

# WILLIAMTOWN CONSULTATIVE FORUM

8 April 2011, 1000 to 1200

## HAWK/ROULETTE ROOMS, RAAF BASE WILLIAMTOWN

### 1. Welcome and Apologies

The meeting opened at 10.05am.

Apologies were received from:

- Mr Bob Baldwin, Member for Paterson. His Senior Electorate Advisor, Mr Adam Olsen attended on his behalf.
- Ms Sharon Grierson, Member for Newcastle. Mr Michael Kachel attended on her behalf.
- Mr Tim Owen, NSW Member for Newcastle. Mr Josh Hodges, Office Manager, attended on his behalf.
- Mr Paul Hughes, CEO of Newcastle Airport Limited. Mr Ray Bowen, Manager, Assets and Commercial attended on his behalf.
- Cr John Tate, Lord Mayor of Newcastle.
- Rob Noble, Acting General Manager of Newcastle City Council.
- David Broyd, Manager, Sustainable Planning, Port Stephens Council. Mr Peter Marler, Strategic Planning Coordinator, attended on his behalf.

### 2. Adoption of Minutes of 8 October 2010

Minutes adopted.

### 3. Actions Items from Last Meeting

No outstanding action items were raised from the last meeting.

### 4. Update from Defence's New Air Combat Capability (Joint Strike Fighter) Project Team

GPCAPT Chris Wheaton gave an update on Defence's New Air Combat Capability (NACC or Joint Strike Fighter) project. A copy of the presentation is attached to these minutes.

Mr Peter Gesling suggested that Defence engage with Port Stephens Council early to assist with the public consultation process for the environmental impact statement (EIS). GPCAPT Chris Wheaton agreed.

Mr Adam Olsen asked when the new ANEF would be promulgated. GPCAPT Wheaton said that it would be subject to the timeframes of the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Act 1999* (EPBC Act), but at this stage likely to be late 2011, or early 2012. Mr Mike Healy explained the stop clock provisions of the EPBC Act and iterative nature of the process.

Mr Peter Marler confirmed that Port Stephens Council is presently using the 1 September 2010 ANEC for some planning and building purposes. He also noted that promulgation of the 1 September 2010 ANEC now would benefit some, but not others. Mr Marler also pointed out that there was confusion amongst the members of the public over what the ANEF/ANEC maps mean.

Mr Olsen asked how many ANEC would be produced for the EIS. GPCAPT Wheaton said that there would be numerous ANEC produced, and associated sensitivity analysis to be completed. He also advised that the EIS will outline the ANEC prepared, and the differences between ANEF ANEC and Australian Noise Exposure Indexes (ANEI).

WGCDR Glen Johnson asked how many remaining properties were affected by the 1 September ANEC near Medowie. Mr Marler advised it is those dwellings in eastern Medowie within approximately 200 metres of the range.

GPCAPT Wheaton said that Medowie was affected by both RAAF Williamtown and Salt Ash Air Weapons Range movements and therefore both the 2025 ANEF and the 1 September ANEC.

Ms Jennifer Collison suggested that the EIS contractor should meet with local and state representatives for input into the consultation strategy. Mr Gesling added that Port Stephens Council can help to manage the consultation process, in a manner similar to the way Council has coordinated community input through the Port Stephens Aircraft Noise Reference Panel.

Mr Craig Baumann advised that there were strong opinions amongst some members of the public that the flight track over Grahamstown Dam was placed where it is currently shown (more towards west Medowie) in order to avoid Kings Hill.

GPCAPT Wheaton reiterated this is not the case. Defence has objected to the development of Kings Hill for many years. It is an area where Air Force currently fly over regularly, and will continue to do so in the future. The flight track over the Grahamstown dam still affects Kings Hill. Defence is aiming to avoid existing built up areas such as Raymond Terrace and Medowie itself.

Mr Olsen suggested that the track should be moved more to the northwest.

There was a general discussion, and agreement, amongst members that the issue was more to do with the 2025 ANEF and 1 September ANEC maps, rather than the levels of aircraft noise per se. There was also a general consensus that there was not an urgency to convert the 1 September ANEC into an ANEF, noting it would most likely need to be updated in early 2012 to reflect the outcomes of the NACC EIS process, including any decisions made on runway extensions and Government responses to submissions received during the EIS process.

## **5. RAAF Update on RAAF Base Williamtown matters**

WGCDR Johnson discussed the festivities at the base as part of the 90th Birthday of the Air Force celebrations.

WGCDR Johnson said a squadron of Air National Guard of F-16s from the US visited the base to take part in joint exercises.

WGCDR Johnson advised that the tempo of operations at the base was still high. In addition, the base was supporting various deployments including flood relief efforts. The base raised funds and will donate \$13,500 to this relief fund.

WGCDR Johnson said that the stage 2 redevelopment of the base was expected to commence 2013, and \$370-400 million would be spent improving infrastructure.

WGCDR Johnson also advised that more advance notice is needed for requests for Defence representatives to attend schools for ANZAC day information sessions.

AIRCDRE Hupfeld re-affirmed the significant investment being made by Defence at the Base, and that it is not proposed to re-locate the Base away from Williamstown. Significant funds are being spent on improving security, and war fighting capability to deliver air combat power from the base.

AIRCDRE Hupfeld reiterated his commitment to working with the community. In this regard, he advised that there was a new strategic communications advisor position in Air Combat Group, who will work at state, regional and local levels to advise members of the community of the operations of the base.

