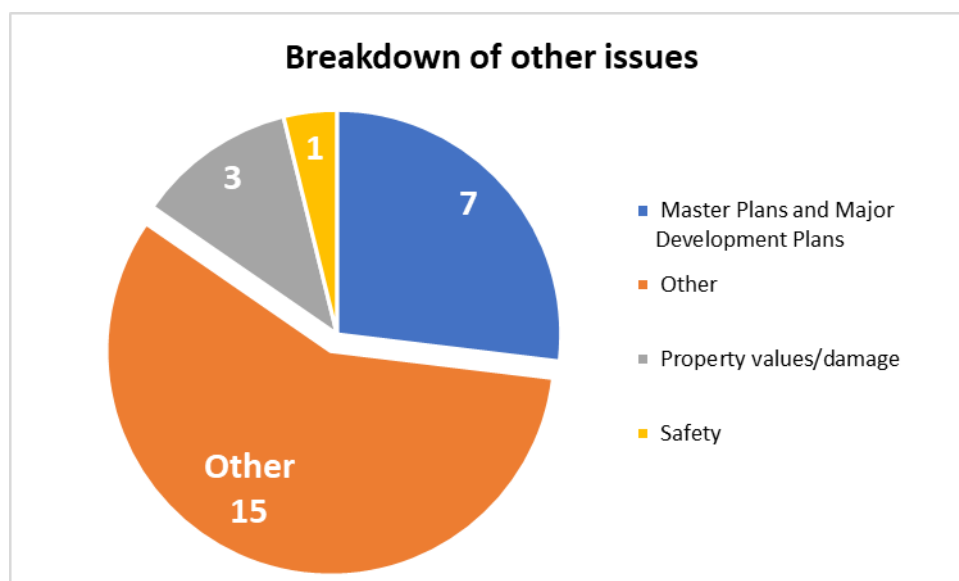


Figure 8 – Issues outside of the ANO's jurisdiction, raised in complaints received by the ANO, April 2022 – June 2022

2.3 Brisbane investigation

The ANO *Investigation into complaints about the flight paths associated with the Brisbane Airport new parallel runway* report made 4 recommendations for the Airservices' Board to consider. Airservices' Board accepted all 4 recommendations of the ANO with [the ANO report and Airservices' Board response](#) published on 12 October 2021.

Airservices have provided an update on all 4 recommendations. Based on documentation submitted to the ANO regarding recommendation 4, this recommendation has been closed this quarter. Implementation of the remaining 3 recommendations is ongoing. Of particular note during this quarter, community focus groups undertaken by the independent reviewer, Trax International, were completed with the final report expected in late July. The ANO will continue to monitor Airservices' implementation of opportunities identified by the Trax International, in relation to the ANO's recommendations 1 and 2.

A summary of the progress in implementing the recommendations is provided in Attachment 2.

2.4 East Melbourne investigation

The ANO *Investigation into complaints about flight paths over East Melbourne* report included 3 recommendations by the ANO, which were accepted by Airservices. The [ANO report and Airservices Board response](#) were published on 19 July 2021.

Airservices have provided an update on its progress against recommendation 3, confirming that implementation of this recommendation remains on hold while awaiting the outcomes of the Melbourne Airport consultation for the proposed new runway. The complainants have made a complaint to the ANO that Airservices' deferral of the matter is unfair and/or unreasonable and a formal response to that complaint has been sought from Airservices. Recommendation 1 and 2 were closed by the ANO, in previous quarters. A summary of the outstanding ANO recommendation is provided in Attachment 2.

2.5 Gold Coast investigation

In March 2022, the ANO commenced a multiple complaints review as provided for in clause 47 of the ANO Charter. The ANO's assessment of the complaint has been provided to Airservices which now has a reasonable opportunity to resolve the matter.

2.6 Liaison with Noise Complaints Information Service (NCIS)

The ANO office and Airservices' NCIS team continue to hold regular meetings. In addition to formal meetings, staff from the ANO office and NCIS team speak regularly to discuss matters identified through individual reviews.

In the October-December 2021 quarter, the ANO office identified areas in which frequent concerns were being raised by complainants, about the NCIS handling of complaints. The ANO continues to work with Airservices to identify opportunities to improve its complaint handling processes. The ANO has been pleased to see a number of changes adopted by the NCIS in the past quarter, which have been reflected in higher quality responses to complainants.

2.7 Liaison with Defence

During this quarter, the ANO office met both formally and informally with the Staff Officer, Aircraft Noise Management for the Department of Defence. This included to discuss findings from individual reviews and broader aircraft noise management issues and opportunities.

3 Community Engagement and Noise Information Provision

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.

The ANO continued to work with Airservices staff on engagement projects as they were delivered. This has included attending one community aviation consultation group (CACG) meetings in this quarter.

