

**Department of Defence**  
**Annual Environmental Compliance Report**  
**March 2023**

EPBC Act Approval 2010/5747  
Flying Operations of the F-35A Lightning II

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Document Version Control

| Version | Date         | Approved by               | Details / Reason for Change                |
|---------|--------------|---------------------------|--------------------------------------------|
| 1       | 7 March 2023 | Berlinda Bowler,<br>DEPAC | Annual Compliance Report Due 10 March 2023 |

## Declaration of Accuracy

In making this declaration, I am aware that sections 490 and 491 of the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (Cth) (EPBC Act) make it an offence in certain circumstances to knowingly provide false or misleading information or documents. The offence is punishable on conviction by imprisonment or a fine, or both. I declare that all the information and documentation supporting this compliance report is true and correct in every particular. I am authorised to bind the approval holder to this declaration and that I have no knowledge of that authorisation being revoked at the time of making this declaration.

Signed:

berlinda.bowler

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|-----------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|
| Full name:                                                      | Berlinda Bowler                                                |
| Position:                                                       | Director, Environmental Planning,<br>Assessment and Compliance |
| Organisation (please print including<br>ABN/ACN if applicable): | Department of Defence<br>ABN: 68 706 814 312                   |
| Date:                                                           | 07 March 2023                                                  |

## 1. Description of Activities

To conduct flying operations of the F-35A Lightning II aircraft at RAAF Base Williamtown and Salt Ash Air Weapons Range in New South Wales, RAAF Base Tindal in the Northern Territory and other secondary urban locations around Australia.

RAAF Bases Williamtown and Tindal will be the main operating bases (MOBs) where the F-35A Lightning II fleet are permanently based. The F-35A Lightning II will deploy periodically to five forward operating bases (FOBs), 14 Air Weapons Ranges (AWRs) and exercise areas located across Australia to conduct operations and training. This includes the FOBs at RAAF Bases Darwin, Townsville, Amberley, Edinburgh and Pearce. The locations of the MOBs, FOBs and AWRs are detailed in Figure 1 of the Referral for the Flying Operations of the F-35A Joint Strike Fighter (EPBC 2010/5747) dated 19 November 2010.

This action was approved under the EPBC Act, subject to conditions of approval issued by the (now) Department of Climate Change, Energy the Environment and Water (DCCEEW), on 10 July 2015. The Action commenced on 10 December 2018.

Condition 7 of the EPBC Act approval requires Defence to publish a report on its website within three months of every 12 month anniversary of the commencement of the action to address compliance with each of the conditions of the approval, including implementation of any management plans, reports and strategies as specified in the conditions. The approval has an expiry date of 1 June 2065.

