

FORUM ON WESTERN SYDNEY AIRPORT

OPEN GENERAL MEETING – 7 SEPTEMBER 2019

Submitted questions and answers

This document provides answers to questions submitted to the Forum on Western Sydney Airport (FOWSA) for its open meeting held on 7 September 2019.

Questions were submitted by community members and have been de-personalised and summarised as appropriate.

Similar questions have been grouped together where relevant, with a single answer provided.

Q. Have FOWSA at any time considered safety in regard to bird & bat strike, & consulted with the AAWHG on this matter, given that there are >100,000 Grey Headed Flying Foxes with wingspans of 1.5m, living in camps on all sides of the airport site, which creates a high degree of safety risk (acknowledged in the EIS), indeed, the highest in the country, since no other airports are thus situated, & to make things worse, tens of thousands migrate along the Nepean valley just west of Badgerys Creek every night, so is FOWSA prepared to wear any level of safety risk, or would they be prepared to make representations to the government that this site is unsafe for an airport & that the project should therefore be cancelled?

A. The role of FOWSA is to ensure community views are able to be raised with the Government and are taken into account in the development of the airport. The issue of bird and bat strike has been identified as a matter of interest by members and is expected to be considered at one of FOWSA's upcoming meetings.

Bird and bat strike is a safety consideration for all airports and was considered in detail as part of the airport's 2016 Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).

The EIS reviewed species' presence and abundance; habitat available on the airport site and within the study area; projected aircraft movements; and staged construction.

The assessment found that the risk of bird and bat strike is low relative to many other Australian airports, particularly those that are situated in coastal areas. The Western Sydney International airport site is not unique in having wildlife in proximity that may present strike risk.

The EIS identified design, construction and operation measures to maintain the bird and bat strike risk at an acceptable level, including through the development of a Wildlife Hazard Management Plan. It is mandatory that this plan be developed before airport operations commence.

Land use planning measures are being informed by Guideline C of the National Airports Safeguarding Framework (NASF), which covers 'Managing the risk of wildlife strike in the vicinity of airports'. The Western Sydney Planning Partnership, which is responsible for land use planning for the land surrounding the airport site, is working in consultation with Western Sydney Airport and the Department to ensure the risk of wildlife strike is minimised.

The Western Sydney Airport company has undertaken wildlife surveys both on and off the airport site. The company is engaging with industry experts and, along with the Planning Partnership and the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Cities and Regional Development, recently attended the Australian Aviation Wildlife Hazard Group (AAWHG) 2019 Workshop, the main AAWHG industry engagement event.

Western Sydney Airport will continue to undertake wildlife surveys as part of a wildlife monitoring and management program. All major airports around Australia undertake wildlife monitoring and prepare Wildlife Hazard Management Plans.

Western Sydney Airport will prepare a Wildlife Hazard Management Plan as part of the operational requirements for the airport.

Q. I read that groups or organisations can tour the site however if you are not a member of a club or organisation can individuals like myself turn up at nominated times with others for a tour?

A. Earlier this year the Western Sydney Airport company launched Airport Shuttle Tours of the site. The guided tours of the Airport site are specially designed for interested individuals, groups and organisations. The [Western Sydney International Airport Experience Centre](#) is open to all interested members of the community to learn more about the airport and speak to team members about any questions they may have.

To book a guided tour of the airport site, or to enquire about the Experience centre, contact Western Sydney Airport company on 1800 972 972.

Q. When will an info session be held in Blue Mountains?

A. The key objective of FOWSA is to promote informed and responsive engagement between the community, the Federal Government and the Western Sydney Airport company during the planning and development of Western Sydney International. FOWSA aims to hold information sessions annually and will hold these in different parts of Western Sydney. These sessions are widely advertised, including through metropolitan and local newspapers.

In addition to the recent session conducted in Campbelltown, information sessions were held in Warragamba, Chipping Norton, Glenbrook and Penrith in 2018.

