



COMMUNITY AVIATION CONSULTATION GROUP

2.00pm – Tuesday, 25 November 2025

Ringer Room, CAG Office, Level 4, Plaza Offices West, Canberra Airport

MEETING NOTES

The Chair of the CACG is Bob Ross.

CACG Members
Independent CACG Chair and representing: Pialligo Residents Association (PRA) North Canberra Community Council (NCCC)
Canberra Airport Michael Thomson, Head of Aviation Andrew Connor, Planning and Environment Manager Susan Mulligan, Planning Co-ordinator Jordan Fallon, Government Relations and Policy
Fernleigh Park Community Association (FPCA)
Tuggeranong Community Council (TCC)
Jerrabomberra Residents Association (JRA)
Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council (QPRC)
Airservices Australia (ASA)
ACT Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate (CMTEDD)
ACT City and Environment Directorate (CED)
Guests

Summary of Attendees

Community Groups Note: Chair represents 2	5	Canberra Airport	4
ACT Government	2	Airservices Australia	3
Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council	2		
Guests	2	Total	17

1. MEETING FORMALITIES

1.1 Welcome and Notation of Apologies

The meeting commenced at 2.00pm.

The Independent Chair introduced himself and undertook a roll call of attendees.

The following apologies were noted:

- Ridgeway Community Group
- Gungahlin Community Council
- Weston Creek Community Council
- QPRC
- Aircraft Noise Ombudsman

1.2 Declaration of Impartiality by the Chair

As the representative of the Pialligo Residents Association as well as representing the North Canberra Community Council, the Chair declared that should any issues of impartiality be raised during the meeting, he would address them in an appropriate manner.

1.3 2025 CACG Representation

Persons nominated to represent their community groups were noted.

1.4 2025 Meetings/Consultations

The list of Meetings/Consultations attended by Canberra Airport to date in 2025 was noted.

2. ACCEPTANCE OF MEETING NOTES OF CACG MEETING HELD ON 28 AUGUST 2025

The Meeting Notes of the CACG Meeting held on 28 August 2025 were accepted.

4. CANBERRA AIRPORT

Michael spoke to the Meeting Brief as follows:

4.1 General Aviation Update

- Canberra Airport continues to operate between 90% and 95% domestic passenger numbers compared to pre-Covid.
- Pleasingly, there was an increase in passengers in October 2025 of 2.6% compared to October 2024.
- We are welcoming Qatar Airways back on 2 December and that should provide some opportunities for freight. The flight will operate 7 days a week via Melbourne arriving at 8.30am and departing 12.30pm. It is good for Canberra and the region to have that international connectivity back.
- A new Avalon service operated by Fly Pelican commenced on 26 October. This is the first time that Canberra Airport has had a direct service to Avalon.

- The Coffs Harbour seasonal service operated by Link Airways recommenced on 18 September and will continue through to the end of January 2026.
- We are still pushing to attract an airline to service New Zealand which is the No. 1 priority for our next international service.

4.2 Airport Infrastructure and Current Development, including update on status of Major Development Plan (MDP) Investment Projects

Andrew spoke to a Powerpoint presentation and to agenda items 4.2a)-h).

The Chair asked if a freight hub was still planned for Fairbairn?

Michael advised there was still the potential for a freight hub in Fairbairn, however while there are good reasons for it, we need to convince airlines to start operating out of Canberra. Qatar provides the best option in the short term, and we are trying to encourage freight out of the region utilising the Qatar service.

4.3 Australian Government response to the Senate Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport References Committee report: Impact and mitigation of aircraft noise

Members of the CACG noted the report which was distributed with the agenda papers.

4.4 PFAS Investigation by DITRDCSA and ASA

Andrew advised the Department's investigation program involved all Australian federally leased airports, including Canberra Airport.

Jacobs, on behalf of DITRDCSA, is currently undertaking surface water, groundwater and soil sampling in landside and airside areas of the Airport site. Once Jacobs has the results from this sampling program, they will prepare a Detailed Site Investigation report and Remedial Actions Plans will follow once the DSI is agreed. At this stage the investigation is not expected to be finalised until early 2027.

The Chair informed the meeting that Jacobs had also undertaken some sampling in Pialligo and some residents had raised concerns about how Jacobs and the Department intended to use the data. Following discussions, he understood agreement has now been reached.

4.5 Other News/Events

4.6 Communications

Refer to the Canberra Airport Meeting Brief for items 4.5 and 4.6.

Guest was invited to join the meeting.

5. REPORTS

5.1 Community Groups

Fernleigh Park Community Association

FPCA advised nothing new to report.

Jerrabomberra Residents Association

JRA advised that the Jerrabomberra community Christmas event would be held on Saturday, 6 December.