## 2. Conditions of Approval

Table 1 – Compliance Table

| Condition Number / Reference | Condition                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | Is the project compliant with this condition? | Evidence / Comments                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
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| 1                            | Ensure, during the transition period, aircraft noise levels at sensitive receptors at RAAF Bases(s) do not exceed the F-35A Lightning II aircraft noise levels predicted in the Environmental Impact Statement. During the transition period monitoring must be undertaken, reported biennially to the Department, and, if noise levels exceed the F-35A Lightning II aircraft noise levels predicted in the Environmental Impact Statement, then corrective measures must be developed and implemented, until agreed in writing by the Minister. | Compliant                                     | <p>The action commenced on 10 December 2018 and the transition from F/A-18 A/B Classic Hornets to F-35A Lightning II was completed in December 2021 when RAAF Base Tindal ceased F/A-18A/B Hornet operations. Throughout the early part of 2022, F-35A Lightning II aircraft operated predominantly from the main operating bases at RAAF Base Williamtown (WLM) and RAAF Base Tindal. An extensive runway works program at RAAF Base Williamtown for the second half of 2022 created restrictions around take-offs and landing for F-35A Lightning II aircraft and hence F-35A squadrons were deployed to other bases across Australia and overseas from June 2022 to February 2023. In accordance with the approved RAAF Base Williamtown Base Aircraft Noise Management Plan (BANMP) and (Enclosure 1) F-35A Noise and Flight Activity Verification Program (NFAVP) the following has occurred:</p> <p>During the transition period from 2018 to 2022, the F-35A NFAVP was developed to monitor and assess aircraft noise levels during the transition from F/A-18A/B Classic Hornets to F-35A Lightning II aircraft.</p> <p>Defence continued to validate the EIS predicted noise and flight activity levels against actual F-35A flight data using the Defence Noise and Flight Path Monitoring System (NFPMS) throughout 2022 as F-35A aircraft numbers continue to build. The noise monitoring system has coverage across a wide area in the vicinity of RAAF Base Williamtown including Salt Ash Air Weapons Range operations and a number of sensitive receiver sites.</p> <p>There is a requirement to produce an annual compliance report (this report), and two biennial reports to comply with the Conditions of Approval for the flying operations of the F-35A Lightning II. The first two biennial reports assessed and compared actual F-35A Lightning II noise levels with predictions in the Referral Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) (among other elements of the conditions of approval). These reports were drafted based on results of the first two years of the transition period (December 2018 to December 2020, inclusive) and were submitted to now DCCEEW in July 2021.</p> <p>The two biennial reports are: the Noise and Flight Path Activity (December 2018 – December 2020) and the Noise and Flight Path Monitoring System Review. The Noise and Flight Path Activity December 2018 - December 2020 report addresses <i>Condition 1; Condition 3.a.; 3.c., 3.e.ii; 3.ii.i; 3.e.ii.ii; 3.e.ii.a); b.)c); d).</i> of the approval decision. The F-35A Biennial Reporting - Noise and Flight Path Monitoring System Review report addresses <i>Condition 1, Condition 3, 3.b., 3.c.i.; 3.c.ii.; 3.c.iii.; 3.c.iv.; 3.e.i; 3.f.; 3.f.iv.</i> Please refer to <a href="#">Defence Aircraft Noise: Department of Defence</a> to view the documents.</p> <p>The F-35A Noise and Flight Path Activity December 2018 - December 2020 Report identified flying operations and noise level changes associated with the F-35A aircraft were generally consistent with the EIS. However, the approval condition relating to thrust settings at take-off (M07) was unable to be complied with for safety reasons. In this instance, predictive modelling of take-off conditions used in the EIS were not replicated in actual flying operations and higher thrust settings must be used. As a result of the requirement for higher departure thrust settings, higher than predicted noise levels are associated with these operations.</p> |