The monthly meeting between ANO senior advisors and Airservices senior community engagement staff has provided regular updates on ongoing community engagement processes and actions undertaken by Airservices. 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.

4 Key performance indicators

The ANO office introduced key performance indicators (KPIs) for its complaint handling processes in July 2021. KPI compliance levels are determined based on results throughout the applicable financial year, with the 2021-22 financial year KPIs discussed in the ANO's Annual Report.

KPIs for complaints received by the ANO office are divided based on whether the complaint is a single complaint or part of a multi-complaint review³. Regardless of whether a complaint is part of a multi-complaint review or not, the ANO office aims to finalise all complaints within a maximum of 12 months from the date of receipt.

4.1 Acknowledgement of complaints

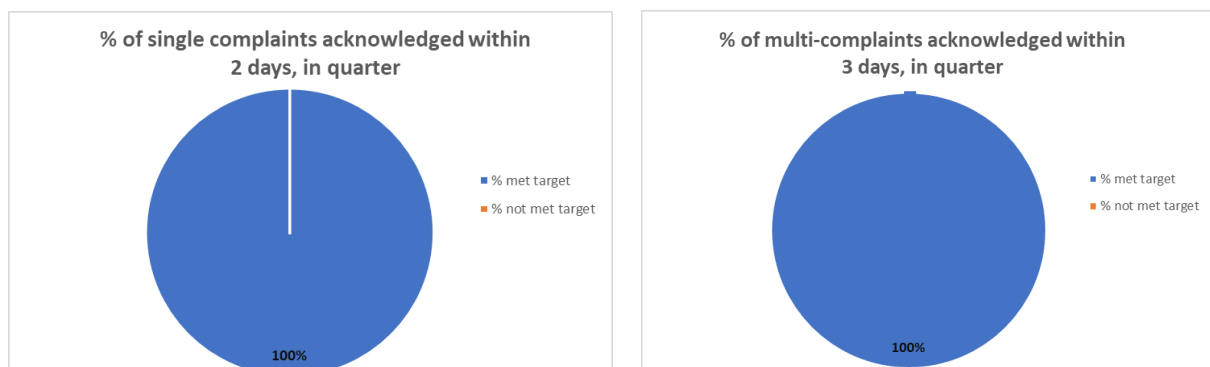


Figure 9 - % of single and multi-complaints acknowledged within target period, in quarter.

³ Separate KPI's for complaints within a multi-complaint review reflect the more complex nature of multi-complaint reviews and that these reviews will generally involve the consideration of large amounts of evidence. This results in these complaints generally remaining open longer than individual cases.

The ANO has a KPI of 2 days and 3 days to acknowledge complaints related to single complaints and multi-complaints, respectively. Full compliance was achieved for this KPI, this quarter.

4.2 Determination of complaints

Once a complaint is received, the ANO has 14 days for single complaints, or 21 days for multi-complaints, to determine whether the complaint is within the scope of the ANO Charter. Full compliance was achieved for this KPI, this quarter, as shown in Figure 10.

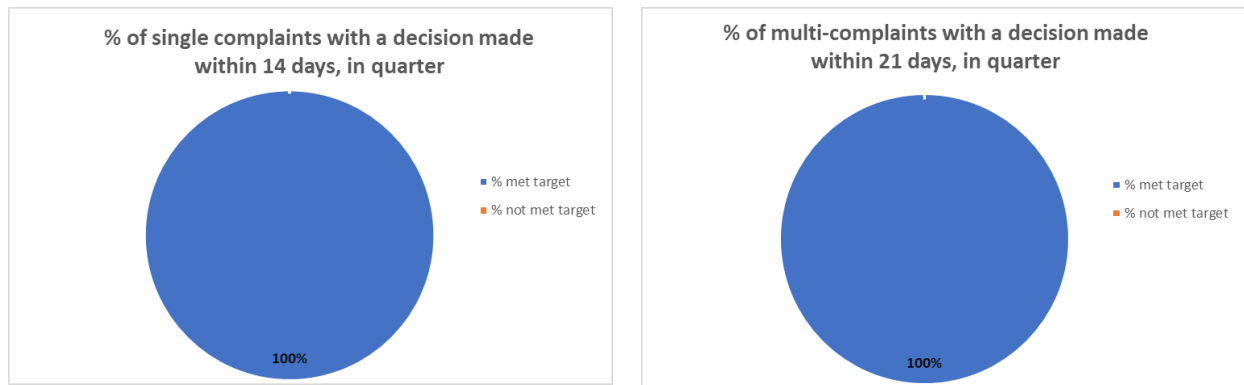


Figure 10 - % of single and multi-complaints with a decision made within target period, in quarter.