Residents of Queanbeyan, Bungendore and Googong have concerns regarding the ACT Government's transition from gas to electricity by 2045 as their gas supply is sourced from the ACT Government's network (EvoEnergy). Whilst the ACT Government is offering low-interest loans to ACT residents to switch from gas to electricity, that is not the case for these residents who will potentially have to pay \$27k to transition to electricity.

Tuggeranong Community Council

TCC mentioned the Royalla Quarry and the community's concerns regarding the impact of a substantial increase in heavy traffic movements on the Monaro Highway. He asked from a flightpath point of view, does it change anything?

Andrew advised that Canberra Airport has reviewed the proposal with the Aviation Team and it was determined that it is outside the Airport's air space. We will continue to monitor it, however there are no impacts to aviation identified at this stage.

ASA advised he was not aware of any impacts to flightpaths from the quarry proposal as it was far enough and low enough.

Andrew added that the Airport constantly monitors what is being planned around the Airport and often refers proposals to CASA to undertake a safety assessment.

Michael said it is important to note that the Airport does not set flightpaths, they are determined by the regulatory authorities. The Airport does have a process in place if a crane is proposed that may potentially penetrate the OLS. However, ultimately, we do not control the air. We do monitor this very closely.

QPRC referred to information regarding the Royalla Quarry proposal which he provided in the QPRC Meeting Brief. It is noted that the QPRC resolved to object to the proposal.

This is a State Significant Development; Council is not the determining Authority. The Proponent is responding to Submissions, and any updates should be sourced from the NSW Major Projects website

<https://www.planningportal.nsw.gov.au/major-projects/projects/monaro-rock-quarry-project>

Pialligo Residents Association

PRA advised that residents have raised concerns about Pialligo Brook which appears to be in disrepair again. We are monitoring the situation.

There are also concerns regarding the overflow of people not frequenting the Pialligo continuing to park in Kallaroo Road which reduces carparking space for businesses.

5.2 Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council

QPRC spoke to the QPRC Meeting Brief.

5.3 ACT Government – City and Environment Directorate / Infrastructure Canberra

CED spoke to the same ACT Government Meeting Brief prepared for the Canberra Airport Planning Co-ordination Forum held on 18 November, and the following additional items:

- Athllon Drive duplication
 - Currently awaiting a DA outcome, expected in January 2025.
 - An approach to market for duplication between Sulwood Drive and Drakeford Drive will proceed in Quarter 1 2026, pending approvals.
- Beltana Road defects
 - CED is engaging a contractor to finalise works at Beltana Road including landscape maintenance. Most of the works are intended to be undertaken prior to the holiday shutdown.

3. AIRSERVICES AUSTRALIA (ASA)

3.1 Guest will briefly outline concerns to the CACG regarding light aircraft noise over Inner Canberra and ASA will respond

The Chair advised that Guest's paper had been circulated to those in attendance prior to the meeting.

Guest thanked the Chair and CACG members for giving him the opportunity to outline his concerns.

3.2 General Briefing

ASA spoke to the Powerpoint presentation.

JRA advised in an email exchange with ASA following the last meeting JRA had requested further information relating to RNP-AR usage by airlines and that had not been reflected in the presentation. JRA had wanted to know if ASA could add to the RNP-AR graph to show which aircraft used the RNP-AR and which aircraft were equipped to fly the RNP-AR into Canberra but did not use the RNP-AR.

ASA advised that is correct and had taken an action to review the information, not necessarily change it. In that regard, following a review the Team has determined the information currently provided by ASA in briefing presentations relevant to RNP-AR use should not change. The use of RNP-AR does have benefits, however ASA cannot control if it is used by the airlines or not. Aircraft have to be equipped, pilots trained, and CASA approval is also required. ASA pointed out that whilst ASA can provide more information on RNP-AR use, we cannot make the airlines use it.

For the benefit of both Guests, ASA explained that Required Navigation Performance Authorisation Required (RNP-AR) allows the aircraft to fly a curved approach and if they deviate by more than 0.3 of a nautical mile from where they are supposed to be, the aircraft will let them know. It is a GPS navigated approach.

ASA thanked Guest for recognising ASA's role in his speaking notes and offered the following comments in response:

- ASA's job is to safely separate aircraft in airspace and to minimise the impact of aviation on the environment where practicable.

