

Mr David Diamond
Chair
Brisbane Flight Path Community Alliance
By email: contact@bfpca.org.au

6 May 2021

Dear Mr Diamond

Thank you for your correspondence of 13 April 2021 to Airservices Australia Chairman, Mr John Weber, and Chief Executive Officer, Mr Jason Harfield. Mr Weber and Mr Harfield have asked that I respond on their behalf.

Your recognition of the importance of the aviation industry is appreciated. As the industry grows, and our desire for travel across the country and around the world increases, we need to accommodate a greater number of aircraft movements and unfortunately this often results in suburbs close to major airports experiencing aircraft noise. Where practicable, Airservices seeks to avoid designing flight paths that overfly residential areas, however the closer suburbs are located to an airport, the more likely they are to be impacted by aircraft operations.

The orientation of the runway is the greatest influencer of flight path location, as we have to bring aircraft in to be runway aligned with the runway threshold. With the introduction of the new runway three kilometres to the north-west of the existing Brisbane Airport runway, some new Brisbane suburbs are now being affected by aircraft noise.

Your correspondence contains numerous questions that are best answered by Brisbane Airport Corporation (BAC). I am able to respond to your questions in relation to Airservices approach to flight path design, community noise considerations and air traffic operations.

BAC completed the 2006/2007 Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and led the New Parallel Runway (NPR) engagement program, developed in collaboration with Airservices Australia. I can confirm that the EIS was reviewed as part of our final flight path design environmental assessment to confirm if changes to the earlier assessment required additional engagement. We believe the consultation activity conducted in the planning and delivery of the new runway was appropriate. Significant effort was made to create awareness of the change within the various communities and opportunities were presented to be part of engagement through many different forums and channels.

I note your concern about current aircraft noise levels not being in keeping with what was anticipated. The impact of COVID-19 on the aviation industry could not have been foreseen. Aviation activity has been substantially reduced, with border closures also affecting the fleet mix and origin/destination of flights.

While communities close to the airport will continue to experience aircraft noise as we emerge from the impacts of COVID-19, operations in some locations will vary from those currently being experienced. Accurate, up-to-date information on flight paths, noise levels and Brisbane operations is available through our *Aircraft in Your Neighbourhood* website - [AsA National Insightfull \(airservicesaustralia.com\)](https://www.airservicesaustralia.com).

Due to the impact of COVID-19, the noise data produced since runway opening cannot be reliably compared to the projections included in the EIS, as we have not yet seen the runways operate in a manner that would allow direct comparison to the EIS.

Noise modelling is a projection based on the best information available at the time. Should the forecast noise levels be found to be different to actual monitored levels following a period of stabilised operations that allows reliable comparison, we would seek to identify opportunities to reduce impacts, where practicable.

In our design of flight paths we must consider a number of factors, with safety and operational compliance our highest priority. Where practicable, we attempt to avoid overflying residential areas but as noted earlier, as the flight paths get closer to the airport, our ability to avoid these areas is reduced.

In response to each of your call to action requests:

- Aircraft in Your Neighbourhood has been established to provide accurate noise and flight path information to the community. A link is provided earlier in this response.
- Airservices Australia conducts Post Implementation Reviews (PIR) of new flight paths approximately 12 months after implementation. The PIR seeks to identify the best operational outcome in terms of safety, efficiency and community considerations, and helps us to properly understand the impacts of the new flight paths. Where we can make improvements safely, we will progress these. Information about the Brisbane PIR will be provided in July 2021.
- Community engagement will be a key component of the PIR and will include opportunities for face to face discussion (COVID-19 restrictions allowing).
- Our PIR will offer the opportunity to consider noise improvements and alternatives to the current flight paths where safe and compliant. Our Community Engagement Framework embraces the IAP2 Public Participation Spectrum and Core Values, however the level of engagement applied is dependent on the decision being made.

Thank you for your correspondence and also for sharing the results of your survey, including the link to your full report. The issues you have raised will be included in our PIR considerations and I look forward to engaging productively with BFPCA and the communities you represent at that time.

Kind Regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Donna Marshall".

Donna Marshall
Community Engagement Head