



Concurrent Meeting on 23 February 2023
**Darwin International Airport Community Consultation Group
& Planning Coordination Forum**

Web Report

held at Tindal Board Room, Darwin International Airport & Microsoft Teams

1. Welcome and apologies

Chair Chris Bigg welcomed members to the meeting, and apologies were noted. The Summary Record and Meeting Report of the CCG meeting on 3 November 2022 had been previously settled by circulation.

2. RAAF Base Darwin / Darwin Airport – Draft 2043 joint civil-military ANEF

Alex Morabito from Marshall Day Acoustics presented the Draft 2043 Australian Noise Exposure Forecast (ANEF) being prepared for RAAF Base Darwin / Darwin Airport:

- The ANEF is primarily a strategic land use planning tool.
- As a joint-user airfield, the Draft 2043 ANEF comprises both military and civil aircraft and is being prepared to meet Darwin Airport's regulatory requirements of updating its 20-year master plan.
- The current 2042 ANEF is a long-range 25-year ANEF that was prepared for the Darwin Airport 2017 Master Plan. Since the 2042 ANEF was prepared the rules for preparing ANEFs has changed and it is now a requirement that the ANEF be updated for each airport master plan. The Draft 2043 ANEF is a standard-range 20-year ANEF for inclusion in the Darwin Airport 2023 Master Plan, hence the difference of a single year between the current and proposed ANEF.
- Although the footprint of the contours is broadly similar between the 2042 ANEF and 2043 ANEF, there has been some expansion and contraction of the contours in some areas surrounding the airport.
- The ANEF is supported by other complementary information such as N-contour diagrams that provide more meaningful explanation of how aircraft noise may be experienced day to day.
- Along with two public drop-in sessions being held by Defence on Thursday 23 February, enquiries or submissions on the Draft 2043 ANEF can be made until Friday 10 March 2023 to engage@marshallday.com.
- More information on the Draft 2043 ANEF is available on the Defence website: <https://defence.gov.au/AircraftNoise/Darwin/Consultation.asp>

3. NT Government – Lands Planning

Doug Lesh thanked Defence and Darwin Airport for their presentation of the Draft 2043 ANEF to the NT Government the prior day.

Stage 2 consultation on the Draft Greater Holtze Area Plan finished late last year. The NT Government is working closely with Defence on certain aspects relating to Robertson Barracks. It is anticipated that in the first half of 2023 the Draft Area Plan will be recommended to the Minister for Infrastructure, Planning and Logistics for formal public exhibition for potential inclusion in the NT Planning Scheme.

The NT Planning Commission will likely release a Stage 1 discussion paper for the Weddell subregion in the second half of 2023. The discussion paper will flag the need for future road connectivity through Weddell to the Middle Arm Sustainable Development Precinct, as well as focussing on the overall servicing requirements for Weddell from a power, water and sewer perspective to cater for future population growth.

In Alice Springs, a discussion paper on a subregional land use plan for the area south of The Gap is expected to be prepared for public consultation in the second half of this year. It will cover an area inclusive of the Alice Springs Airport and will canvass public opinions on how the area south of the Gap in Alice Springs should develop over the medium to longer term including analysing the need for additional industrial land in the area.

4. Airservices Australia

Tim Gill advised that a total of 2 individual noise complaints were received by Airservices' Noise Complaints and Information Service (NCIS) between November 2022 – January 2023. The first related to military aircraft and was referred to Defence. The second was seeking information on the effect of a proposed firefighters' strike.

5. Runway works update

Discussion was had amongst CCG members about the proposed runway resurfacing works expected to be undertaken in the second half of 2023. Runway resurfacing is a standard aviation infrastructure maintenance requirement, undertaken approximately every 15-20 years. The last runway resurfacing at Darwin was done around 2008.

Unlike many other capital city airports, RAAF Base Darwin / Darwin Airport has a number of challenges to completing these works: the resurfacing needs to be undertaken in the dry season; the smaller cross runway isn't capable of accommodating all the aircraft traffic while the main runway resurfacing occurs; and there are 24/7 operations.

Defence is working with the airlines and the airport on the method of works plan in order to minimise the impact to the community. Essential services such as CareFlight and RFDS will not be affected by the runway works.

6. Darwin Airport

ADG overview

Tony Edmondstone shared a broad update on Darwin Airport matters, including:

- The airport is experiencing delays on some projects due to construction material shortages.
- The projects being undertaken within the terminal are expected to be completed by this time next year. Improvements to the carparks, including shade structures and disability access enhancements, are expected to be completed by the end of the year.

- There are some challenges with limited airline seat capacity to Darwin currently, resulting in higher airfares.

Aviation development

Allan Woo reflected on the passenger recovery since the easing of border restrictions in February 2022. Domestic recovery peaked in September 2022 due to high pent up demand for travel, however passenger numbers have declined since then as a result of the high inflationary and interest rate environment taking hold. Pent up demand for international outbound travel has cannibalised discretionary domestic trips, however international capacity continued to be constrained. It is anticipated that passenger numbers will stabilise over the next 6 months. The airport continues to engage with a number of international carriers interested in pursuing future opportunities between Darwin and South-East Asia destinations.