- In terms of giving the community regard, the primary focus is about safety, followed by efficiency, regularity of service, quality and minimising the impacts of aviation where practicable.
- ASA is not able to restrict General Aviation (GA) from flying over a particular area unless the Noise Abatement Procedures (NAP) and/or Noise Abatement Areas (NAA) indicate that we should do so. It is about promoting safe aviation and to support aviation growth.
- Where communities are impacted by aircraft noise, ASA cannot guarantee any one person, community or area exemption from aircraft noise.
- In terms of Canberra, the Airport has some limitations on where we can use that airspace as there are specified NAA.
- As a general rule, we are trying to keep big aircraft away from GA aircraft and we do that by keeping them west of the airport to minimise the potential interactions. ASA acknowledge that this is by design. One of the things we cannot do is mix GA aircraft with jets.
- You touched on the number of accidents in Australia. GA is one of the most regulated areas of transport in Australia. Aviation has inherent risk, and we take significant steps to try and minimise these risks wherever possible. We take it very seriously, which is why all parts of the industry are very regulated.
- ASA is required to manage the circuits in line with the Civil Aviation Safety Authority (CASA) and international safety standards as this is a key component of managing GA. It is therefore not a simple case of changing the circuit which are standardised around the world.
- Those rules only change when there is cause to do it. For example, if there are fast moving jet aircraft using the same runway and you do not want them being in the same space.
- The proposition that you can simply move the flightpath and circuit so the aircraft are not over your area is a challenging one.
- ASA has previously provided detailed responses to you on this topic, including why the circuits are where they are. If we have not done that well enough, I am happy to look at the problem and consider your suggestions again.

The Chair asked why the Tower directs circuit aircraft to turn anti-clockwise as opposed to clockwise?

ASA explained that most of the circuits are on Runway 12/30 and the prevailing winds are westerly. When the Tower directs aircraft departures from Runway 30 we have to keep clear of the north end, so we direct the aircraft to turn left (anti-clockwise). The issue is that there is a lot of terrain around Canberra Airport, so we have to operate from an efficiency and safety perspective. We would like to direct circuits to turn right (clockwise) all the time, but we cannot.

Guest asked how much of the left-hand side element is convention and how much is it a real safety issue for flights? What I see on the Majura Parkway is aircraft at least the height of those that go over our houses. I do not understand why Mount Ainslie is a problem. Has anyone at ASA looked at the circuit that runs up our street being moved to the left? We cannot have a conversation or watch TV. I see the aircraft flying different circuits well away near ADFA and I wonder why no one has looked at moving this particular circuit to the east.

ASA advised the Tower has to sequence circuit aircraft with jets. The circuit configurations are not the same and we do not have a dedicated circuit training runway at Canberra Airport.

ASA said ASA cannot compromise safety and we have to manage that first and foremost. We are also keeping the noise from the fast-moving jets away from the NAA and have to weave those jets in-between the GA traffic. Is there an expectation that there is no noise from the circuit aircraft, or to send these aircraft over another community so the noise is concentrated somewhere else?

Guest said he was not suggesting that. We have an amount of noise from Runway 30 and these aircraft come over and over again in sets of between three and seven. What I am suggesting is there must be ways, in this day and age, where we can redirect those flights to the east. I find it hard to believe that the only answer is that these aircraft fly over our houses.

ASA advised the location where aircraft undertake circuits are generally quite fixed which keeps these aircraft predictable. I am not saying it is a great outcome for you, and I have some sympathy for you, but we are quite constrained in this context. I do not think we are giving you the answer you want, but safety is our highest priority. I am happy to look at ideas again, but there should not be a misconception that we can do something we cannot.

ASA invited Guest and CACG members to visit the tower to observe how ASA manages the traffic (particularly GA aircraft) for the community to understand what we do. It is something we are well aware of. I have been here 33 years and back then there was eight training schools and a helicopter school at Canberra Airport.

ASA thought that a great idea. We can then pick-up the conversation after that site visit to see what you feel about it.

JRA asked if there was any requirement for aircraft not to make a certain amount of noise, similar to a car muffler?

ASA advised CASA inspects aircraft. The aircraft need power to climb out and that is where the noise is.

Guest advised that some aircraft are quite reasonable, however one in particular is like three Harley Davidsons going over. I have been told by some GA operators that they do not know why that pilot is getting away with it.

ASA agreed with the analogy of a car muffler and explained that aircraft are required to have a Certificate of Airworthiness which includes a noise assessment; very similar to that required by cars. However, many of these aircraft do not have much of a muffler which creates the noise. More modern aircraft are much quieter.

The Chair suggested that Guest and any others who may be interested should take up ASA's offer of a Tower Site Visit before Christmas.

Michael suggested that perhaps Guest could take a photograph of the noisy aircraft so we can try and identify it.

ASA said he was happy to keep an open mind and see if there is something that can be done within the constraints. I propose to work with Binh and his Team at the Tower on that. I will look at it seriously and come back with a timeframe on when we can action this work.

6. OTHER BUSINESS AS RAISED AT THE MEETING

No other business was raised.

7. NEXT MEETING

Following subsequent consultation with the Chair, the next meeting of the CACG was scheduled for Tuesday, 24 March 2026.

There being no other business, the Chair closed the meeting at 3.35pm.