| Condition Number / Reference | Condition                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | Is the project compliant with this condition? | Evidence / Comments                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
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|                              |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |                                               | <p>Air Combat Group (ACG) has trialled alternative departure procedures at RAAF Base WLM since mid-2019. The aim of the trials, conducted in accordance with the RAAF Base WLM ANMP and the F-35A NFAVP is to identify procedures that do not compromise the safe operation of the F-35A aircraft, the safety of the public and aircrew, and minimise noise at sensitive receivers, while still achieving training and operational requirements.</p> <p>In accordance with the RAAF Base Williamtown BANMP, Defence continued evaluating the corrective measures in 2022. Data from ongoing monitoring will be collated and presented in the second biennial report - Noise and Flight Path Activity 2021/22 planned to be released in July 2023. This report will provide an update and outcomes of the F-35A Noise and Flight Activity Verification Program contained in the RAAF Williamtown BANMP.</p> <p>Standard operating procedures are to be finalised in 2023/24 as per the approved RAAF Base WLM BANMP F-35A NFAVP once all aircraft are introduced into service. Please see <a href="#">Defence Aircraft Noise: Department of Defence</a> for the RAAF Base WLM BANMP Enclosure 1 – link <a href="https://defence.gov.au/AirCraftNoise/Master/Docs/Environment/F35/RAAF-Base-Williamtown-Base-Aircraft-Noise-Management-Plan-Enclosure1.pdf">https://defence.gov.au/AirCraftNoise/Master/Docs/Environment/F35/RAAF-Base-Williamtown-Base-Aircraft-Noise-Management-Plan-Enclosure1.pdf</a></p> <p>This condition is also supported by actions taken to satisfy conditions 2, 3 and 4.</p> |
| 2                            | Implement the management and mitigation measures outlined at MO1 to M36 of Appendix M of the Environmental Impact Statement and at SO1 to SO8 of Annex A.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | Compliant                                     | <p>The requirements identified in the management and mitigation measures outlined in MO1 to M36 of Appendix M of the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and at SO1 to SO8 of Annex of the EIS are being implemented on an ongoing basis (see itemised description at <b>Attachment A</b>).</p> <p>This condition is also supported by actions taken to satisfy conditions 1, 3 and 4.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| 3                            | Prepare and implement Aircraft Noise Management Plan(s), as described in the Aircraft Noise Management Strategy, at RAAF Base(s), as described in the Aircraft Noise Management Strategy, at RAAF Base(s) to minimise noise disturbance at sensitive receptors from the flying operations of the F-35A Lightning II aircraft. The plan(s) must include, but not be limited to, the following measures: | Compliant                                     | <p>The action commenced on 10 December 2018.</p> <p>The RAAF Base WLM BANMP was approved by the then Department of Environment and Energy (now DCCEEW) delegate on 3 December 2018. The RAAF Base WLM BANMP includes relevant elements of Condition 3 measures, and the biennial reporting covers off on remaining elements of Condition 3 noted below.</p> <p>BANMPs for other RAAF Bases were prepared as part of the Air Force Aircraft Noise Management Strategy and progressively uploaded to the Defence Noise website during 2021. BANMPs were prepared for RAAF bases prior to F-35A exercises and operations in each location. The documents were submitted to DCCEEW on completion. The BANMPs are reviewed annually by Senior Australian Defence Force Officer at each base and can be located on the Defence Aircraft Noise website see link – <a href="#">Defence Aircraft Noise: Department of Defence</a>.</p> <p>BANMPs include measures to align with Condition 3 where applicable. Activities undertaken to inform the BANMPs, and with Condition 3 measures include:</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |

