



The Australian Strategic Air Traffic Management Group (ASTRA)

Statement of Principles Protecting airspace around Australia's airports

Context:

- A. The Australian aviation industry contributes significantly to Australia's economic prosperity and supports hundreds of thousands of jobs.
- B. Safe and efficient airports are an essential part of the transport networks on which all successful modern economies rely.
- C. Aviation activity has grown strongly over recent decades and continues to grow:
 - i. The number of airline passengers and aircraft flying to or from Australia's capital city airports are forecast to reach 235 million and 1.7 million respectively by 2030.
 - ii. The number of airline passengers and aircraft flying to or from Australia's regional and general aviation airports also continues to grow strongly, delivering a significant economic contribution to communities across the nation.
- D. The safety of airline passengers, the aircraft in which they fly and the general public is of paramount importance to the aviation industry.
- E. Safety, in part, relies on defining and protecting the operational airspace of Australia's airports. 'Prescribed Airspace' protects aircraft from obstacles that could be a threat to safety and ensures that communications, navigation and surveillance equipment can operate free from interference.
- F. Prescribed airspace also protects the envisaged future operational airspace to safeguard an airport's ability to grow and meet future demand.

Development and land use planning in the vicinity of airports:

- G. Australian Governments are promoting new development in our cities in order to build a more competitive economy, create jobs, improve urban sustainability and improve housing choice and affordability.
- H. The aviation industry recognises that this new development is essential to accommodate population growth, ensure Australia's future prosperity and promote the economic and social wellbeing of all Australians.
- I. State/Territory and Local Governments are primarily responsible for land use planning and development approvals in the vicinity of airports. The Australian Government, in consultation with the aviation industry, has a decision-making role for development proposals that intrude into prescribed airspace.
- J. The aviation industry is a key stakeholder in development and land use planning decisions around airports.

- K. Australia is a signatory to international civil aviation agreements that require developments in the vicinity of Australia's major and other airports to meet internationally agreed criteria for protecting airspace from intrusion by tall buildings and other structures or hazardous activities. For federally-leased airports, these criteria are reflected in the Commonwealth *Airports Act 1996* and *Airports (Protection of Airspace) Regulations 1996*.
- L. Infringement of the prescribed airspace of federally leased airports without approval is an offence under section 183 of the *Airports Act 1996* and severe penalties apply.
- M. To provide guidance to governments about prescribed airspace, representatives from the Department of Infrastructure and Regional Development and Department of Defence, aviation agencies, State and Territory planning and transport agencies and the Australian Local Government Association developed the National Airports Safeguarding Framework (the Framework).
- N. Commonwealth, State and Territory ministers agreed to adopt the Framework at the Standing Council on Transport and Infrastructure (SCOTI) meeting on 18 May 2012.
- O. The Framework's *Guideline F: Managing the risk of intrusions into the protected operational airspace of airports* provides advice for land use planners and decision makers about assessment of developments within and around an airport's prescribed airspace, including intrusions into that airspace, and the need to better integrate aviation issues with land use planning and development approvals processes.
- P. Land use planning and development proposals are increasingly coming into conflict with the prescribed airspace around many of Australia's airports.

Key principles:

1. As major contributors to the Australian economy, we, as key participants in the Australian aviation industry, are united in our view that the prescribed airspace around Australia's airports needs to be protected now and into the future.
2. We firmly believe that protecting the prescribed airspace around Australia's airports is vital to ensure airports and aircraft operators can continue to operate safely and efficiently.
3. We, as aviation stakeholders, support Australia's airports, preparing detailed "prescribed airspace" charts, consistent with relevant national and international aviation standards and engaging with relevant planning authorities to ensure a clear understanding of the resulting implications for development in the vicinity of airports.
4. We urge State, Territory and Local Governments, as decision makers, to ensure land use planning and development proposals are approved only if they do not conflict with the prescribed airspace of airports.
5. We call on State, Territory and Local Governments to include in their state, regional and local planning and development control schemes, provisions to fully implement the National Airports Safeguarding Framework and, in particular, its associated *Guideline F: Managing the Risk of Intrusions into the Protected Airspace of Airports*, as agreed by governments at the Standing Council on Transport and Infrastructure meeting on 18 May 2012.
6. We, as aviation stakeholders, support Australia's airports continuing to monitor and, where appropriate, updating their prescribed airspace for compliance with regulations and take necessary action to rectify unapproved infringements to that airspace.

The members of The Australian Strategic Air Traffic Management Group, listed below, endorse the *Statement of Principles - Protecting airspace around Australia's airports* as stated at the ASTRA Council Meeting held on Friday 04 December 2015.