4.3 Progress reports to complainants

The ANO office is committed to providing regular updates on the progress to complainants during the course of an investigation⁴. In this quarter, all updates were provided in the target 28 days.

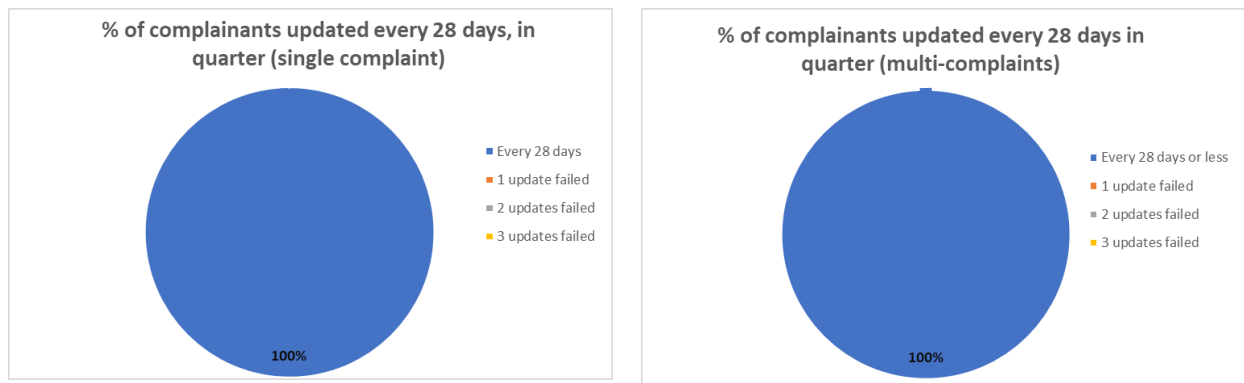


Figure 11 - % of single and multi-complainants updated within target period, in quarter.

⁴ For both individual complaints and multi-complaint reviews, the KPI target is for updates to occur every 28 days or less.

4.4 Time taken to finalise complaints

All 242 cases closed in this quarter, as shown in Figure 12 , were single complaints. Two of the cases closed in the quarter were closed in 3-6 months of receipt, with the remaining cases closed within 3 months of receipt. No multi-complaint cases were closed during the quarter.

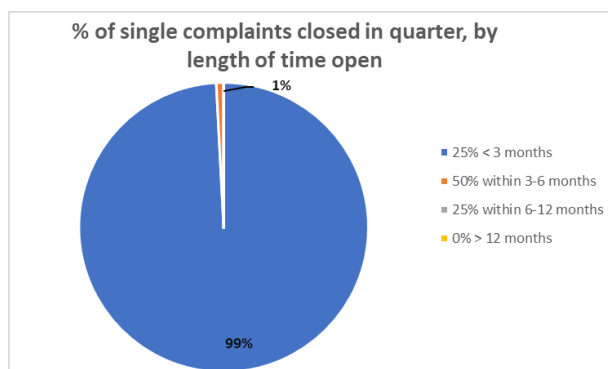


Figure 12 - % of single closed in quarter, by length of time open

Full KPI performance data for the quarter are presented at Attachment 3.

Kieran Pehm

Aircraft Noise Ombudsman

28 July 2022

Attachment 1 Complaint Statistics

The following tables summarise the complaint statistics for the quarter.

AIRSERVICES	Apr-22	May-22	Jun-22	Total for quarter
Complaints received:	119	55	41	215
Complaints closed:	132	60	45	237

Total complaints closed - not reviewed:	127	54	37	218
Complainant did not provide further information	6	3	1	10
Outside charter scope	4	-	-	4
Referred to Airservices to respond directly	117	51	36	204

Total complaints closed - reviewed:	5	6	8	19
No change possible - explanation provided	3	6	8	17
Change adopted by Airservices Australia	2	-	-	2

DEFENCE	Apr-22	May-22	Jun-22	Total for quarter
Complaints received:	1	1	1	3
Complaints closed:	-	1	-	1

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

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

	Airservices	Defence	No agency assigned*	Total
Complaints open at 1 April 2022 (first day of the quarter)	32	1	0	33
Complaints received	215	3	4	222
Complaints closed	237	1	4	242
Complaints open at 1 July 2022 (first day of next quarter)	10	3	0	13

*No agency assigned includes where the identified Agency is outside of the ANO's jurisdiction, or where complainants do not provide sufficient information to identify the agency.

