



-DARWIN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT COMMUNITY CONSULTATION GROUP

Meeting Report of Meeting No 13 – 19 March 2015

held at

Pandanus Room, Airport Management Centre, Darwin International Airport

1. Welcome and Apologies

Acting Chair Ian Kew welcomed members to the 13th meeting of the DIA Community Consultation Group. Apologies were noted.

The Summary Record and Web Report of the meeting on 20 November 2014 had been previously settled by circulation.

2. Darwin Air Service Developments, Retail and Ground Transport

Jim Parashos reported on Darwin airline services including:

- year to date passenger numbers are soft in line with the Australian economy;
- service changes for various airlines;
- airline market outlook which has limited growth prospects; and
- air service development aspirations for the next 2-3 years.

There was a discussion around the strong negative correlation between hotel room rates and tourist numbers i.e. as room rates increase tourist numbers reduce.

For terminal retail and airport ground transport Jim outlined:

- continuing Terminal retail works and opening times of new offerings;
- Virgin Australia Lounge opening 30 March;
- evaluation of a children's play area in the Terminal;
- car park strategy update and customer response to revised long term parking pricing;
- new car rental company contracts commenced 1 March 2015;
- car rental ready bays to be relocated to the east of the Terminal in November 2015; and
- upcoming ground transport projects.

3. Airport Service Quality Survey Results 2014

Jim Parashos detailed the Airport Service Quality (ASQ) results by quarter in 2014 which showed a progressive increase in customer satisfaction as the Terminal Expansion Project progressed.

4. Update on Almost Complete Terminal Expansion

Victoria Moore related progress on the almost complete Terminal Expansion Project including:

- a brief overview of the expansion and redevelopment elements;
- survey of the completed works, new Terminal furniture and further seating options;
- new signage, way finding and Flight Information Display System;
- Sense of Place Master Plan and artist concepts; and
- planned shop front treatments.

5. Military Exercise 2015 Outlook & RAAF Base Operational issues

WGCDR Wes Perret outlined military exercises and other RAAF Base operational activity for 2015:

- Tiger, Taipan and Chinook helicopters are flying out of RAAF Base Darwin till Friday 27 March as part of Exercise Vigilant Scimitar. This exercise is designed to integrate helicopters from the 1st Aviation (Darwin) and the 5th Aviation (Townsville) Regiments operating as a battle group;
- USMC advance party for the annual 6 month deployment will arrive 7 April. There will be 1100 Marines and the aviation component will comprise 4 CH-53E Super Stallion helicopters; and
- Exercise Talisman Sabre, a biennial land, sea and air exercise, will occur over 3 weeks in July. There will be some 1200 personnel on RAAF Base Darwin and around 70 aircraft. The air element is approximately the same size as Exercise Pitch Black.

RAAF Base projects include:

- 80 new houses to comprise the married quarters abutting the RAAF Base;
- flood mitigation works will include increasing the capacity of the existing retention pond which will release water at a manageable rate into the Ludmilla Creek system;
- Air 7000 (Maritime Patrol Aircraft Replacement Project) works will include construction of a Hangar Maintenance and Operational Facility and aircraft apron upgrading; and
- sites for a potential solar farm are being assessed.

6. DIA Planning Issues

Ian Kew noted that DIA was working with the Northern Territory Government (NTG) on the Rapid Creek flooding issue. DIA had undertaken its own flood work and was working with the NTG on another study. There was now expert work on development impact within the Rapid Creek catchment and what mitigation measures are likely to be effective.

There is considerable High Voltage ring main works occurring with a \$2M project involving 1.8 km of cable being laid. Ian outlined that the electrical infrastructure was almost 30 years old and was understandably becoming less reliable. A major outage had occurred in November 2014.

DIA had Board approval for a 4MW solar project which would generate some 35% of peak daily consumption. This will be the largest airport solar project in Australia.

7. Airservices Matters

Dave Moore noted that the quarterly aircraft noise report for Darwin would be published on the Airservices website next week.

Dave then presented an update of the Darwin Air Traffic Management Plan and outlined changes to 3 aircraft departure paths and 2 approach paths. These changes are proposed to achieve the most effective separation assurance and to maximise airspace efficiency. It was noted that these changes are initiated by the RAAF and Airservices are undertaking the environment assessment and community consultation.

8. Master Plan Development Update

Chris Bigg provided an update on the DIA Master Plan:

- Originally due to be submitted in December 2015;
- USMC and USAF deployments to Darwin under the 2014 Australia-US Force Posture Agreement will increase significantly and Defence (responsible for producing Master Plan aircraft noise metrics under the DIA-Defence Joint User Deed) cannot provide a draft joint civil-military Australian Noise Exposure Forecast until end 2015;

- as a result Minister Truss has extended the Master Plan to 30 June 2017; and
- it is anticipated that public consultation will occur in the second half of 2016.

9. DIA Property Developments

Ross Baynes presented on property developments at DIA including:

- construction of a second JKC car park;
- proposed hangar and office development for Bond Helicopters;
- the entertainment precinct with the Ardent Family Entertainment Centre currently under construction;
- the new Caltex service station recently opened; and
- a potential self-storage facility.

10. Dept Infrastructure & Regional Development Update

Helen Gannon outlined several policy developments in the aviation portfolio:

- the previous Discussion Paper on reforming Master Plan and Major Development Plan provisions in the *Airports Act 1996* had attracted widely varying submissions. Another Discussion Paper with concrete proposed changes will be put out for comment;
- there is a review of the *Airports Act 1996* parking regime which only applies at certain airports (not applicable in the Northern Territory);
- the Government has responded to the 37 recommendations of the Aviation Safety Regulation Review and has adopted 32, will further consider 4 and will not adopt 1; and
- the Aviation Access Forum is currently reviewing 43 Disability Access Plans and the policy on carriage of assistance animals. There had been 32 submissions from the disability sector and 14 from the aviation sector.

Adam Allanson of ORIMA Research then detailed the review of Community Aviation Consultation Groups commissioned by the Department of Infrastructure and Regional Development including:

- the review will assess how the Consultation Groups are supported by participants, the extent of meaningful consultation, Chair and secretariat arrangements, the nature, efficacy and extent of membership;
- recommendations will be made on future consultative arrangements;
- genesis of the review is a recommendation of the Productivity Commission review of the Economic Regulation of Airport Services; and
- the process of the review which includes an online survey and visiting selected Consultation Group meetings.

11. Defence Support Report

Angeline Samara and Jennifer Isaacs reported that:

- planning for a new RAAF Air Traffic Control Tower was proceeding and discussion were being held with DIA on the issue;
- noxious weed spraying was underway;
- trees at the runway ends will be trimmed; and
- perimeter roads will shortly be repaired.

12. Community Consultation Group Member Issues

Dawn Lawrie complimented the DIA Terminal Expansion Project team for taking on board suggestions and incorporating the suggestions in the Project.

Ian Kew noted that DIA had been working with Rapid Creek Land Care on reaching understandings on where tree planting and fencing should occur.

The question of who is responsible for baggage handling was raised as one member had experienced baggage delays on arrival. It was reaffirmed that airlines undertake all baggage handling while the airport provides baggage handling infrastructure.

Brian O’Gallagher requested that Jim Parashos provide a briefing on air services to a Chamber of Commerce business forum.

13. General Business

There was no general business.

14. Terminal Tour

A Terminal tour was then undertaken by those who could stay.

Note: Remaining 2015 meetings - Thursday 2 July and Thursday 19 November