| Condition Number / Reference | Condition                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | Is the project compliant with this condition? | Evidence / Comments                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
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|                              | <p>a) Comparison of actual flight activity of F-35A Lightning II aircraft with those predicted in the Environmental Impact Statement;</p> <p>b) A review of existing noise management programmes;</p> <p>c) Monitoring, to validate predicted noise impacts to sensitive receptors at RAAF Base Williamtown (including Salt Ash Air Weapons Range), RAAF Base Tindal and RAAF Base Townsville.</p> <p>This must include, but not be limited to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An investigation of alternative noise measurement and analysis methods;</li> <li>Utilisation of Noise and Flight Path Monitoring Systems (where installed), to provide ongoing noise information, and the development of a noise measuring system at RAAF Base Tindal;</li> <li>Comparison of actual measured F-35A Lightning II aircraft noise levels with those predicted in the Environmental Impact Statement; and</li> <li>Biennial review of noise monitoring locations, unless agreed with the Minister.</li> </ol> |                                               | <p>3a: Flight activity is documented in the first biennial noise report F-35A Noise and Flight Path Activity December 2018 - December 2020 and includes a comparison of flight activity with EIS predictions for RAAF Base Williamtown. See Pages 15 – 39, Sections 4 to 4.8.2. Flight activity for the period December 2018 – December 2020 is less than predicted in the EIS primarily due to the decreasing F/A-18A/B Classic Hornet aircraft numbers, and the gradual increase of F-35A aircraft introduced into the RAAF. Flight activity for the years 2021–22 will be incorporated in the next biennial F-35A Noise and Flight Path Activity Report. It is anticipated that flying activity will be less than expected at RAAF Base Williamtown due to runways works, ensuring local F-35A squadrons were deployed for prolonged periods from end of May 2022 to February 2023. Runway works will continue until end of February 2023. The biennial reporting for 2021-22 will reflect these operations at RAAF Bases Tindal, Darwin, Townsville and Amberley. The reports will be published in July 2023.</p> <p>3b: A review of existing noise management programmes at RAAF Base WLM was conducted as part of the biennial review - F-35A Biennial Reporting - Noise and Flight Path Monitoring System Review Pages 9-12; Section 3.1 to 3.1.5. In summary, the report found that noise management programs were appropriately addressing community impacts from aircraft noise.</p> <p>The second biennial reports will be published in July 2023. The biennial reporting for 2021-2022 will incorporate F-35A Lightning II operations at RAAF Bases Tindal, Darwin, Townsville and Amberley.3c: The first biennial report, F-35A Noise and Flight Path Activity December 2018 - December 2020 included monitoring data to validate predicted noise at sensitive receptors. F-35A Noise and Flight Path Activity December 2021 - December 2022 will provide the next two years of analysis. Please refer to link: <a href="#">Defence Aircraft Noise: Department of Defence</a></p> <p>3c. Defence operates a Noise and Flightpath Monitoring System across a number of bases across Australia to monitor aircraft noise from military operations. Defence has reported NFPMS data to local communities since 2005. Noise monitoring occurs at RAAF Bases Williamtown in New South Wales, RAAF bases Amberley and Townsville in Queensland and RAAF Bases Darwin and Tindal in the Northern Territory.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The F-35A Biennial Reporting - Noise and Flight Path Monitoring System (NFPMS) Review published in 2021 included an investigation of alternative noise measurement and analysis methods. For reference go to Pages 36 - 52, section 4.3 – 4.3.6. The review found that the current system was a sophisticated and modern system – designed as a fit for purpose model required for monitoring noise for military fast jets.</li> <li>RAAF Base WLM NFPMS produces monthly reports, and annual reports to provide ongoing noise information to local residents. . In 2013, Defence introduced an interactive webpage reporting system to replace paper-based reporting. Noise monitoring terminals have been installed at RAAF Bases Tindal and Darwin over the period November 2021 to January 2022. The NFPMS data is used to produce monthly, and annual noise reports for flying operations for RAAF Bases TDL and WLM. Further information can be sourced through the interactive webpage reporting system – see link: <a href="#">Defence Aircraft Noise: Department of Defence</a></li> <li>Comparisons were conducted and documented in the first biennial noise report F-35A Noise and</li> </ol> |