As the project progresses, particularly during periods of formal consultation, FOWSA will look at holding more regular sessions to meet public demand.

FOWSA members are available to the public throughout the year to answer questions. Queries can also be directed to FOWSA@infrastructure.gov.au, the Western Sydney Airport via info@wsaco.com.au or the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Cities and Regional Development on wsu@infrastructure.gov.au or free call 1800 038 160.

Q. How will the airport and government deal with its local residents?

A. The role of FOWSA is to ensure that community views are able to be raised with the Government and are taken into account in the planning and development of the airport.

FOWSA has held open meetings in 2018 and 2019 as well as community drop-in information sessions. FOWSA will look at other activities that can be undertaken as the project evolves to respond to the community's needs.

The role of FOWSA is complemented by a range of other activities undertaken by the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Cities and Regional Development and Western Sydney Airport.

The Department oversees a regular program of pop-up information stalls held at local events and shopping centres across Western Sydney and the Blue Mountains. These provide an opportunity for people to stop and pick up information or talk to team members.

The Department also issues a Community Update newsletter approximately once a quarter. This has the most recent information about the airport and includes updates on other projects related to the airport's development. The newsletter is distributed to around 39,000 households, email subscribers, and local councils and libraries. It is also available online.

Western Sydney Airport undertakes a number of initiatives to keep the community up to date on the construction of the airport. For example, it operates Airport Shuttle Tours for groups and organisations to take a guided trip around the airport site and has recently opened an Experience Centre, which provides an opportunity for the community to learn more about the airport, ask questions and see construction underway. Western Sydney Airport is also delivering a Schools Safety Program, visiting schools in the local community to teach students about safety around roads and construction sites.

Other activities include stalls at local community events, attending community forums and maintaining open lines of communications through a community feedback line, a hotline, general information inbox and up-to-date web content.

Q. As this will be a 24/7 airport, what community guarantees, action or mitigations are in place for increased public education and safety.

A. Western Sydney International has always been planned to operate on a curfew-free basis. Very few airports around the world, including in Australia, are restricted by a curfew.

Of Australia's capital city airports, only Adelaide Airport and Sydney (Kingsford Smith) Airport have a curfew.

An effective way of protecting communities from aircraft noise is the application of land use planning controls, which place restrictions on the types of buildings that can be established in areas where aircraft noise will be highest.

The airspace design process will seek to minimise aircraft overflights of residential areas to the greatest extent possible, and minimise noise impacts on communities and noise-sensitive areas.

Where flight paths are unable to avoid residential areas, measures will be considered to achieve the lowest possible impact on the affected communities taking into account safety and other operational factors.

Q. In a presentation given by a departmental representative, the restrictions imposed on flight paths for Western Sydney Airport were explained. Please advise where I can access these restrictions.

A. The Airport Plan requires the Department to undertake a defined formal process for finalising the flight paths over the next several years.

The formal process is informed by several flight path design principles that are outlined in the Airport Plan, including:

- safety is non-negotiable
- overflights of residential areas and noise sensitive facilities will be avoided to the maximum extent possible
- aircraft arrivals will not converge through a single merge point over any single residential area
- consideration will be given to the impacts of aircraft operations on natural and visually sensitive areas such as the Greater Blue Mountains World Heritage Area
- the use of head-to-head operations to and from the south-west, when it is safe to do so, is an important preferred option for managing aircraft noise at night. This preferred option will be thoroughly evaluated through further detailed assessment
- in determining the final flight paths, the community, aerodrome operators and airspace users will be consulted extensively and flight path designs will

be subject to referral under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*.

The full list of airspace design principles for Western Sydney Airport is outlined in the Airport Plan: <http://westernsydneyairport.gov.au/about/airport-plan/index.aspx>

Q. When are the flight paths being released?

A. The flight paths for Western Sydney International (Nancy-Bird Walton) Airport are currently being developed. Detailed work to begin planning for the flight path design started in 2017 and will be finalised in 2024. Before flight paths are finalised, the proposed design will be open for public consultation as part of the environmental assessment. This is expected to take place around 2021.

