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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
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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:

Warnervale Airport provided a friendly, professional environment away from the busy and costly training centres in the Sydney Basin, in order for me to complete my initial flight training. This is critical in training pilots, especially initially, when the pressure of a crowded commercial airspace are distracting and unproductive leading to an extension of training time. A smaller airport such as Warnervale is well placed for such activity, which only involves small aircraft, low risk training with a higher degree of supervision. It is also well located to facilitate the continued training of future pilots, with advanced training involving trips 'down' to the controlled airspaces of Sydney.

I have had the pleasure to continue my flying non commercially, and find that the facility at Warnervale provides access to such stunning scenery as well as proximity to Sydney and the Hunter Valley airports, that I choose to fly from there in preference to other locations (Bankstown, Camden etc). This combined with the great school for refresh training, hire and support provides me with a perfect combination.

I feel that the above benefits are bringing continued income to the area (most people spend time before and after a flight to eat/prepare/meet friends etc), are non invasive to the community (small engine planes, mostly around a limited space at the airport or climbing higher to depart to the scenic surrounds).

This use scenario that I describe is basically prevented by enactment of the movement cap, and the loss of the continued recurring business of private pilots like myself would be commercially untenable to the school and hire facilities, and lead quickly to a loss of an airport which is in such a good position to maintain controlled growth in direct and indirect business based on the ever increasing time and airspace constraints occurring in the Sydney Basin.

Please don't throw away something so good, especially based on the negative and narrow minded attitudes of a very small section of the community.

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

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