| Condition Number / Reference | Condition                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | Is the project compliant with this condition? | Evidence / Comments                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
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|                              | <p>d) If actual measured F-35A Lightning II aircraft noise levels, and flight activity exceed those predicted in the Environmental Impact Statement then corrective action be developed and implemented at RAAF Base(s) and forward operating RAAF Base(s), until an appropriate assessment of noise levels and flight activity has been reached, as agreed with the Minister.</p> <p>e) Reporting, to ensure clear and timely public access to noise levels and flight activity monitoring data. This must include,</p> |                                               | <p>Flight Path Activity December 2018 - December 2020. The details can be found at Pages 48-50, Section 5 to 5.1.4 and Appendix E. The findings of F-35A Noise and Flight Path Activity December 2018 - December 2020 indicate that flying operations and noise level changes associated with the F-35A aircraft are generally consistent with the EIS. Further comparisons of actual noise measurements versus the EIS have been conducted throughout 2021-22 and the results will be published in the second biennial reports to be presented to DCCEEW in June 2023, and published in July 2023.</p> <p>iv. Noise monitoring locations were reviewed in F-35A Biennial Reporting - Noise and Flight Path Monitoring System Review go to page 38, Section 4.3.4. There were no recommendations for changes to the siting of noise monitoring locations, beyond provision of mobile noise monitors in specific locations if required (refer to response in condition 3.c.ii)</p> <p>3d: Air Force has conducted considerably less flying activity since the introduction of the F-35A at RAAF Base WLM than identified in the EIS. This will be the case until squadrons reach full capacity. The first F-35A aircraft arrived at RAAF Base Tindal on 3 December 2021. Aircraft will be gradually introduced until the end of 2023.</p> <p>The findings of F-35A Noise and Flight Path Activity December 2018 - December 2020 indicate that flying operations and noise level changes associated with the F-35A aircraft are generally consistent with the EIS.</p> <p>Air Combat Group (ACG) has trialled alternative departure procedures at RAAF Base WLM since mid-2019. The aim of the trials, conducted in accordance with the RAAF Base WLM Aircraft Noise Management Plan (Enc.1) F-35A NFAVP is to identify procedures that do not compromise the safe operation of the F-35A aircraft, the safety of the public and aircrew, and minimise noise at sensitive receivers, while still achieving training and operational requirements. The noise test program was designed to be carried out from the first flying operations of the F-35A aircraft in Australia as from January 2019 through to December 2022.</p> <p>In 2022, ACG moved into Phase 5 of the verification program, which involved continued monitoring and comparison at RAAF Base WLM and Salt Ash Air Weapons Range. Building on the information gained as a result of the extensive noise verification program at RAAF Base WLM in 2021-2022, Defence will provide this data into the 2023 biennial reports. Utilising this data, ACG will seek to finalise operating procedures throughout 2023 designed to minimise aircraft noise as much as possible without comprising operations or safety where required. Defence may look to replicate this departure profile where the benefits can be realised at RAAF Base Tindal and other forward operating bases where applicable.</p> <p>Flying activity and noise levels were monitored throughout 2022 to assess the success of the revised departure profile in minimising noise within safety and operational constraints. The details of the 2021-22 noise monitoring will be assessed in the next scheduled biennial reports due to be published in July 2023.</p> <p>3e:<br/>i. The F-35A Noise and Flight Path Activity December 2018 - December 2020 was published in July</p> |