Further information about the flight path design process is available at the Department's Western Sydney Airport website and in the fact sheet titled *Airspace Design* at <https://www.westernsydneyairport.gov.au/media-resources/resources/factsheets>

Q. You say that approach used for Western Sydney Airport is the same as the one used for other airports across Australia. Does that mean that any existing homes affected will be sound proofed as homes in Mascot were years ago?

A. The approach to designing the airspace for Western Sydney International is consistent with other major airports around Australia.

Proof-of-concept flight paths were developed for the 2016 Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to ensure that both Western Sydney International airport and Sydney (Kingsford Smith) Airport could operate safely and efficiently within the Sydney basin.

This is a key first step for assessing change in Australian airspace and is the standard airspace and flight path design process that is carried out at other Australian airports.

Land use planning controls have been in place around the Badgerys Creek site for a number of decades to prevent noise-sensitive development near the airport. The Commonwealth and NSW governments have agreed that new residential development around Western Sydney International airport will not be permitted where the Australian Noise Exposure Forecast (ANEF) exceeds 20. This is the most stringent ANEF control in the country—by comparison at Sydney (Kingsford Smith) Airport new development is restricted at ANEF levels over 25.

The airspace design process will seek to further reduce aircraft overflights of residential areas, and minimise noise impacts on communities and noise-sensitive areas where possible.

Government policy related to the insulation and possible acquisition of residential and other noise-sensitive buildings near Western Sydney International will be established as part of the detailed airspace and flight path design process.

Q. Pursuant to the Terms of Reference for FOWSA and specifically "FOWSA will also have a critical role in ensuring the views of the community are taken into account throughout the air space and flight path design process for the airport's first stage of development" I wish to submit the following question:-

The report Dr Eric Ancich and Mr Donald Carter entitled "*Assessment of Measured Aircraft Noise Levels Under the Existing Flight Paths of Sydney Kingsford Smith Airport with Reference to Western Sydney Airport*" was forwarded on request to Ms Sarah Leeming, General Manager Regulatory, Environmental and Stakeholder Engagement Branch, Western Sydney Unit Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Cities and Regional Development on 19 April 2019.

The Department responded to the report by email on 26 June 2019 and subsequently a meeting was held in Canberra on 9 August 2019 between Ms Leeming and her staff with Dr Ancich and Mr Carter. The outcome of the meeting was that there was agreement on all but one of the issues raised by the Department in its response to the report. Subsequent correspondence from Dr Ancich by letter of 26 August 2019 to the Department provided additional information that demonstrated that the noise levels of aircraft on approach to Kingsford Smith Airport recorded in the report were valid and therefore applicable to WSA. The perceived loudness of noise levels stated in the report exceeded those predicted in the WSA EIS for Blacktown and Blaxland by nearly 3 and 4 times respectively and, by implication, other areas of Western Sydney impacted by aircraft noise.

In light of the above, what measures does FOWSA intend to take to ensure the implications of the report are communicated to the community and to WSA Corporation?

A. The role of FOWSA is to ensure community views are taken into account in the planning and development of the airport. FOWSA members are kept up to date on the development of the airport to ensure they can adequately inform the wider community.

The report authored by Dr Ancich and Mr Carter has been provided to FOWSA members and will be discussed at the next FOWSA meeting in December 2019. Members have also been given a review of the report prepared by the Department in consultation with the acoustic consultant who undertook the noise assessment in the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) 2015.

The Department's technical review found that the approach to aircraft noise assessment in the EIS is sound and that the indicative airspace and flight paths are presented in a format that is consistent for major development plans prepared under the Airports Act 1999.