Property & terminal

Adrian Massey gave an update on the terminal and ground transport improvements underway:

- Works have commenced on the first floor to infill the terminal footprint between gates 7 and 10 to house new food and beverage outlets. Construction is expected to take 12 months and the airport is proactively managing the construction schedules to minimise disruptions to customers. A communications plan is being prepared.
- Two new billboards are proposed – one near the northern roundabout on Henry Wrigley Drive, and the other on Charles Eaton Drive.
- Work will soon commence on the undercover shade structures to the carparking areas in front of the terminal. As part of the ground transport master plan, it is intended that the carparks will be reconfigured for increased efficiency, and the carparking equipment upgraded to ticketless parking.
- An electric vehicle strategy is being prepared to scope the requirement for the future provision of rapid charging capability for hire cars and general public use.
- A precinct access plan is being prepared that captures active transport (pedestrian and cycle access), fencing and beautification, and bike/scooter/motorbike monetised parking.

Tony Edmondstone provided a short update on the proposed fuel pipeline from East Arm to Darwin aerodrome, advising that agreement on technical aspects has now been reached on the pipeline. The project will also include additional storage at Darwin Airport's existing fuel facility. Commercial agreements are now being progressed.

Operations

Rob Porter highlighted that the airport's customer interface and passenger accessibility is front of mind. The airport is undertaking a review to ensure it is appropriately meeting disability access requirements, as well as investigating how it can better facilitate passengers with hidden disabilities.

The new aerobridge constructed on bay 4 is now operational. Installation of the new aerobridge on bay 3 is underway, to be followed by bay 1.

Significant works are underway in the check-in area to introduce auto bag drop technology. The first six auto bag drop units (including self-service kiosks) have been installed and are in

the commissioning phase. This will be followed by a further 17 units. Once operational, it is intended that airline staff will still be available in the check-in area to provide assistance to passengers.

Dawn Lawrie reiterated feedback she had previously provided to Victoria Moore on the Exposure Draft version of the Darwin Airport 2023 Master Plan. Dawn's comments related to addressing disability legislation in airport land use zone development guidelines within the Land Use Plan chapter of the Master Plan.

Projects

AJ Wackrow summarised the terminal projects underway and coming up at Darwin Airport, in keeping with the airport's Terminal & Forecourt Master Plan:

- The auto bag drop project in the check-in area is expected to be completed by the middle of the year.
- Following this, all security screening will be consolidated to the eastern end of the terminal.
- Work has recently commenced on the first floor of the domestic departure lounge to infill the area between gates 7 and 10 to provide additional food & beverage offerings. This will lead into a broader retail refurbishment throughout the terminal.
- Shaded structures are planned for the carparks in front of the terminal, with works commencing shortly and due to be completed by the end of 2023.

7. Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts

Megan Thomas provided an update on Australian Government matters, including:

- The Terms of Reference for the Government's Aviation White Paper were released on 7 February 2023. Stakeholders are invited to provide feedback on the broad topics identified in the Terms of Reference by 10 March 2023. Feedback will inform the development of the Green Paper. Detailed consultation will be undertaken following the release of the Green Paper in mid-2023 to help inform the development of the White Paper.
- The establishment of a Jet Zero-style Council is still in the early stages. Minister King will be hosting a roundtable on 28 February to provide both government and industry representatives an opportunity to share their views on the Council's outcomes, goals and format. Following this, the Council will be appointed and an inaugural meeting is scheduled to be held in 2023.
- The Aviation Access Forum last met in October 2022, with the next meeting date yet to be confirmed. The Aviation White Paper will also canvas access issues.

8. Department of Defence / RAAF Base Darwin

Air Traffic Control

SQNLDR James Lee advised that there has been some minor feedback on the editorial wording of the NOTAM regarding the Compulsory Traffic Advisory Frequency procedures (CTAF) currently in place for the overnight hours.

Defence Support

Nola Chellingworth advised that the exercise dates for 2023 are yet to be finalised. The biggest exercise will be Talisman Sabre, expected to be held in the middle of the year. The Marine Rotational Force – Darwin (MRF-D) infill will arrive from late February.

The mid-term refresh for RAAF Base Darwin is at the design stage, with construction targeted for mid-2024. As previously discussed, the scope includes infrastructure upgrades and a new base entry. A new medical centre is also being built at the Base.

The bulk fuel storage project constructed as part of the US Force Posture Initiatives is in the commissioning stage and is expected to be in use by mid-2023.

Estate Planning

Tim Hogan advised that Defence continues to respond to development applications surrounding the aerodrome. Tim mirrored Doug Lesh's comments that Defence and NT Government are working closely on the Greater Holtze Area Plan in relation to Robertson Barracks. Work on the public safety area project for RAAF Base Darwin is progressing.

Dawn Lawrie queried the planting of vegetation around the aerodrome, particularly regarding bird-attracting species. Rob Porter explained that Darwin Airport has an interest in plantings within a 5 nautical mile radius of the aerodrome. The airport works with local councils on the selection of plants to reduce bird-attracting species.

9. City of Darwin

Cindy Robson shared a number of council-related matters:

- The 81st anniversary of the bombing of Darwin was held on Sunday 19 February.
- City of Darwin is beginning to implement a series of strategies that were finalised last financial year: 2030 Movement Strategy; 2030 Greening Darwin Strategy; 2030 Climate Emergency Strategy; Economic Development Strategy 2030.
- City of Darwin is working to enhance active transport (e.g. walking, cycling) around Darwin. This includes cooling/shading and green routes, filling in existing paths, accessibility and end of trip facilities.

10. Community Consultation Group member issues

No member issues were raised.

2023 meeting dates: Thursday 6 July, Thursday 2 November.