



Noise Abatement Procedure Monitoring

June 2026

1 Introduction

- 1.1 Noise Abatement Procedures (NAPs) are the best way to help minimise the noise created by aircraft operations.
- 1.2 This is a report on the ANO's monitoring Airservices Australia's (Airservices) progress on delivering its capacity to effectively monitor and publicly report on compliance with NAPs. The ANO reported on Airservices' management of NAPs to the Airservices' Board following a systems review in [November 2025](#), finding that considerable work was required by Airservices to deliver a publicly credible system and recommending that the ANO continue to monitor its progress.
- 1.3 The Board accepted the recommendation for further monitoring and agreed to the following terms of reference:

Commencing immediately and concluding no later than 30 June 2026, the ANO will conduct ongoing monitoring of the development and implementation of procedures regarding Airservices' monitoring, reporting and compliance with Noise Abatement Procedures (NAPs) at the 10 major Australian airports (Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane, Perth, Adelaide, Hobart, Canberra, Gold Coast, Cairns, Sunshine Coast). Specifically, the ANO's monitoring will address:

- a) Airservices' reporting to the Secretary of the Department of Infrastructure under Ministerial Direction 99/37;*
- b) Airservices' public reporting on compliance with NAPs; and*
- c) Airservices' response to non-compliance with NAPs.*

To facilitate the effectiveness of the ANO's monitoring:

- *Airservices' Head of Community Engagement will keep the ANO informed of progress including in relation to Airservices' engagement with relevant internal and external parties; and*
- *the ANO will advise the Head of Community Engagement of potential improvement opportunities as soon as they are identified in order to enable sufficient time to consider and if practicable, implement these initiatives.*

2 The monitoring process

- 2.1 The ANO was briefed by the Head of Airservices' Community Engagement in relation to the public reporting and response to non-compliance and supplied the NAP Monitoring and Investigation Tracker, which had been updated since it was last reviewed by the ANO. A meeting was also held with Airservices' Head of Noise and Environment in relation to the reporting to the Secretary of the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications, Sport and the Arts (the Department) and the reform of NAPs.
- 2.2 The ANO was also briefed jointly by the Head of Community Engagement and the Head of Noise and Environment on plans for a new NAP reporting system to be implemented by the end of 2026.
- 2.3 A meeting was also held with the company contracted by Airservices to develop its NAP reporting system to better understand its engagement with Airservices and the potential for further improvements.

- 2.4 Airservices has automated online reporting available on Aircraft In Your Neighbourhood (AIYN) at the ten major airports noted in the terms of reference above. The review interrogated the online reporting. The ANO also continued to examine the NAPs noted on the Departure and Approach Procedures for major airports as these are under reform.
- 2.5 Further research was conducted on airport NAP reporting and tools available worldwide and in Australia.

3 Noise Abatement Procedure Reporting - Secretary

- 3.1 The terms of reference for this report cover Airservices' reporting to the Secretary of the Department in compliance with a Ministerial Direction dating from 1999.
- 3.2 There has been no further NAP reporting to the Secretary of the Department since the last reporting for the third quarter of the financial year 2024/25. Airservices have advised that the Department considers the reporting requirements are being met through Airservices public NAP reporting on AIYN.
- 3.3 Airservices also outlined the development of a NAP Quarterly Insights Report, which will be reviewed by the Secretary and the Minister before being added to public NAP reporting. The report was developed in response to Initiative 33 of the [Aviation White Paper](#) which called for a quarterly report on non-compliance with NAPs. This was supplied to the ANO in mid-May, reporting on the period from December 2025 to February 2026. Airservices advises a decision was made to provide the quarterly reporting by season to enable better insight into weather conditions which influence aviation operations and NAP compliance.
- 3.4 The report presents a consolidated assessment of preferred flight path NAP adherence for the ten major airports noted in the terms of reference above, as well as complaint information from the Noise Complaints and Information Service (NCIS). Visual aids are used to assist with understanding complaints, using runway diagrams. While previous reporting to the Secretary included coverage of SODPROPS statistics regarding Brisbane Airport, the new format does not, with this reporting to be delivered separately under the relevant Ministerial Direction. The reporting also appears to be focussed on areas of high compliance and with some aspects of low compliance less prominent, which appeared to be the case with some Brisbane NAPs. While complaint information from the NCIS is included, relevant issues raised through Community Engagement are not.
- 3.5 With respect to the development of the NAP Quarterly Insights Report and other areas covered by this ANO report, the ANO notes that Airservices' staff had competing priorities including the opening of Western Sydney International Airport and accompanying changes to airspace in Sydney (including a proposed flight corridor to the south of Bankstown Airport), Melbourne's third runway, Perth's New Runway Proposal (PNRP), introduction of controlled airspace in Ballina, and ongoing work on Post Implementation Reviews (PIRs) at Brisbane, Hobart and the Sunshine Coast.