| Condition Number / Reference | Condition                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | Is the project compliant with this condition? | Evidence / Comments                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
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|                              | <p>but not be limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Conducting a biennial evaluation of the effectiveness of flight activity monitoring and programmes at RAAF Bases(s) until agreed in writing by the Minister;</li> <li>ii. Biennial publication on the Defence Aircraft Noise website of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. noise levels and flight activity monitoring data of the F-35A Lightning II aircraft; and</li> <li>ii. a comparison of actual noise levels and flight activity of the F-35A Lightning II with those predicted in the Environmental Impact Statement. This must include, but not be limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) noise management measures;</li> <li>b) days and hours of operation;</li> <li>c) flight paths used to reduce noise; and</li> <li>d) frequency and type of activities that occur at Salt Ash Weapons Range.</li> </ul> </li> <li>iii. Annual review and update of the Aircraft Noise Management Plan for the first three years following the commencement of the action, and then biennially, unless agreed in writing by the Minister.</li> </ul> </li> <li>f) Consultation activities, to ensure adequate communication with stakeholders, including local residents and relevant authorities. Consultation activities must include, but not be limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Regular review of communication arrangements with affected stakeholders and communities;</li> <li>ii. Clear and timely notification of information regarding varied flight activity and future plans, which may impact stakeholders, but not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. days and hours of operation;</li> <li>ii. flight paths; and</li> <li>iii. higher noise events.</li> </ul> </li> <li>iv. continued participation at community forums; and development of a concise location specific package of key information related to noise levels and flight activity monitoring data that addresses community concerns in an easily understandable manner for the lay person.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> |                                               | <p>2021. The report includes sections evaluating the effectiveness of flight activity monitoring and programmes at RAAF Base WLM. See page 46, section 4.10).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ii. The F-35A Noise and Flight Path Activity December 2018 - December 2020 was published in July 2021 at <a href="#">Defence Aircraft Noise: Department of Defence</a> under Noise Reporting. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) The NFPMS interactive noise level and flight activity monitoring website is in addition to annual reports. Please see link - <a href="#">Defence Aircraft Noise: Department of Defence</a>.</li> <li>(ii. a,b,c,d) F-35A Noise and Flight Path Activity December 2018 - December 2020 covers the requirements of this condition. The next F-35A Noise and Flight Path Activity December 2020 - December 2022 continues this requirement.</li> </ul> </li> <li>iii. Annual review conducted of the RAAF Base Williamtown BANMP revised or updated, submitted to the Department of the Environment and uploaded to the Defence Aircraft Noise website by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>6 December 2019</li> <li>2 December 2020</li> <li>6 December 2021</li> <li>6 December 2022 – Signed by Senior Australian Defence Force Officer, uploaded to web in February 2023.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>3f: Defence has prepared a Community Engagement and Information Provision Plan (CEIP) for RAAF Base Williamtown. The CEIP was promulgated on 9 December 2018 and was reviewed by the Williamtown Advisory Group in October 2019, and October 2020. The CEIP was uploaded to the Defence website by 10 December 2018. The CEIP was last reviewed in 2020. RAAF Base Williamtown Community Engagement and Information Plan – Nov 2018 - <a href="https://defence.gov.au/AirCraftNoise/Environment/F35EIS.asp#:~:text=RAAF%20Base%20Williamtown%20Community%20Engagement%20and%20Information%20Plan%20%E2%80%93%20Nov%202018">https://defence.gov.au/AirCraftNoise/Environment/F35EIS.asp#:~:text=RAAF%20Base%20Williamtown%20Community%20Engagement%20and%20Information%20Plan%20%E2%80%93%20Nov%202018</a>.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. As documented in the CEIP, Defence regularly engages with communities on communication arrangements, including clear and timely notification regarding varied flight activity. Further detail on consultation activities is available in Attachment B.</li> <li>ii. Location-specific information about F-35A Lightning II EIS noise predictions is provided on the Defence website. Defence also provides aircraft noise levels and flight activity monitoring data on the Defence website. See <a href="#">Defence Aircraft Noise : Department of Defence</a></li> <li>iii. As documented in the CEIP, Defence regularly engages with communities on communication arrangements, including clear and timely notification regarding varied flight activity. Further detail on consultation activities is available in Attachment B.</li> </ul> |

