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**From:** Andrew Berry [Andrew.Berry@NETS.org.au]  
**Sent:** Monday, 24 February 2020 3:14 PM  
**To:** DPE PSVC Central Coast Mailbox  
**Subject:** 2020 03 09 Berry, Andrew Individual 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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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:

I landed last year in my 4 seat private aircraft with guests from Maine, USA. I was showing them the aviation infrastructure of the eastern seaboard as they were from LifeFlight of Maine, a charitable organisation providing air medical emergency transport across Maine. In that small state, communities rely on air medical transport because of distance and weather preventing access by ground. The people of the central coast rely for emergency medical evacuation on helicopters which can only operate in good weather as the landing site helipads on Gosford and Wyong hospitals don't allow instrument-assisted landing. Warnervale has the capacity to increase aeromedical access for the people of the central coast; as it is close to Wyong Hospital in particular.

Currently, air medical transport is only possible using helicopters. This comes at substantial increased cost to the local health district because each helicopter mission costs the hospitals \$8,600 whereas if Warnervale was an option for fixed wing, costs would be thousands less. This is money the hospitals could better spend on other

health services for the central coast community.

There whole region is without sophisticated aeromedical infrastructure; from Williamtown in the north to Sydney in the south. Aeromedical teams have no alternative than to travel to the central coast by road from Newcastle or Bankstown. Given the roads and heavy traffic, this can mean travel times of 90 minutes before an expert team can reach a critically ill patient too sick for Wyong or Gosford. Although the numbers would be small, use of Warnevale to back-up the helipads in case of bad weather and/or congestion (there are times when either hospital helipad is occupied) puts further stress on the proposed 'cap'. My colleagues were horrified that aviation infrastructure like this could be under threat. They have enhanced dozens of outlying hospital helipads and rural airports with satellite-based approach and landing aids which significantly increase equity of timely access to their community of Maine. Rather than restricting and cutting back on the utilization and community value of Warnevale, local and state government should be looking after private and community use of this airfield, It is not an airport for large aircraft. If it is desirable to restrict large/heavy aircraft, deal with that without a cap. Any noise implications from high activity will be measurable less than the noise of existing and growing road traffic noise. No one would tolerate a cap on ground traffic to control noise.

**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

Andrew Berry

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