Mr Gesling asked about the sewer transfer timeframes. Mr Healy advised that Defence is actively working on this issue, and that there has been close engagement with Newcastle Airport, Hunter Water and Hunter Land.

## **6. Port Stephens Council Update**

Mr Gesling acknowledged Defence's presence on Council's Aircraft Noise Reference Panel meetings in February and March this year.

Mr Gesling advised Port Stephens Council was meeting with representatives of the Department of Infrastructure and Transport to seek amendments to Australian Standard AS2021-2000, as well as to discuss other matters with the Department associated with the use of the ANEF system as a means of managing military noise impacts.

Mr Gesling said that the drainage issues associated with the Defence and Related Employment Zone adjoining the Base and Newcastle Airport have been resolved and that a development application has been approved for Stage 1 subdivision.

Mr Healy indicated that Defence has long been aware of drainage issues in this area and that Defence would continue to work collaboratively with Council to resolve these issues.

## **7. Newcastle City Council Update**

No update.

## **8. NSW Department of Premier and Cabinet Update**

Ms Jennifer Collison said the NSW Government has funded \$75,000 to go towards a detailed design concept for DAREZ tow-way/taxi-way.

Ms Collison also advised that the NSW Department of Premier and Cabinet was currently requesting Lockheed Martin to attend a forthcoming Defence and Aerospace Summit, proposed for later this year.

Ms Collison also indicated that a review of the Lower Hunter Regional Strategy was proposed in the near future and that the review will also incorporate infrastructure needs and requirements.

## **9. Newcastle Airport Limited (NAL) Update**

Mr Ray Bowen said that February passenger numbers for NAL were 87,800. This was 6.2% higher than for the same time last year, and 10% higher than for the first 2 months of 2010.

Mr Bowen said that a development application for a hangar on NAL lease – (aerospace east precinct) has been submitted to Port Stephens Council and with Defence for landowners consent.

An NAL master plan review is underway. AECOM consultants have been engaged to prepare a taxiway upgrade/civil works scoping study.

## **10. Other Business**

WGCDR Johnson pointed out that a clarification of terms was required between ‘flight path’ versus ‘flight tracks’. He indicated that there was a community perception that pilots were deviating from flight paths, although there were no flight paths as such. WGCDR Johnson also indicated that there were no regulations for prescribed minimum altitudes – Air Traffic Control dictate heights for safety. Cr Bob Westbury suggested that a presentation could be made at the next Aircraft Noise Reference Panel meeting to clarify these types of issues.

AIRCDRE Hupfeld reinforced that the Salt Ash Air Weapons Range was a gazetted training area, and that aircraft need to get to and from it. As much as possible, Air Force will fly in a neighbourly way. AIRCDRE Hupfeld also indicated that Air Force takes noise complaints seriously, and cited an example of a horse that was startled whilst training with the US National Guard F16 aircraft. The base will continue to issue media briefs about unusual training activities.

## **11. Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the WCF will be held at Port Stephens Council in early October. The date and time of the next meeting will be confirmed, to ensure it does not interfere with federal and state parliamentary sitting days.

The meeting closed at 11.50am.

**WCF MEMBER ATTENDEES  
WCF 8 APRIL 2011**

<b>NAME</b>	<b>TITLE / ORGANISATION</b>
<b>BAUMANN MP, Craig</b>	NSW Member for Port Stephens
<b>BOWEN, Ray</b>	Manager Assets & Commercial on behalf of the CEO, Newcastle Airport Limited
<b>COLLISON, Jennifer</b>	Regional Coordinator, Hunter Region, NSW Department of Premier & Cabinet
<b>GESLING, Peter</b>	General Manager, Port Stephens Council
<b>HEALY, Mike</b>	A/Head Infrastructure, Defence (Chair)
<b>HODGES, Josh</b>	Office Manager on behalf of Tim Owen, NSW Member for Newcastle.
<b>HORN, Helen</b>	Senior Environmental Manager, RAAF Base Williamtown, Defence, on behalf of Larry Robbins, Regional Director, DSG, Defence
<b>HUPFELD, Mel</b>	Air Commodore, Commander Air Combat Group, Defence
<b>JOHNSON, Glen</b>	Wing Commander, Base Executive Officer RAAF Base Williamtown, Defence
<b>KACHEL, Michael</b>	On behalf of Sharon Grierson, Federal Member for Newcastle
<b>MARLER, Peter</b>	Strategic Planning Coordinator on behalf of Manager Sustainable Planning, Port Stephens Council
<b>OLSEN, Adam</b>	Senior Electorate Advisor on behalf of Bob Baldwin, Federal Member for Paterson
<b>WESTBURY, Bob</b>	Mayor, Port Stephens Council.
<b><u>Other Defence Attendees</u></b>	
<b>DOPSON, Matt</b>	Assistant Director External Land Use Planning, DSG.
<b>DRUC, Anthony</b>	APS Graduate, DSG.
<b>KERWAN, John</b>	Director, External Land Planning, DSG.
<b>MCCORMACK, Matt</b>	Wing Commander, Deputy Director, Air Combat Capability, Air Force Headquarters.
<b>PONTON, Jim</b>	Executive Officer External Land Planning, DSG.
<b>WHEATON, Chris</b>	Group Captain, Director, Acquisition, New Air Combat Capability.