
From: Allan Bligh OAM [bligha@ozemail.com.au]
Sent: Thursday, 20 February 2020 11:53 AM
To: DPE PSVC Central Coast Mailbox
Subject: Warnervale Airport (Restrictions) Act 1996 Review

Categories: Reply Sent

The Director

Central Coast and Hunter Region
Department of Planning, Industry and Environment
PO Box 1148
GOSFORD NSW 2250

Email: centralcoast@planning.nsw.gov.au

Dear Director,

Submission in relation to the Warnervale Airport (Restrictions) Act 1996 review.

I understand and agree that my submission will be made public.

The statement below represents my personal opinion pertaining to the act review:

The Warnervale airport is part a chain of airports that are the backbone of the non-airline aviation industry of Australia. To hinder access to this airport, impacts all aviation and is particularly debilitating to the local operator to whom aircraft utilisation, is fundamental to business survival and future investment.

In a period of rapidly developing aviation technology changes, it seems unusual that a council having the opportunities for local youth on its mind, would restrict rather than embrace aviation activity and development.

The transfer of drone technology to manned aeroplanes along with the emerging electric, hydrogen and other power plants offer huge prospects for investment and skilled employment. Currently, most see drones as toy-like helicopters but the need to carry the weight of people with reasonable economy, will necessitate fixed wing designs which, need the runway and taxiway offered by Warnervale.

To seize the glittering prizes that automated flight and revolutionary power plants offer, your local aviation businesses (airport and aircraft operator alike) must be profitable, strong and above all ready to embrace the new technology both fiscally and mentally. Within a decade of their introduction, space based navigation systems gave General Aviation aircraft the navigation and communication power of an early B747 and swept all the terrestrial based aids away. The same dramatic and speedy change will happen when automated or semi-automated personal flight powered by new-generation power plants are introduced. The citizens of the Central Coast should not be deprived of the downstream skills and benefits of these developments.

On the subject of runway length, surely a balanced and independant stance would be that the minimum runway length and width should be predicated on the needs of the predominant aircraft in the RFDS + Air Ambulance + RAAF/Army/RAN (Liaison) fleet namely the King Air (or whatever its successor might be). Why a council or a parliament would (or should) involve itself in runway length without operational knowledge is neither sound nor practical.

Is the Warnervale Airport (Restrictions) Act 1996 (the Act) relevant or necessary?

The Act is neither relevant nor necessary.

- The Act was enacted to protect the community from large jet transport operations. The runway has never been sufficiently long enough for any jet transport aircraft operating in Australia.
- The airport is surrounded by terrain which makes it very difficult to physically lengthen the runway (wetlands immediately South, a major road and rising terrain to the North).
- Environmental zoning surrounding the Airport requires that State Government must consent to any lengthening of the runway.
- There is no economic case for jet airline or freight operations at Warnervale, as Warnervale is within a 2 hour radius of Sydney, Newcastle and soon, Western Sydney Airport, all of which cater to these operations.

If the Review concludes the Act is to remain.

Clause 2 of the Act limits aircraft movements to 88 per day in the event the runway is lengthened. The department has made a determination that the former Wyong council lengthened the runway, triggering this clause.

- The current flight training provider has operated for over 4 decades without being constrained by the movement cap and at the time the Act was put in place was regularly performed over 300 movements a day.
- Training aircraft regularly perform up to 20 movements per hour. Multiple training aircraft may be operating at once; therefore the movement cap may be reached within 2 hours or less of commencing operations for the day.
- Once the cap is reached, no other users of the airfield will be permitted to operate, save in an emergency.
- As the movements will almost exclusively be absorbed by the flying school, the Aero Club members based on the field and itinerant operators wishing to fly into Warnervale, including patient transfer and Rural Fire Service refuelling and positioning flights, will regularly be excluded from operating.

Clause 2 of the Act should be removed, or amended to apply only to aircraft above 5,700 kgs – a figure used by the Civil Aviation Safety Authority to designate large aircraft. This still gives the community protection from large and jet transport operations, but allows the existing operators to continue their current, low impact operations.

Warnervale Airport is the only aviation infrastructure servicing the 340,000 residents of the Central Coast. The Act is unique, no other airport of this type in Australia is constrained by such a limiting piece of legislation. The Act, and Clause 2 specifically, serve to heavily cripple the ability of the Airport to serve its purpose, and threaten to heavily restrict, or completely destroy, the ability of operators to continue a viable business on the site.

I respectfully recommend that the Reviewers take appropriate action through repealing of the Act, or amending its structure, to create a legislative environment which is fair and workable for the Central Coast community and the operators who rely on this important asset.

I thank you for taking the time to consider this submission.

Yours Faithfully

Allan Bligh OAM

bligha@ozemail.com.au

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