4 Noise Abatement Procedure Reporting - Public

- 4.1 Part 2 of the terms of reference of this review require the ANO to monitor and report on Airservices' public reporting of its monitoring and compliance with NAPs.

New system

- 4.2 Airservices engaged in a [Request for Tender \(RFT\) process](#) with the initial portion of the RFT running from 1 September 2025 to 7 October 2025. The RFT included installation and maintenance of noise monitoring terminals; hosted systems to collect and correlate flight track, weather, and noise data; a public website for noise data and software tools for data interrogation and environmental impact analysis.
- 4.3 Preliminary indications are that a new system will be developed to produce a more modern and user-friendly system in one website only. This development is scheduled to occur by mid-2027. The proposed system would potentially also meet the requirements laid down in Recommendation 20 of the [Senate inquiry into the impact and mitigation of aircraft noise](#):

the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts works with Airservices Australia, the Aircraft Noise Ombudsman and aviation industry stakeholders to create a modern, user-friendly website that provides a 'single source of truth' for the community. This process should include comprehensive community consultation.
- 4.4 After the preferred supplier was identified, Airservices gave the ANO a more thorough description of the design of the new website and the improvements to be instated. The ANO also researched the service offerings available online and had some limited discussions with Airservices about what improvements were of interest to them. The flight corridor layer, such as that which is available for [Heathrow Airport](#) was identified as a useful improvement. Flight corridors would provide a technical capability to determine whether aircraft are adhering to flight paths as well as better visual representations of this adherence. Complaints received by the ANO in Brisbane have raised concerns regarding adherence to Standard Instrument Departures (SIDs) and the issue was discussed in the Brisbane Airport Community Airspace Advisory Board meeting of [27 August 2025](#). NAPs in Brisbane measure adherence to SIDs and provide altitude guidance for arriving aircraft, so it does appear this would be of particular importance to the Brisbane community. The ANO has suggested the SID adherence reporting be further split up, to allow the public to better understand on which SID/s adherence is low.
- 4.5 There is a further opportunity to improve on the current system, which only publishes statistics related to levels of compliance with NAPs, by providing tools for analysis of NAP compliance and more visual representations of information. For example, Brisbane Airport has a range of reporting and tools available on their [website](#). These include flight track overlays on the Brisbane Airport Live Flight Tracker, visual displays of runway modes such as the frequency and duration of SODPROPS usage, and the ability to scrutinise movement numbers. Looking at the flight tracks, members of the public can immediately get some indication of whether aircraft are adhering to flight paths which have NAPs associated with them. By easily scrutinising movement numbers, it can be determined how NAP compliance has been affected by increases in movements over time. In reviewing complaints, the ANO regularly conducts analyses of this nature using existing tools and finds it exceedingly time consuming. There is a lack of adequate public information requiring the ANO to often request more detailed data from Airservices, meaning this information is even harder for the public to access.

Airservices appear to be supportive of the application of more visual representation in the developing system, and the ANO has made some suggestions in this regard.

Reform

- 4.6 As identified in the November 2025 ANO report, some NAPs need reform so they can be sensibly interpreted and decisions made as to whether they are practicable and consequently reported upon publicly.
- 4.7 Airservices formed a NAP Adherence Working Group, with workshops commencing in March, to review existing NAPs to make them better suited to reporting. The locations to be examined were Cairns, Perth, Gold Coast, Sunshine Coast, Adelaide, Melbourne and Canberra. Brisbane, Hobart and Sydney were not reviewed due to Airservices considering that extensive work has occurred at these locations to date.
- 4.8 The general finding across most reviewed locations seems to have been that NAPs have not kept pace with changes to operational procedures and changes to SIDs/Standard Terminal Arrival Routes (STARs) due to changes to traffic volumes. Airservices seems to have adopted the rationale that SIDs/STARs, NAPs and local instructions for ATCs are linked and should be updated together, rather than in isolation, to ensure they complement each other.
- 4.9 The ANO notes the significant lead in times required to adjust NAPs, especially when they become part of broader reform activities in the airspace such as PIR or other design activities. For example, at Hobart changes to arrival and departure flight paths were initially introduced in September 2017 and further changes made in November 2019¹. Hobart has been the subject of much community concern and two ANO reports since, one of which was directly related to a NAP trial regarding use of a contentious Required Navigation Performance – Authorisation Required (RNP-AR) Instrument Flight Procedure. There is still ongoing PIR activity, an action known as Recommendation 4 to potentially relocate the RNP-AR may only be fully implemented sometime in 2027, if approved. It isn't clear whether change to the associated NAP may be required if the RNP-AR is relocated. This illustrates the length of time required to fine tune airspace architecture and NAP settings in response to design changes, there are similar criticisms of the duration of PIRs at Brisbane and the Sunshine Coast.
- 4.10 Location specific reviews of NAPs conducted by Airservices over this period will be discussed below.

