

Meeting Notes
Williamtown Advisory Group – 19Mar2015

Attendees

AIRCDRE Steve Roberton, WGCDR Peter Cluff (Air Base Executive Officer), Brenin Presswell (Defence Support and Reform Group); N-NSW Environment Manager Helen Horn (Defence Support and Reform Group), Ian Hooper – Joint Strike Fighter Project Team; Tim Crossdale – Port Stephens Council; Aaron Spadaro – NSW Premiers & Cabinet; Sue Hirsch, Ruth Lunney - West Medowie reps; John Donahoo – East Medowie/Medowie Progress Association; Malcolm St Hill – NSW Trade and Investment; Marcus Lancaster – NAL; Glen Whitton - Medowie Public School Principal; WGCDR David Strong – Air Force Head Quarters; Grahame Thompson - Air Force Head Quarters; Aircraft Noise Ombudsman representative – Tim Abberton

Apologies: Salt Ash Rep - Bev Male; East Medowie Rep - Bill George, Kristen Keegan – Hunter Business Chamber; Trevor John – Hunter Regional Development; Tricia Phillips – Oyster Cove Rep (attended community meeting), Ross Osbourn – Raymond Terrace

Welcome to Glen Whitton – Principal Medowie Public School, replaced Kerrie Jamieson – Salt Ash Public School

Senior Australian Defence Force Officer – Welcome/Introductions

AIRCDRE Steve Roberton performed introductions and welcomed all attendees to Williamtown Advisory Group (WAG) held at RAAF Base Williamtown and reinforced the role of the group. AIRCDRE Roberton reinforced the commitment Defence has to the WAG.

Minutes from Nov 2014 (to be adopted out of session)

What	Who	When
Action 1: Defence asked of the status of the proposal to Defence Area Controlled Regulations 1989 for Protected Airspace.	DSRG (Brenin Presswell) to supply written response to NCC, and summarise the process – in lieu of NCC rep not attending meeting	Written response attached to Meeting Notes
Action 2(a): Group to look at the terms of reference, and seek confirmation of the importance and structure of the forum; Action 2(b): Group discussed the need to recruit new community representatives. Defence agreed to suggest a few options – however it was suggested a call for nominations in the Port Stephens Examiner was perhaps appropriate.	J. Payne to develop options and distribute to group	Options developed and attached to Meeting Notes
Action 3: Community request for Dept of Planning and PSC to look	Dept of Premiers and Cabinet; and PSC	See general discussion.

at the scale and type of aircraft noise and look at the level of information that exists in the community, particularly with regard to information given to solicitors as part of property conveyancing.		
Action 4: ABXO undertaken to address signage issues around the base and will involve community consultation/council as to information on the signs and their location.	RAAF Base WLM	Update provided in meeting.

Action 3 – (Discussion)

Aaron Spadaro (P&C) passed on the requests to NSW Planning for considerations to be made to having discussions around the Sect 149 certificate – planning controls applied to property purchases/sales near airports, and bases. Aaron has requested Dept of Planning to consider attendance at these meetings.

Sue Hirsch: Restrictions/planning controls only appear to apply to ANEF zones, and there is a need for people to know. Suggestions around a separate planning certificate which provides generalised advice to residents regarding the aircraft noise they will be subjected to and references to general information.

WGCDR Cluff (ABXO): People should be able to find out noise details on the Port Stephens Council website.

Sue Hirsch – In the situation of Wade Close, Medowie – Perhaps look to a Section 149 certificate of sorts being attached to the Development Application, and not just the Building Application – highlighting that the area could be subject to aircraft noise.

Port Stephens Council and NSW Planning do have a duty of care around this issue. They should look to protect people. Key issue is the option taken way after point of purchase.

Strategic planning exercise – ie the Hunter Regional Growth Plan establish where future growth is expected to occur.

Noise affected areas vs Asset protection – we need to look at property values. Also flag no build zones, or those area with no attenuation.

No noise in Medowie – but it is a tainted area.