The correspondence of 30 August 2019 stated that the Department had significant reservations about the methodology applied in undertaking the noise assessment, the interpretation of data, and the manner in which Sydney (Kingsford Smith) Airport aircraft noise data was applied to future flight paths at Western Sydney International. The Department believes that its approach to aircraft noise assessment in the 2016 Environmental Impact Statement was sound.

As part of the flight path design process, further noise assessment will be undertaken with the associated formal consultation process in 2021. When this occurs, FOWSA will have a key role to play in ensuring that the flight paths and noise assessment are communicated to communities and that there is a variety of methods and opportunities for community feedback on the proposal.

Q. It has been mentioned numerous times through the Environmental Impact Statement documents that “the townships of Silverdale and Warragamba will not be subjected to Jet aircraft overflights”. Will this be introduced into legislation through the Airports Act 1999 and enshrined or will it be just listed as a part of operational procedure of the airport and possibly overturned if deemed operationally necessary?

A. The proof of concept flight paths were developed for the 2016 Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to ensure that Western Sydney International airport could operate safely and efficiently alongside Sydney Airport within the Sydney basin.

The EIS stated that there would be a further comprehensive process to develop and formalise the flight paths, and that this would be subject to further environmental assessment and community consultation. This process is mandated by the Airport Plan 2016.

The flight paths for Western Sydney International airport are currently being developed. Before the flight paths are finalised, the proposed design will be open for public consultation and community feedback as part of the environmental assessment process. This is expected to take place around 2021.

Specific flight paths or aircraft procedures are not legislated. A key principle of the airspace design for Western Sydney International is that flights over residential areas and noise-sensitive facilities are to be avoided as much as practically possible. Where flight paths are unable to avoid residential areas, noise abatement procedures will be optimised to ensure that residents are less affected. The flight path design process will carefully consider the location of flight paths relative to Silverdale and Warragamba to protect the amenity of these townships.

Q. How will the Western Sydney Airport assist the local jobs deficit in Campbelltown/Western Sydney areas?

A. The airport will support over 11,000 direct and indirect jobs during the construction period and almost 28,000 full-time jobs within five years of opening. Jobs in construction, transport and logistics, retail, hospitality and professional services will be available closer to where people live.

Western Sydney Airport, the company building and operating the airport, has set a local employment target of 30 per cent during construction, increasing to 50 per cent once the airport is operational. So far the project is exceeding that target – as of 30 June 2019, 54 per cent of the workforce was from Western Sydney.

Q. My understanding is that before landing, airplanes dump fuel. If that is the case what if any environmental control will be put in place to ensure health and safety of the environment and residents affected by this practice?

A. The need to jettison (dump) fuel is very rare and only occurs when an aircraft needs to reduce weight before making an emergency landing. Most aircraft flying services in Australia, such as the Boeing 737 and Airbus 320, do not need to reduce weight to land in emergency situations and are, in fact, incapable of jettisoning fuel.

In 2014, there were 10 instances of civilian passenger aircraft jettisoning fuel in Australia out of 730,201 air traffic movements, representing approximately 0.001 per cent of movements.

In the event that emergency fuel jettisoning is required, Airservices Australia enforces strict regulations on when, how and where it can occur. Jettisoned fuel vaporises rapidly and disperses widely. This means it is highly unlikely to reach the ground and would have a negligible effect on air or water quality, or the wider environment.

Q. To rezone the last two roads of Badgerys Creek. They are Lawson and Martin Road. Lawson road of Badgerys Creek are been impacted by the noise/ dust and traffic increase. We are adjoining to the airport site?

Q. My understanding is NSW – dept? will decide and plan where roads and services will be located in Badgerys Creek aerotropolis. Is it possible to have the plan ready soon so the residents of the area can benefit from the services of the area? This will also help others (council, developers) to give the residents of the area to plan their future movements. At present, plans are on hold. This affects mainly the senior people in their plans for themselves and their children?

A. The NSW Government is responsible for the land use planning and zoning framework for the area around the airport site.

The Western Sydney Land Use and Infrastructure Implementation Plan (LUIIP) was released last year (2018) for community consultation. It provides a framework for land use and important measures to protect the community from aircraft noise.