Cairns

In Cairns, one NAP has been reviewed, as below:

2.1 Arriving Aircraft

Aircraft will be routed clear of populous areas until seawards of the coastline or established on their final approach course. To assist with noise reduction on final approach course, pilots are requested to delay flap deployment until as late as is operationally practicable.

The review investigated several issues with this NAP:

¹ Airservices Australia, 'Hobart Airspace Design Review Post Implementation Review Report', 4 April 2022, p.5, viewed 6 May 2026, [Hobart Airspace Design Review](#)

- What is meant by 'populous' and it was noted that the identified populous areas are mostly avoided by the runway centreline. Populous areas to be examined to see if they are still relevant.
- Examination of any new flight paths introduced, such as the RNP-AR procedure to see if they can assist in avoiding identified populous areas.
- Review of flight track data before and after introduction of the RNP-AR procedure and further review with air traffic controllers (ATC).
- What is meant by practicable in relation to flap deployment and noted that airline data is not available in relation to flap deployment.

As some NAPs reference different requirements for jet aircraft, Airservices investigated and noted that there is an even distribution of operations between jet and turboprop operations arriving into Cairns.

Perth

In Perth, two NAPs are under review which relate to preferred flight paths (2.1 and 2.5 as identified on the Perth NAP page).

- 2.1 - The minimum height over residential areas is:
- Jet aircraft 5000FT AGL;
 - Turbo-prop aircraft 3000FT AGL;
- except where impractical in the normal course of operation to and from the airport runways.
- 2.5 - Non-STAR tracking must approximate STAR tracks or must comply with paragraph 2.1 except:
1. Landing runway 21, arriving from the South
 - a. ACFT at or below 45000kg MTOW, visual left CIRCUIT
 2. Landing runway 21, arriving from the West
 - a. Via WOOFY to 6nm final runway 21 for VISUAL APPROACH
 3. Landing runway 24, arriving from the South
 - a. Via SPUDO
 4. Landing runway 03, arriving from the South or West
 - a. Via HARMN for ILS approach
 - b. Via 5nm Final runway 03 for VISUAL APPROACH
 5. Landing runway 06, arriving from the Southwest or West
 - a. West of the coast then via straight in approach

For 2.1, the review considered what was meant by residential areas and impractical. It was noted that ATC do not have any clarity on what these areas are and that flight path design should avoid these areas. Airservices determined the NAPs should be removed in the short term and to review NAPs during detailed design for the PNRP.

For 2.5, reporting on the NAP is available on AIYN but remains under review as it has been queried as to whether a different methodology for the reporting is needed. Examining the reporting available online, it seems there is a wide variation in adherence to this NAP and so it is unclear how reliable the reporting is if Airservices considers the methodology may need review.

Airservices advised that they had found further complexities with the application of a NAP by ATC in some cases not lining up with the published NAPs or ATC local instructions. It was further explained that in the example of the Perth NAPs, they have not kept up with changes to operational procedures or changes to SIDs/STARs. Airservices proposed to look at these NAPs as part of the PNRP airspace design. Perth

Airport projects that construction commenced in March 2026 and will be completed in 2028².

Gold Coast

Gold Coast NAPs include much discussion of treatment for aircraft, based upon whether they are jet or non-jet. Airservices have found over a monthly comparison that operations at the Gold Coast are largely jet aircraft (between 64% to 77%) compared to turboprop aircraft (3 to 6%). Piston aircraft from Archerfield and Wellcamp are operating into Gold Coast for training purposes. In summer months, most departure and arrival movements occur on Runway 14.

Airservices advised the PIR for the Instrument Landing System (ILS), is considering a change to the connection coming into the ILS from the north over water for the Runway 14 approach. It was further advised that changes to the RNP-AR would be considered but that this has been split into two separate projects with risk determination finding that changes to the RNP-AR need to be implemented first in December 2026, and changes to the ILS to occur in December 2027. The PIR handed down its final report in October 2020, and it is not clear what the delay in this process has been for considering the significant community concern with use of the ILS³.