Aaron Spadaro: Regional Planning Process – July 2015 - decide where to best input into the process.

Tim Abberton(Aircraft Noise Ombudsman rep) advised the Real Estate Institute of Queensland has a section 149 equivalent as a provision of notifications; the

notification is to anyone subject aircraft noise – Above and beyond any planning requirement.

Tim Crossdale (PSC) Looking at those options – such as a general planning provision which indicates a given property maybe affected by aircraft noise (provided by the seller)

Action 4: (from Nov 14 meeting)

WGCDR Cluff - Signage

Met with Port Stephens council and noted they do not want any additional signage; but we can update the wording on the current signage, although this wording had been chosen and is a direct result of the Hawk EIS.

Trade-off has to be that the words are understood by the public; advice has been that requests for signage wording changes to go through local councillors.

Also there needs to be recognition that there are better ways to inform the public; and we need to educate people about the JSF – signage is not just the issue.

Action 1:

Tim Crossdale from PSC has offered to organise a meeting with council and community representatives to discuss signage in other areas.

Discussion around the use of the 149 Certificate in vicinity of Canberra airport – All new development in the ANEF zone receive notifications for new developments.

Glen Whitton(Medowie Principal)

For schools the main interest is noise factors. High school students appear to be much less affected than little children. Concerns are that noise may have an effect for Wirreander and Medowie schools.

John Donahoo addendum #1 added to the minutes

Updates:

Senior Australian Defence Force Officer for RAAF Base Williamtown Discussion Operation Okra

“... ADFs contribution to the international effort to combat the ISIL terrorist threat in Iraq ... closely coordinated with the Iraqi Government, Gulf Nations and a broad coalition of international partners.”

Australian Defence Force self-deployed 12,000km and was ready for combat operations 19 days from Government decision. Personnel from RAAF Bases Amberley; Richmond and Williamtown were deployed in September 2014.

75SQN RAAF Tindal left March 2015 as part of 2nd rotation. Defence is planning for an ongoing commitment in Iraq.

Commander, Air Combat Group has responsibilities towards aircrew and fast jet operations are essential for the security of Australia – and providing the Government with options.

Preparedness levels directed (non-negotiable), and based around agreed Notice-to-Move (measured in days).

Williamtown Advisory Group

AIRCDRE Steve Robertson as Senior Australian Defence Force Officer for RAAF Base Williamtown presides over the formation of the group and provides considered advice to the Williamtown Consultative Forum on issues. Group has been functioning since 2012, and reinforced Defence commitment to the process.

Defence is aware of impact of our operations on local community, and RAAF Base wants to minimise our footprint on the local area

‘Fly Neighbourly’ Program: promulgated November 2012

Engagement:

- WLM Advisory Group - since 2012,
- SAAWR Community meetings – since 2012;
- WLM Consultative Forum meetings

Information program: Increased Media Releases issued around

- operations,
- monthly columns,
- RAAF Base WLM website and
- email notifications to Base neighbours, SAAWR neighbours

RAAF Base Williamtown – ACG Fly Neighbourly

- Promulgated November 2012
- Visiting Squadrons adhere to Fly Neighbourly Program
- Basis for national RAAF Fly Neighbourly Policy

Evaluating Program:

- Reduction in complaints recorded around Base, Raymond Terrace and West Medowie
- Attributed to revised ground tracks/departure profiles, and increased notifications of Base activities

Listening to You:

- Noise Abatement – New ‘norm’ Civilian aircraft will arrive/depart over the ocean (Runway 12) when conditions suitable
- Improved information flow – since 2011 regarding operations – MR, monthly column; email notifications – SAAWR, around Base
- Review of ‘Pop-to-Dive’ Pattern over the SAAWR – noise sharing

Noise and Flightpath Monitoring System

- installed additional monitors around SAAWR, and received advice on locations
- new interactive system which provides better information for community to better understand aircraft noise in their area

Ongoing issues:

- Concerns around SAAWR use in school holidays. ‘Best Endeavours’ – difficult due course structures
- Attenuation Study is still working its way through Defence. Will provide more information at next WAG meeting.

