



Community Aviation Consultation Group

Meeting on 8 July 2026

held at Tindal Room, Airport Development Group Office & Microsoft Teams

Web Report

The Web Report for the 8 July 2026 Community Aviation Consultation Group (CACG) meeting is a true and proper reflection/recording of the discussions.

1. Welcome and apologies

Chair Eddie Fry welcomed members to the meeting, and apologies were noted. The Summary Record and Meeting Report of the CACG meeting on 19 March 2026 had been previously settled by circulation.

2. Darwin Airport / Airport Development Group

Aviation development

- Reflecting on the 2025-26 financial year, passenger traffic grew by approximately 6% compared with the previous financial year, primarily due to new routes and international traffic.
- While fuel supply remains stable following world events earlier this year, rising fuel costs are having an impact on passenger growth. This is not unique to the NT and is being experienced globally. As a result, airlines have responded to current market conditions with route exits (e.g. AirAsia services Darwin – Kuala Lumpur and Darwin – Denpasar) and capacity reductions (e.g. Qantas service Darwin – Singapore).
- Despite this, ADG is seeing strong growth in the resource and energy sectors, with Airnorth adding additional service on Perth – Alice Springs and Cairns – Alice Springs routes. AeroDili has recently commenced Dili – Darwin – Denpasar.

Operations

- ADG continues to support local community events through terminal activations such as Bass in the Grass, Darwin Supercars, Oceania Athletics Championships, and AFL and NRL games.
- DIA is developing a Customer Care Plan to ensure focus on the overall experience of passengers, including highlighting accessibility and hidden disability care.
- DIA has seen strong participation in training for the hidden disabilities Sunflower Program, particularly among security screening personnel. Local border force agencies have also shown interest in taking part.
- Wildlife hazard activity remains elevated due to the prolonged wet season and drainage system changes associated with the recent runway resurfacing project.

Projects

- ADG is optimising the scheduling of its construction programs during the dry season.
- Terminal forecourt upgrades are close to completion, with landscaping works underway.
- Detailed design is nearing completion of the RV park at the Darwin Airport Resorts.

- An expansion of the air transport apron is scheduled for the dry season 2027 to increase aircraft parking, providing operational flexibility and supporting airline operations.
- Planning is underway to expand existing solar PV infrastructure and install a battery for energy storage, strengthening the airport's energy resilience and supporting long-term sustainability objectives.
- Energy network upgrades across the Darwin Airport precinct are progressing to provide greater resilience.
- Several car parking improvements are planned, including equipment upgrades and the installation of shade cover to the remainder of the short stay car park. Traffic management enhancements are being considered to divert taxi queues away from the roundabout in order to reduce congestion and improve airport entry traffic flow.

Indigenous and community projects

- ADG has invested over \$2M in our community during FY26, outlined in ADG's Community Report to be published later this year.
- ADG's Indigenous Engagement Strategy continues to be measured by three intersecting pillars of intent: Indigenous participation, tourism enhancement, and cultural engagement and relationships.
- ADG's Indigenous Advisory Committee (established in 2022) continues to guide the development and implementation of ADG's Indigenous Engagement Strategy.
- ADG's sponsorship of tourism events is built on a plan to showcase the Darwin, Alice Springs and Tennant Creek regions as destinations, thus driving tourism.
- ADG has recently held its fifth round of community grants, spread across the regions it operates in.

Planning matters

- The Terms of Reference for the Darwin Airport CACG has now been updated and will be circulated to members.
- DIA continues to provide comment on proposed developments around the airport, more recently comprising a number of warehouse developments in the Berrimah Industrial Estate and residential subdivisions at Northcrest.
- In early 2027 ADG will start developing the next Alice Springs Airport master plan, which takes approximately 2 years to complete.
- ADG is also preparing a 'lite' master plan for Tennant Creek Airport.

3. Department of Defence / RAAF Base Darwin

RAAF Base Darwin operations

- The 2026 National Defence Strategy has recently been released. It builds upon the 2024 Strategy and maintains a strong focus on northern Australia.
- The Northern Exercise Activity Period is underway from May to September 2026, with military exercises including Diamond Storm, Southern Cross and Pitch Black.
- The Exercise Pitch Black flying display at Mindil Beach will be held on 23 July, and the RAAF Base Darwin open day is scheduled for 1 August.
- An unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) detection trial is continuing at RAAF Base Darwin.

Air Traffic Control

- Air Traffic Control initiatives are being implemented this year for Exercise Pitch Black to manage the flow of aircraft traffic.
- Work continues on the transition to the new Civil Military Air Traffic Management System (CMATS), with the first system scheduled to become operational in late 2027. As part of this transition, Airservices Australia's Brisbane Centre will assume responsibility for the provision of Darwin approach air traffic management services.

Base Management

- A wild dog monitoring program is underway.
- There has been backburning on base, consistent with RAAF Base Darwin's bushfire mitigation plan.
- Additional vehicle traffic gates have been opened on the Stuart Hwy to relieve pressure at the main entrance.
- The perimeter fencing project is underway.

Estate Planning

- The Defence Estate Divestment will have no impact on RAAF Base Darwin.
- The RAAF Base Darwin Mid-Term Refresh project is currently on schedule and on budget.

4. Airservices Australia

- Over the period March to June 2026, two complainants in the Darwin region contacted Airservices' Noise Complaints and Information Service. One related to military aircraft in the Holtze area; the other related to general aviation traffic (emergency services) in the Parap area.

5. NT Government – Lands Planning

- The development permit for the proposed Bagot Rd commercial development has been issued.
- The proposed rezoning of the land parcel on Dick Ward Dr (currently zoned SD44) to a new specific use zone will be considered by the Minister. This follows public exhibition and an NT Planning Commission hearing.
- An amendment has been approved to the NT Planning Scheme that introduces a new overlay to manage the impact of building generated windshear/turbulence in proximity to Darwin International Airport / RAAF Base Darwin. This is aligned with the National Airports Safeguarding Framework (NASF) – Guideline B.

6. NT Government – Transport Infrastructure Planning

- Safety and capacity improvements to the Bagot Rd / Osgood Dr / Totem Rd intersection have recently been announced by the Australian Government. The project will be jointly funded, with \$24M from the Commonwealth and \$6M from the NT Government. The NT Government is currently working through the project scope.

7. City of Darwin

No update to provide.

8. Community Consultation Group member issues

Members discussed the recent smoke generated from both planned and unplanned (deliberate) burns across the Darwin region, along with wildlife considerations. It was noted that ADG and Defence work closely on the bushfire mitigation strategy for Darwin Airport / RAAF Base Darwin.

The NT Office of Disability recognised ADG's commitment to accessible and inclusive outcomes at Darwin Airport and noted the Disability Advocacy Committee's previous visit to the airport. The Office of Disability encouraged ongoing engagement on future airport projects to support accessibility improvements.

9. Planning Coordination Forum

Planning Coordination Forum members agreed there was no need for a separate closed session following the Community Consultation Group meeting.

Remaining 2026 meeting dates: Thursday 19 November.