Sunshine Coast

Airservices found NAPs have not been reviewed in line with changes to SIDs/STARs. The NAPs were last updated in 2020, as the new runway and associated flight paths became operational on 14 June 2020. The NAPs have not been reviewed to consider changes made to SIDs (2022/2024), STARs (2022/2026) and the RNP-AR (2024).

A NAP which refers to climb gradients was reviewed, reproduced below.

4.3 All departing Jet Aircraft to comply with 7 percent climb gradient to 6000FT, except if SID cancelled by ATC at pilot request due weather.

Airservices advised that a review of data for March 2026 shows that the 7% climb gradient is being met but did not advise a percentage. However, this NAP is not reported upon publicly.

The ANO notes there are ongoing NAP development activities occurring as part of the PIR of the Sunshine Coast.

² Perth Airport, 'Perth's New Runway', viewed 25 May 2026, [Perth Airport - Corporate | Perth's New Runway](#)

³ Airservices Australia, 'Gold Coast Airport Runway 14 ILS Arrival Procedures', 1 October 2020, viewed 24 April 2026, [Gold Coast Airport Runway 14 ILS Arrival Procedures](#)

Melbourne

Airservices reviewed the below NAP:

2.1 - The minimum height over densely populated areas is:

- Jet aircraft 5000ft AGL;
- Non-jet aircraft 3000ft AGL;

except where impractical in the normal course of operation to and from the airport runways.

The finding was the NAP is impractical, and there is not any opportunity to refine the NAP as Airservices considers it is more practical to provide noise sharing at this location rather than focus on altitudes over areas. As such, Airservices will remove this NAP and focus on noise sharing. Airservices explained TRAX is developing a noise sharing plan for Melbourne Airport for the third runway, which is not scheduled to become operational until around 2031⁴.

Canberra

Canberra NAPs identify preferred runways and include noise abatement areas (NAA) covering most of Canberra and Queanbeyan. The NAPs seek to constrain arrivals and departures on Runway 12 to keep aircraft clear of NAAs with usage of runways 35, 17 and 30 preferred during the day and Runway 17 at night. Airservices conducted some investigation into usage of the runways to review this location. Some insights were that the only arrivals on Runway 12 are light aircraft (monthly statistics of runway usage are available on AIYN) and aircraft arriving on Runway 30 (which overfly the Queanbeyan NAA) are Saab and Dash 8 aircraft. Airservices did not give any indication it intends to reform NAPs at Canberra. Given the ANO does not receive many complaints from the Canberra region due to the mostly favourable position of the airport in relation to main population centres this does not seem unreasonable.

- 4.11 Airservices provided a schedule for quarterly NAP adherence meetings and monthly reviews of SIDs once this initial review process is complete. The ANO was advised that these workshops will be used to inform what the new process should be for development and review of NAPs. The ANO was also advised to expect standardisation of NAPs nationally after review of individual locations has ceased.
- 4.12 The ANO considered how the community might be able to get involved and assist with NAP creation/refinement, aside from participating in PIR processes involving NAPs. There is a process for community suggested improvements outlined in Airservices' [Post Implementation Review Procedure](#), although there is not a specific procedure for NAPs. Nevertheless, community members could suggest NAPs through this community suggested improvements process and such proposals would be handled under Airservices' *Change to Airspace and Aircraft Operations* procedure which is overseen by an Airspace Governance Panel comprising accountable managers from Environmental Assessments, Customer, Community, Aerodrome, and Airspace and Flight Path. This change governance process is also described in the [Environmental](#)

⁴ Melbourne Airport, 'Third Runway', 22 October 2025, viewed 6 May 2026, [Third Runway | Melbourne Airport](#)

[Management of Changes to Aircraft Operations](#) National Operating Standard. The ANO is not aware of any NAPs which have been created because of community suggestions but is aware that members of Community Aviation Consultation Groups have expressed criticisms of the procedure as changes proposed have been in the queue for action for several years. Although some of those proposals may not be suitable for progression under the procedure today, it nevertheless demonstrates that getting proposals through the process is difficult when other more substantial competing priorities exist (as noted above at 3.5).