F-35A Update:

- First RAAF WLM pilot flew the F-35A aircraft week of 16-March 2015
- Most F-35A Joint Strike Fighter Lightning II aircraft, to be based at WLM

- 72 F-35A aircraft – comprising three WLM squadrons (two operational) - + one at RAAF Base Tindal.
- First two Australian JSF off production line at Fort Worth in August 2014
- The first F-35A aircraft will arrive in Australia in 2018 and the first squadron, Number 3 Squadron, will be operational in 2021.
- All 72 aircraft fully operational by 2023

Salt Ash Air Weapons Range usage:

- Authorised to a max of 115 days pa
- Long term average approx 60 days pa
- Thus far up 19Mar2015 - 7 days
- Noise complaints/enquiries register – 13

Range use for 2014 – 62 days

Hawk – 34 days; Hornet – 14 days; PC-9 – 15 days

Air Base Executive Officer:

RAAF Base Williamtown includes SAAWR use for 2015, upcoming operations/events including Base redevelopment - ABXO

ABXO committed to checking whether the new Runway 12/30 is promulgated.

Newcastle Airport Ltd update

Marcus Lancaster: - Aero Pelican as of late April plan to operate an early morning Sydney-Canberra service out of Williamtown. Terminal is building a new arrivals area as part of extensive improvement for NAL. Airport is looking to put in place processing facilities for flights to NZ – Jetstar/ANZ offering flights; and looking to increase capacity for Qantasline to Brisbane – plenty of scope within airport/Defence agreement for additional flights.

Port Stephens Council

Tim Crossdale:-Development Control Plan is about to go on public exhibition for 6 weeks. Will go through the Dept of Defence Estate Planning Branch – and take any submissions on board as part of this process.

Premiers & Cabinet

Aaron Spadaro: - Hunter Regional Growth Plan will be on public exhibition soon. Govt is looking for formal input into the process from community.

NSW Trade and Investment

Malcolm St Hill - BAE nominated as regional maintainer for JSF
Represents an opportunity for further employment and growth

Community Groups

Sue Hirsch:

John Donahoo:

Thanked Base for efforts in sorting the civil aviation issues ie overflights over Medowie/Raymond Terrace early mornings - Runway 12/30

Mr Donahoo raised a number of issues as per submission into the F-35A EIS process, and the Public Works Committee hearings.

Discussions centred around the engine is noisy, and queried the noise profiles as indicated in the EIS; assumptions around the noise profiles but wanted to clarify whether the F-35A simulator was certified.

Defence advised the F-35A simulator work was done in 2011, and it was this assessment that allowed Air Force to revise the noise impacts prior to the release of the 2025 ANEF (August 2011)

SADFO advised that whilst we are waiting for the aircraft to fly in Australia before conducting final noise assessments; Defence did have confidence in the 2011 modelling.

Action 2: *Look to the possibility of an update if available in the flight profiles from the US, and Lockheed Martin.*

Discussion around the RAAF Base Williamstown Noise Abatement procedures such as the Fly Neighbourly Policy, which means Air Force does what it can to minimise noise. This applies to all platforms, and provides guidance for aircrew.

Defence needs to devise a way how to put in a few more lines in the ANEFs, which is approved by code and local councils are obliged to adhere to the code. PSC admits there is considerable complexity

Tim Abberton ANO rep: Advised the Australian Standards were recently under review. He outlined that everyone has a role (including the building and real estate industry). Department wanted a broader review - but not supported by the group and therefore the review had a narrow scope.

Hence the ANEF process stands, although the ANO has developed a guidelines document, in recognition of the limitations of the ANEF.

Defence x research into system it uses for land use planning by people for jet aircraft noise. People surveyed living in the environment are different and can't apply those results to people who have not lived there.

WGCDR Strong (AFHQ): Defence did provide input in the AS20-1=21 review. Defence take away from the review that there are many different ways to communicate about noise.

