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Sent: Saturday, 15 February 2020 11:37 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
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GOSFORD NSW 2250

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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:

This airport provides a valuable and extremely limited resource to the Central Coast. Living in Canberra and flying a light aircraft the Warnervale airport is one of few access point to coastal holiday areas on the Eastern sea board. There are three option south of Sydney and without Warnervale being available the next destination north of Sydney is north of Newcastle. Warnervale Airport is a valuable enabler for many to visit the area and spend scarce tourist dollars.

The airport also provides an valuable aviation resource by adding safe alternate to Sydney air fields for aircraft flying south if weather or mechanical issues arise. The services and support that the airfield provide are rare and so important to supporting a viable aviation sector both on the Central Coast and beyond. Limiting the movements would decimate the services and infrastructure that is currently available at the air field.

Limiting the movements would also seriously effect the viability of using the file for

bush fire fighting support. Given the recent devastating fires and the massive reliance on fire fighting aircraft support to our bush fire fighters it seems incredible to be restricting and potentially killing the Warnervale Airport infrastructure by reducing the movements available at the field and therefore in so doing making the airfield unviable. Who would want to be standing up in front of a Royal Commission down the track saying it was a good idea to let this air fields capability fall away due to restrictive practises when the next fire season hits the Central Coast.

I completely agree with the boiler plate comments of this submission and hope adding my own thoughts is useful for those considering the fate of the Warnervale Airport. Any decision must take into account the wider impacts than just those of the local community. We are all in this together. An airports existence and capability has much wider implication to our nation than that experienced by those who have moved to live next to it. I hope the bigger picture is considered appropriately during your deliberations.

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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