Stage 1 of the LUIIP identifies where certain types of land uses could be located to embrace the opportunities set out in the Western Sydney City Deal, the Future Transport Strategy and the Western City District Plan.

The NSW Government will now prepare the second stage of the LUIIP, a State Environment Planning Policy and a Development Control Plan for the initial precincts. This work will provide for the zoning of the initial precincts, and is expected to be released later this year.

Q. Need to lower dust surrounding suburbs (Badgerys Creek, Luddenham, Bringelly)

A. Western Sydney Airport, the company responsible for building the airport, is monitoring and managing impacts on noise and air quality during the airport's construction and operation. The Department is responsible for regulating Western Sydney Airport to ensure that measures included in the EIS and Airport Plan to minimise impacts from the airport construction and operation are complied with.

Western Sydney Airport and its construction contractors take a number of steps to minimise the impact of dust on air quality, including air quality monitoring, the use of water carts, monitoring wind conditions and adjusting work plans accordingly. Western Sydney Airport has developed Construction Environmental Management Plans (CEMPs) that outline steps to ensure that the project meets permitted air quality criteria as a minimum. Copies of the CEMPs are available on the [Western Sydney Airport website](#).

Q. Are there any plans to upgrade Elizabeth Drive as part of the airport development?

A. A new intersection at Elizabeth Drive is being constructed in collaboration with Transport for NSW as part of the early earthworks package. Further works on Elizabeth Drive are the responsibility of Transport for NSW, with funding being provided by the NSW Government to investigate potential upgrades.

Q. Will Pitt St be open once Badgerys Creek is opened?

A. While Pitt Street will remain closed during construction of the first stage of Western Sydney International, options for Pitt Street when the Airport is operating are now being considered. There will be greater clarity when planning for the Airport's operations and ground transport links is complete.

Q. I have not seen how aviation fuel will be delivered to the site a very important component, can you provide an answer.

A. Initially, jet fuel to Western Sydney International is expected to be supplied by road tanker. That is consistent with how it is supplied to similar sized airports in Australia, like the Gold Coast and Adelaide Airports.

The Department completed a report in December 2017 on a strategic assessment of corridor options for a fuel pipeline to supply the Airport. This was a condition of the Airport Plan 2016.

The report found that a pipeline would not be commercially viable until jet fuel demand reaches around 2.5 million litres per day at the airport. This was projected to occur around 2034 when passenger numbers are expected to justify investment in the required infrastructure by the commercial sector.

The report found that when the airport is first operational, five fuel trucks a day will be required, which is a very small portion of the trucks on Sydney's roads.

In terms of identifying a corridor for a potential fuel line, the NSW Government is responsible for the identification and preservation of corridors for critical infrastructure such as roads, rail and utilities, including fuel pipelines.

The NSW Government is planning to undertake a more detailed study of the specific corridor options for supplying fuel to the airport in the next few years.

A further condition of the Airport Plan 2016 is that, until such time as a fuel pipeline is in place, Western Sydney Airport must prepare and publish periodic reviews of aviation fuel supply comparing the social, economic and environmental costs, savings and benefits of fuel supplied to the airport by road with other alternatives, including a fuel pipeline.

Q. I have been a resident of Campbelltown for my entire life. I understand Western Sydney Airport will embed digital infrastructure within its design to ensure a world-leading smart-airport and 21st-century customer experience. How could this government investment in digital infrastructure benefit Campbelltown?

A. Western Sydney International, as a new airport that will cater for up to 10 million passengers a year, is expected to draw digital assets such as 5G into the Western Sydney region, including Campbelltown, faster than what would have otherwise been the case.

Western Sydney Airport is a member of the Steering Group of the Digital Action Plan of the Western Sydney City Deal, along with Campbelltown City Council and other local councils, and together they are looking for opportunities and synergies to share digital assets and technologies.