John Donahoo:

Advised people did not believe the predictions around noise modelling for the F-35A. Bill George (community rep) identified that the issues around predictions for Medowie residents etc.

Requested information regarding noise data for the F-35A, and wanted raw data for the aircraft. Draft EIS contained no raw flight data, there community can't do our own calculations.

Action 3: *Clarification from JSF Project as to the data/information utilised to compile the noise data and flight profiles for F-35A.*

Defence advised as these questions were asked of the project in Mr Donahoo's submission, the questions should be addressed in the Supplementary Report.

SADFO advised he would expect the flight path data to be collated on the best available technical data.

Mr Donahoo advised that he wanted access to the raw data, and commented that it should be unclassified as available for the community to use. He also suggested a technical committee might be useful.

SADFO advised the WAG was sufficient for these purposes.

Other Business:

NFPMS update discussion/presentation

For copy of presentation please go to

http://www.airforce.gov.au/Bases/New_South_Wales/RAAF_Base_Williamtown/?RAAF-hGKolBgcjFzkAjuJv83Grq59BEM+C152 attached to WAG Meeting Notes.

F-35A EIS Update

- Draft EIS was available for public comment from 21 July 2014 until 19 September 2014
- Supplementary Report to the Draft EIS due to be completed by the end of March 2015
- Final EIS, comprised of the Draft EIS and the Supplementary Report, scheduled to be submitted to the Minister for the Environment in March 2015
- Minister for the Environment provides Defence with a proposed approval decision and invites comment – April/May 2015
- Minister for the Environment finalises his approval decision, including what conditions, if any, are required – May/June 2015

- 53 submissions were received in total
 - 44 from the general public
 - 5 from government agencies
 - 2 from non-government organisations
 - 2 from industry

- From the 53 submissions received a total of 482 individual issues were raised.

- The majority of the issues (90%) were associated with RAAF Base Williamtown or Salt Ash Air Weapons Range (SAAWR).

- Most submissions were concerned with the potential impacts of noise emissions from the proposed flying operations of the F-35A aircraft.

- All public comments and submissions made on the Draft EIS have been considered in the Supplementary Report to the Draft EIS.

- All public comments will also be forwarded to the Department of the Environment as part of the Final EIS submission process.

- The Supplementary Report will be published online at www.f35evolution.com.au

- The Supplementary Report will be available to view at selected venues around Australia for one month after submission to Department of the Environment
- The Minister for the Environment has 40 business days in which to decide whether or not to approve the proposed F-35A flying operations

- During this period, the Department of the Environment will review the Final EIS and provide a recommendation report to the Minister.

- The Minister for the Environment is required to invite comment on his proposed decision and any proposed conditions from other relevant Ministers and the proponent (Defence).

- The Minister *may* decide to publish his proposed decision on the Internet and invite public comment.
- When the Minister for the Environment has finalised his approval decision, it will be published on the Department of the Environment's EPBC Act Public Notices website at <http://www.environment.gov.au/epbc/public-notice>.
- Defence will also publish relevant documentation on the approval decision at www.f35evolution.com.au
- Following receipt and consideration of any approval conditions, Defence intends to conduct public information sessions on the outcomes of the EIS process. This is likely to occur in July 2015.

Explanation of Ombudsman Review – Aircraft Noise inc military operations

For copy of presentation please go to

http://www.airforce.gov.au/Bases/New_South_Wales/RAAF_Base_Williamtown/?RAAF-hGKolBgcjFzkAjuJv83Grq59BEM+C152 attached to WAG Meeting Notes.

Next meeting:

TBC – October/November 2015

Important Links:

PWC Report for the F-35A Facilities Project

http://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/Joint/Public_Works/NACC/Public_Hearings

For past WAG and WCF Minutes:

http://www.airforce.gov.au/Bases/New_South_Wales/RAAF_Base_Williamtown/?RAAF-hGKolBgcjFzkAjuJv83Grq59BEM+C152