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 flight paths over East Melbourne (July 2021)

Ongoing recommendations	ANO assessment of agency response
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>On hold: Airservices advised that they continue to work with the East Melbourne Group (EMG) on the EMG's suggestion. The suggestions (3) have been assessed to determine if they are safe and flyable. Airservices have confirmed that the proposed changes are at the stage where community and industry consultation would be required.</p> <p>Due to Melbourne Airport's Major Development Plan (MDP) and Master Plan 2022 (MP) consultation (January – May 2022), Airservices have advised that this work is on hold until after that consultation activity, including confirmation of any changes to the MDP reflecting community feedback, is complete. The complainants have complained about the delay and the ANO will assess compliance with the recommendation following its assessment of the complaint.</p>

Airservices – Investigation into complaints about the flight paths associated with the Brisbane Airport new parallel runway (October 2021)

Ongoing recommendations	ANO assessment of agency response
Recommendation 1: Airservices Post Implementation Review of the Brisbane flight paths includes a community engagement process that provides reasonable opportunities for community contributions and the consideration of community suggested alternatives to the current flight paths.	<p>Ongoing: Since the last quarterly report, Trax International who are conducting an independent review of the Brisbane flight paths, have completed 14 face-to-face community engagement sessions and one online session. Airservices' are expecting to receive the Trax International Final Report which incorporates the community input from those sessions in July 2022.</p> <p>Airservices engagement with the community is scheduled to continue through 2022. This will include discussions with the community in the same locations as the Trax workshops, in September 2022, to discuss Trax International's recommendations and Airservices response. Additional opportunities for community feedback on the draft PIR report, once available, will also be offered.</p>

Ongoing recommendations	ANO assessment of agency response
<p>Recommendation 2: Airservices review the effect of its managerial separation of flight path design, environmental assessment and community engagement, and implement a management structure that includes these functions under the same manager or demonstrate how effective community engagement is incorporated into the flight path change process under the current structure.</p>	<p>Ongoing: Airservices provided details of its progress against this recommendation in late April, confirmation that it did not intend to alter its management structure. It did, however, advise of internal reforms such as the Airspace Governance Group and other cross division mechanisms designed to include the consideration of environmental and community concerns at earlier stages of flight path design. The Trax interim report also makes a number of suggestions towards the same end and Airservices' Implementation Approach identifies these as requiring further consideration regarding feasibility.</p> <p>Given the overlap of the Trax suggestions with the ANO's concerns in this area, it is considered prudent that the ANO continue to monitor the effectiveness of Airservices internal mechanisms, to address this recommendation during the next quarter, including any flight path changes which progress during that period, as well as the Trax final report and Airservices response.</p>
<p>Recommendation 3: Airservices update its Third-Party Framework to ensure that Airservices' obligations regarding community engagement are properly acquitted when it enters into cooperative arrangements for community engagement with third parties.</p>	<p>Ongoing: Airservices commenced the update of the Third-Party Framework. Airservices and the ANO will meet in the next quarter, in order that the ANO can review and provide feedback on the proposed changes, prior to finalisation of the updated Framework.</p>
<p>Recommendation 4: Airservices update its policies to ensure that if metrics for the assessment of significance have changed since the initial EIS assessment and approval, the originally approved designs and data should be used to produce the relevant applicable metrics, retrospectively. If the original approved data does not support production of the additional metric, for comparison against the final flight path designs, the comparative assessment should clearly explain the reasons for the alternate assessment method selected.</p>	<p>Closed: Airservices have reviewed and provided a draft of the policy document NOS 2.100 to the ANO this quarter, which included additional guidance for future changes approved via EIS. With consideration of Airservices changes to this policy document, the ANO has closed this recommendation.</p>

Attachment 3 Key performance indicators for ANO complaint handling

The following table summarises the performance of the ANO against the identified complaint handling KPIs for April-June 2022.

While quarterly reporting is provided, performance against the ANO KPIs is determined based on 12 months of data, for July-June of each financial year. Reporting for the 2021-22 financial year is included in the ANO Annual Report 2021-22.

Complaint type	Key performance indicator	Benchmark	% Met target (Apr Jun 2022)
Single complaint	Acknowledgement of complaint	Within 2 business days	100%
	Decision on whether complaint is within jurisdiction within 14 business days	Within 14 business days	100%
	Update to complainant on progress of complaint	Every 28 days	100%
		1 update failed	0%
		2 updates failed	0%
		3 updates failed	0%
	Time from complaint received to closed	25% < 3 months	99%
		50% within 3-6 months	1%
		25% within 6-12 months	0%
		0% > 12 months	0%
Complaints in a multi-complaint review	Acknowledgement of complaint	Within 3 business days	100%
	Decision on whether complaint is within jurisdiction	Within 21 days	100%
	Update to complainant on progress of complaint	Every 28 days or less	100%
		1 update failed	0%
		2 updates failed	0%
		3 updates failed	0%
	Time from complaint received to closed	50% < 6 months	N/A
		50% within 6-12 months	N/A
		0% > 12 months	N/A