
From: Peter Miller [millerpetej@gmail.com]
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To: DPE PSVC Central Coast Mailbox
Subject: Submission in relation to the 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,

I've been contemplating my submission on this review for some time. I have lived on the Central Coast for over 30 years and in Tuggerah, under the flight path of Warnervale Airport for 21 of these years.

I was a member of the Executive Committee for the Wyong Regional Chamber of Commerce for 7 years several years ago and at that time become first familiar with the WAR act. To me, it has always seemed to be based upon self interest and about securing votes rather than for the long term health of our region.

As with all industries, Aviation is undergoing massive change due to among other things technological change. I feel that the Central Coast is uniquely positioned to be a leader in this space but is being held back by the WAR act. The constant doubt over the long term future of the airport is a barrier to investment and without clear direction any new opportunity would be very hard to get off the ground.

My son who is 16 is currently training with Central Coast Aero Club to become a pilot and without this valuable local organisation he would be unable to fulfill this dream of becoming a pilot. He's been taking lessons for several years and I have had the opportunity to speak with many people while their friends and family are having lessons or joy flights. They all agree with my opinion regarding the airport. Some even travelling up from Bankstown to hangar their planes on the Central Coast due to the lower costs with Warnervale Airport and the training benefits of being able to be in the training area immediately after takeoff at Warnervale.

The following is taken from the Central Coast Aero Club's website and represents my views on this matter more formally than the above text;

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 performing 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 Sincerely,

Pete Miller
4 Anniversary Place
Tuggerah NSW 2259
0490812162