5 Response to non-compliance with NAPs

- 5.1 Part 3 of the terms of reference examines Airservices' response to non-compliance with NAPs.
- 5.2 As described in the ANO's previous report to the Board on NAPs, Airservices scrutinises the data on compliance with NAPs once per month and has adopted a method using a spreadsheet to track this. A procedure is noted in the spreadsheet, comprising of three parts. First the accuracy of the data is confirmed; if accurate, further investigation will occur; and finally, if an anomaly is identified it will be investigated. An investigation will be triggered if there is less than 80% compliance.
- 5.3 Airservices prepared one-page reports to demonstrate to the community that issues identified by the process have been examined. At the start of this process in March, the ANO reviewed a report for Melbourne, providing feedback to expand the information provided to make it more intelligible to the public. Airservices advised at that time that reports would be promulgated for Gold Coast, Perth, Cairns and Hobart. In June, the ANO noted that Airservices promulgated one-page reports for Hobart, Canberra, Melbourne, and Adelaide, but was not notified by Airservices this had occurred.
- 5.4 The previous ANO systems report noted that Airservices has no power to enforce compliance, and outcomes are dependent upon the degree of cooperation of aircraft operators. Although there has been evidence of some action taken to raise the issue with the relevant airline at Hobart (which is noted by Airservices in the report for that location), Airservices has yet to develop a publicly accessible policy regarding action to be taken for non-compliance including approaching the non-compliant operators. Staff in Airservices Community Engagement advised that complaints are still being raised directly to them and to airlines about adherence to a NAP related to the use of the Runway 30 RNP-AR at Hobart.
- 5.5 In its systems report, the ANO raised the issue of public identification of non-compliant flights as a transparency measure likely to influence compliance. At this stage, Airservices advises that its systems cannot identify individual flights across the ten major airports. While Airservices has been able to do so in limited circumstances such as when prompted by complaints out of Hobart, it cannot do so where traffic volume is high or NAPs are complex. Airservices also advises they are being directed by the Minister to capture all information, including identifying flights, in relation to Reciprocal Runway Operations at Western Sydney International and so are exploring how to achieve this in what is expected to be a low volume environment. By exploring this issue further in the current system design phase, there may be opportunities to automate public identification of flights in a broader range of circumstances.

6 Findings

- 6.1 Throughout this period of monitoring there has been limited progress on public reporting and the response to non-compliance. This appears to have been in part due to a cessation of work under the current contract and the new tender process.
- 6.2 Reporting to the Secretary as required by Ministerial direction will be discontinued with the improvement of publicly accessible reporting, with the notable exception of SODPROPS reporting. This will increase transparency as now the public will be able to see the information provided to the Secretary. The draft the ANO has seen seems an improvement on prior reporting.
- 6.3 The process for reforming the internal administration of NAPs appears reasonable and is progressing. However, there is still a considerable body of work ahead to complete the reforms and to establish a process for the creation and administration of NAPs in future. Across multiple locations it has been shown that the finalisation of airspace and flight path settings, which includes NAPs (in the case of Hobart, only due to ANO intervention), takes 5-10 years. Understandably, these lengthy timelines have drawn criticism from communities which have been subject to PIRs, such as Hobart, Brisbane and the Sunshine Coast. Although reforming all facets of airspace, flight paths, NAPs and internal documents such as local instructions to complement each other will likely achieve an optimum outcome, the fact does remain the timelines are long.
- 6.4 The process to monitor and investigate non-adherence to NAPs has some progress. The development and publication of one-page reports detailing investigation activities undertaken for some airports has occurred, but the systematic promulgation of the reports and the underpinning processes are opaque to the public. The issues of public identification of flights which are non-compliant and the process for raising non-compliance with the relevant operators have received limited attention. Airservices advises that the NAP Adherence Working Group it created to reform NAPs notifies airlines of NAP adherence trends. However, the ANO has not received any evidence that demonstrates this work is occurring.
- 6.5 Preliminary indications are the new system to be constructed may create a better user experience. However, no certainty can be reached on this point until the new system is live in mid-2027 and it is reviewed by the ANO.

7 Recommendations

- 7.1 The identification of flights in relation to NAPs is an issue of importance to noise affected communities as the increased accountability and transparency would encourage airline compliance. I recommend that system design options in the next phase of development include the potential for publicly reporting non-compliant flights.
- 7.2 While recognising that compulsory measures for non-compliance with NAPs are matters for government policy, there are opportunities for non-compulsory co-operative arrangements, such as discussing significant instances of non-compliance with the relevant airlines, ascertaining the reasons, and explaining them to the noise affected communities. I recommend Airservices develop a publicly accessible policy, through engagement with relevant stakeholders, for the action it will take regarding significant instances of non-compliance.

- 7.3 This report on the current period of monitoring by the ANO demonstrates that the ANO should continue to monitor Airservices future progress in this area. Legislation creating an independent ANO, as currently proposed by government, is not likely to come into force before October 2026. The only available mechanism to provide for continued monitoring in the meantime remains monitoring under the ANO Charter. As such, I recommend that the Board agree to terms of reference for the continued monitoring and report by the ANO under the ANO Charter. The appropriate mechanism for ongoing monitoring by the ANO can be reviewed if and when the proposed legislation comes into effect.