



Concurrent Meeting on 4 November 2021
**Darwin International Airport Community Consultation Group
Planning Coordination Forum**

Web Report

held at

Territory Room, Novotel Darwin Airport Hotel, Darwin International Airport

1. Welcome and apologies

Chair Chris Bigg welcomed members to the meeting. The Summary Record and Meeting Report of the CCG meeting on 29 July 2021 had been previously settled by circulation.

Airservices was an apology to the meeting. Airservices' presentation had previously been circulated to CCG and PCF members via email.

2. Darwin Airport

CEO

Tony Edmondstone summarised the airport's understanding of the recently announced NT Government COVID roadmap, noting that 17 January 2022 has been indicated for quarantine-free travel to the NT. In the meantime, DIA is expecting further reductions in domestic airline capacity as a result of the ongoing 'red zone' travel restrictions to VIC/NSW/ACT and anticipation that other states may become red zones as they begin to reopen their borders.

Qantas commenced its first flight from Sydney–Darwin–London on 1 November. DIA is fielding a lot of interest from other international airlines based on the 17 January reopening date. DIA has identified the need for appropriate connectivity between domestic and international flights to ensure services remain financially viable.

Airport Development Group (DIA's parent company) was successfully awarded a \$30M Federal Government grant earlier this year to assist with the development of a diesel fuel storage facility for national use at East Arm. ADG is awaiting clarification regarding the grant, to determine whether there is flexibility to extend it to mixed fuel storage such as aviation fuel. The opportunity exists for a possible jet fuel pipeline from the port to Darwin aerodrome.

Property & Terminal

Ross Baynes spoke about property and terminal developments at Darwin Airport, including:

- DIA is preparing a landside precinct plan to inform the future development of the land in the immediate vicinity of the terminal, to provide a cohesive blueprint to guide development over the next decade and to enhance connectivity particularly between the terminal and the hotels.
- Works are continuing to improve on the safety and realignment of Henry Wrigley Drive and Sir Norman Brearley Drive. The new southern roundabout and realigned Sir Norman Brearley Drive are due for completion by the end of the year.

- ADG continues the process of transforming the hotels at Darwin Airport into a distinct world class topical resort.
- DIA is working proactively with the NT Government (DIPL) on the in-principle agreement for an all-movement signalised intersection at McMillans Road and Sabine Road, that will include pedestrian crossings. The proposal includes extending Sabine Road to link with Osgood Drive.
- DIA has progressed negotiations with Amphibian Aerospace Industries (AAI) to develop a campus at Darwin Airport, subject to ADG board approval. Detailed design is underway including windshear and airspace considerations.

Tim Hogan requested early engagement with Defence on the AAI project, in particular regarding windshear.

Operations

Rob Porter outlined a range of operational matters including:

- DIA has now processed some 40 federal government repatriation flights, with significant building works to the terminal undertaken to facilitate the processing of passengers.
- The Australian Federal Police has relaunched *Airport Watch* at Darwin Airport.
- DIA has undertaken a review of the general aviation and airline aprons, to consolidate the airport's plans for future development.
- The airport is planning to install auto bag drop kiosks and equipment in the check-in area.

There was discussion around the accessibility and customer service aspects of the auto bag drop equipment. Rob Porter advised that service desks are incorporated into the design, and there will be airline representatives at check-in to provide support for customers. Dawn Lawrie drew attention to the need for a human presence at airports to assist passengers who may have a hidden disability and who do not cope well with automation.

Aviation Development

Allan Woo began by reflecting on aviation developments this year: There was strong domestic recovery at the start of 2021 with the NT anticipating a very busy dry season, however the covid lockdowns in NSW/ACT/VIC slowed this recovery.

- ADG's outlook is positive, with significant volumes expected once quarantine-free travel to the NT commences in mid-January.
- A new international operation from Darwin to Delhi (outbound only) is scheduled to commence on 6 December.
- The international air freight service between Darwin and Hong Kong will cease in November due to the reopening of NSW's borders. Singapore Airlines have six repatriation flights scheduled for November/December, these will carry cargo.

Tony Edmondstone spoke of expected post-covid passenger preferences including point-to-point flights, noting Darwin's strategic geographic location to enable this.

Environment

Nick Fewster announced that ADG has been successful with a grant from the NT Government Visitor Experience Enhancement Program (VEEP) in stage 1 of installing new outdoor seating areas, pathway upgrades and signage that provide information about Larrakia culture and Rapid Creek. ADG has also been successful with another grant in this

area – laying the foundations for building and sharing Larrakia knowledge at the Rapid Creek Reserve.

This year an airport-wide Flora and Fauna Survey has been undertaken as part of DIA's commitment within the airport's Master Plan. There is a lot of biodiversity on airport land, and this survey has found additional species, resulting in a total of 209 animals and 310 plants listed.

Cindy Robson noted that as a result of Cyclone Marcus in 2018, City of Darwin undertook a review of the cyclone resilience of trees. This has culminated in the publishing of a list of preferred trees for Darwin along with a list of trees recommended not to be planted based on cyclone resistance. These can be found on the City of Darwin website.

Indigenous & community projects

Rychelle Vines provided an update on a range of projects including:

- A concept map has now been developed for the hotel theming project, reflective of the Northern Territory. The naming of the next five hotel villas is underway.
- ADG's Indigenous Training Academy will commence in 2022 with five trainees undertaking a Certificate III in Hospitality.
- ADG has recently held a number of employment pathway tours for indigenous students as a direct result of the connections made through the NT Cricket 365 program earlier this year.
- ADG has now established its Indigenous Advisory Committee.

