

# Forum on Western Sydney Airport

Update from the 21st meeting held on 28 September 2023

## Chair's message

The Forum on Western Sydney Airport (FoWSA) held its third meeting for the year on 28 September 2023. The meeting gave members the opportunity to hear about the community engagement that has occurred since the release of the preliminary flight paths and an update on the draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) on the preliminary flight paths which will be released later this year.

At the meeting the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts (the department) provided FoWSA with an update on community engagement since the release of the preliminary flight paths on 27 June 2023:

- There have been over 240,000 unique visitors to the Aircraft Overflight Noise Tool to access the preliminary flight paths.
- The department conducted a letterbox drop across Western Sydney and the Blue Mountains to a total of 922,345 residential and business addresses.
- The department has held 22 community events across Western Sydney and the Blue Mountains, including 7 community information stalls, 14 community information and feedback sessions and 1 online webinar.

WSP Australia (WSP), which is assisting the department's environmental assessment of the preliminary flight paths, outlined the engagement plan for the release of the draft EIS and explained how learnings from engagement to date has informed the forward plan to better target communities and spread awareness.

WSP also presented on the ambient noise monitoring that was undertaken to support the draft EIS. A field study using noise monitoring terminals was conducted from August to October 2022 to establish ambient noise levels in areas surrounding WSI, with details in the draft EIS.

When the draft EIS goes on exhibition, I call on members to encourage their local communities to have their say. Feedback will be considered in finalising the flight path design. The department will continue to hold community events during the public exhibition to provide the public with an opportunity to get information, speak to a technical expert and help people to make an informed submission.

Separate to the draft EIS process, the department encouraged interested members to review the Aviation Green Paper, which was released on 7 September 2023. The paper can be accessed [here](#) and [submissions](#) are open until 30 November 2023. The Department will also undertake a round of detailed consultation in October and November 2023, holding a series of roundtable sessions virtually and in-person across Australia. The White Paper is expected to be released in mid-2024.

**Lee de Winton**  
Independent Chair, Forum on Western Sydney Airport

## Update from the airport operator WSA Co Limited (WSA)

WSA provided members with an update on the progress of the construction of the Western Sydney International (Nancy-Bird Walton) Airport:



- Glass façade continues to be installed on the terminal pier
- Asphaltting of the runway commencing mid-October
- M12 work progress
- Internal airport road network and bridges progressing well in both airside and landside areas
- Progress with Sydney Metro tunnel boring machines
- Terminal roof structural steel installation progressing well and expected to be completed by the end of the year.

WSA continues with their community engagement with visits to career expos, CSIRO STEM workshops, school visits, TAFE visits and a First Nation Taking Off Program. Total visitors to the Experience Centre to date has also crossed 50,000 people.

## Tour of the Defence Establishment Orchard Hills

Restoration and management of at least 900 hectares of native vegetation, including Cumberland Plain Woodland, at the Defence Establishment Orchard Hills (DEOH) forms an important part of the department's program to offset biodiversity impacts resulting from the WSI development. The department organised for a tour of the DEOH for FoWSA members to



see the restoration work that is being done. The tour was very informative and showed the great work that is being done on the site to restore the native habitat.

During the tour, the members learnt about Cultural Burning, which is being undertaken on the site; this [example](#) is from a Warragamba project.

You can also see the [Habitat Hollows techniques](#) being used onsite (about half-way through this video).

## Upcoming FoWSA meetings in 2023 – indicative program

### November 2023