Exercise Hornet's Nest – Airport Emergency Exercise

Bob Calaby briefed members on the recent airport emergency exercise at Darwin Airport. Exercise 'Hornet's Nest' was held to test emergency procedures and provide training for all personnel as part of the DIA Aerodrome Emergency Plan. The exercise was held in two phases, the first being a field exercise, and the second being a passenger/relative reunification exercise.

3. Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications

Megan Thomas outlined:

- The Australian Government continues to be focussed on the recovery of the aviation sector. It is expected that aviation support programs will wind down as activity increases across the domestic and international sectors.
- The release of the five-year plan for aviation was delayed due to the COVID outbreak this year. Work on an recovery framework is progressing and is expected to be released by the end of 2021.
- The Major Development Plan (MDP) trigger threshold is to remain at \$25M rather than being increased. The Department will focus on reducing red tape and administrative costs related to the development of MDPs, along with a further review into low impact developments.
- Regulations relating to the Airports Act are due to sunset in 2024, with significant work underway by the Department in relation to this.
- The federal budget this year has \$130M allocated to PFAS investigation programs at Australian airports including Darwin. Pilots expected to commence in late 2021.

- The next Aviation Access Forum is scheduled to be held in late November. A key focus is to develop consistent principles and accreditation across all jurisdictions, with a target agreement date of 1 July 2023.

4. Department of Defence / RAAF Base Darwin

Operations

SQNLDR Michael Moroney advised:

- A fast jet exercise with the Republic of Singapore Air Force commenced in September and will continue until early December.
- A number of fast jet related exercises are scheduled for 2022, including Exercise Diamond Storm in May/June 2022 and Pitch Black in September 2022.
- A Freedom of Entry parade through the Darwin city centre was held in October as part of the Royal Australian Air Force's centenary year.

Air Traffic Control

SQNLDR Martin Ferguson shared similar observations as Allan Woo regarding recent aircraft traffic in Darwin. ATC saw a significant reduction in the number of large body passenger aircraft to Darwin during the recent covid lockdowns of NSW/ACT/VIC. ATC are expecting increased traffic in 2022 of larger RPT aircraft and international flights. There has been a lot of General Aviation aircraft flying, with a small drop during recent local lockdown periods. SQNLDR Ferguson noted the large number of projects on Base this year, and expressed the RAAF's thanks to DIA for their close cooperation.

Projects

SQNLDR Craig Sedgman gave an update on the mid-term infrastructure refresh underway at RAAF Base Darwin, including the aircraft arrestor system refurbishment program. WGCDR Andrew Anthony explained the purpose of a broader base modernisation program for RAAF Base Darwin over the next 20 years.

Defence Support

Nola Chellingworth (recently appointed as Base Manager at RAAF Base Darwin) provided an update on a range of base matters, including:

- A cyclone planning exercise was recently completed, and cyclone clean-up underway in preparation for the coming wet season.
- The weed management program contract has been awarded to Larrakia Nation.

Dawn Lawrie broadly queried wildlife hazard management at DIA/RAAF Base Darwin. Bob Calaby and Nick Fewster advised that the next round of the Integrated Vegetation Management (IVM) program is due to commence shortly. There is a really good correlation between the IVM program and wildlife hazard reduction. Nick to provide an update at the next meeting.

Estate Planning

Tim Hogan advised on estate planning matters:

- Defence continue to provide comment on developments in Darwin, including a number of development applications in the Berrimah area.
- Following the bespoke public safety zone model created for RAAF Base Amberley, Defence intends to go out to tender for a similar model for RAAF bases Darwin and Townsville, with studies to commence in early 2022.

Tim noted the last National Airports Safeguarding Advisory Group (NASAG) meeting was held in July, and there was discussion around windshear and the challenges in other jurisdictions of not looking at the cumulative effect of individual developments on windshear.

5. NT Government – Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Logistics

Lands Planning

George Maly shared that the NT Planning Commission has now commenced the second stage of consultation on the Holtze to Elizabeth River Subregional Land Use Plan (previously called the Palmerston Environs Subregional Land Use Plan). Public comment is open until 26 November 2021.

Transport Infrastructure Planning

Chandan Kalase provided an update on NT Government transport projects:

- Concept designs are being prepared for the Bagot Road Shared Path Study and are likely to be released for public consultation in late 2021 / early 2022.
- The finalised concept design for the Vanderlin Drive and Lee Point Road intersection upgrade has been released for stage 2 public consultation until 20 December 2021.

6. City of Darwin

Cindy Robson advised that the recent local government election has resulted in six new elected members to council (50% of the total 12 elected members). City of Darwin has been preparing a suite of 2030 strategies that all link together – e.g. *Climate Emergency Strategy*, *Greening Darwin Strategy*, *Waste and Resource Recovery Strategy*. The next to be published in the suite is the *Movement Strategy*.

7. Community Consultation Group Chairs Meeting

Chris Bigg briefed members on the recent Annual Community Consultation Group Chairs Meeting. Although Chris was unable to attend the session, key discussion topics included: major development plan triggers, aircraft noise, PFAS, Aircraft Noise Ombudsman.

8. Community Consultation Group member issues

WGCDR Andrew Anthony advised members this would be his last meeting. He gave his thanks for the support received from the community and offered to share the details of his replacement.

2022 meeting dates: Thursday 3 March, Thursday 28 July, Thursday 3 November.