| Condition Number / Reference | Condition                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | Is the project compliant with this condition? | Evidence / Comments                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
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|                              | <p>g) Complaint Handling and Resolution, to ensure enquiries and complaints about F-35A Lightning II aircraft flying operations are received, recorded, reported, responded to and resolved, as defined in the Aircraft Noise Management Strategy.</p> <p>The plan must be submitted to the Department for approval. The approval holder must not commence the action unless the Minister has approved this plan.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |                                               | <p>iv. Defence maintains location-specific information about F-35A Lightning II EIS predictions on the Defence website (refer to Biennial Reports). Defence also provides access to aircraft noise levels and flight activity monitoring data on the Defence website. See <a href="#">Defence Aircraft Noise : Department of Defence</a></p> <p>3g: Defence maintains robust complaint handling systems under Enclosure 1 of the RAAF Base Williamtown BANMP, Tindal BANMP, Darwin BANMP, and Amberley BANMP. Complaints are recorded as advised in the BANMPs and in accordance with the RAAF Aircraft Noise Management Strategy.</p> <p>The BANMPs were approved by the Department of Environment and Energy (now DCCEEW) Delegate upon completion of the first NMP beginning with RAAF Base WLM on 3 December 2018. All BANMPs have undergone subsequent documented reviews on an annual basis, or when required. The BANMPs can be found at: <a href="#">Defence Aircraft Noise: Department of Defence</a>.</p> <p>This condition is also supported by actions taken to satisfy conditions 1, 2 and 4.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| 4                            | <p>Prepare and implement a Fauna Management Plan. This plan must include, but not be limited to:</p> <p>a. Establishing a baseline measurement of noise levels at environmentally sensitive locations prior to the flying operations of the F-35A Lightning II aircraft;</p> <p>b. Measurement of noise levels at environmentally sensitive locations during the flying operations of the F-35A Lightning II aircraft;</p> <p>c. If measured F-35A Lightning II aircraft noise levels exceed the baseline measurement of noise levels at environmentally sensitive locations prior to the flying operations of the F-35A Lightning II aircraft, then corrective measures must be developed and implemented until an appropriate assessment of noise impacts is reached, as agreed with the Minister; and</p> <p>d. Reporting the results of noise level measurements to ensure data is publically available.</p> <p>The plan must be submitted to the Department for approval. The approval holder must not commence the action unless the Minister</p> | Compliant                                     | <p>The Fauna Management Plan (FMP) was approved by the DCCEEW Delegate on 10 March 2016 and includes all elements of Condition 4 measures.</p> <p>Activities undertaken to implement the FMP in conformance with Condition 4 include:</p> <p>4a: Baseline measurement of noise levels at environmentally sensitive locations was completed prior to the flying operations of the F-35A Lightning II. Locations were selected in accordance with FMP siting requirements. The baseline measurement of noise levels was conducted during from 2 November 2018 to 23 January 2019. The baseline noise level and fauna observation report was completed in March 2019 and submitted to DCCEEW on 19 April 2019.</p> <p>4b: Transition Period measurements of noise levels at environmentally sensitive locations were undertaken during September to November 2019. The F-35A Aircraft Noise Effects on Fauna – Impact Assessment Results Report is available on the Defence website see link <a href="#">F-35A Aircraft Noise Effects on Fauna – Impact Assessment Results Report</a>.</p> <p>4c: As documented in the Fauna Management Plan, the Impact Assessment Results Report assessed whether F-35A Lightning II noise levels exceed the baseline measurements. No issues were identified to specific animal populations. As a result of the ongoing noise verification trials, Defence will consider the results as part of evaluating whether any corrective measures must be developed and implemented once the transition period is complete in 2023. The biennial reports will inform this assessment.</p> <p>4d: Defence published the Fauna Management Plan to the Defence website in March 2018. The F-35A Noise effects on fauna – Baseline Report April 2019 was published on 5 March 2020. The F-35A Noise Effects on Fauna – Impact Assessment Results report was published on 6 March 2020.</p> |

| Condition Number / Reference     | Condition                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | Is the project compliant with this condition? | Evidence / Comments                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
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|                                  | has approved this plan.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |                                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| <b>Administrative conditions</b> |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |                                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| 5                                | Within 10 days after the commencement of the action, the person taking the action must advise the Department in writing of the actual date of commencement.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | Compliant                                     | Commencement of the action occurred on 10 December 2018.<br><br>On 14 December 2018 the then Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment (DAWE, now DCCEEW) acknowledged receipt of notification that the action commenced.                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| 6                                | The person taking the action must maintain accurate records substantiating all activities associated with or relevant to the conditions of approval, including measures taken to implement the management plans, reports and strategies required by this approval, and make them available upon request to the Department. Such records may be subject to audit by the Department or an independent auditor in accordance with section 458 of the EPBC Act, or used to verify compliance with the conditions of approval. Summaries of audits will be posted on the Department's website. The results of audits may also be publicised through the general media.                         | Compliant                                     | Records are maintained in accordance with Commonwealth record keeping policy using the Defence information management system, known as Objective.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| 7                                | With three months of every 12 month anniversary of the commencement of the action, the person taking the action must publish a report on its website addressing compliance with each of the conditions of this approval, including implementation of any management plans, reports and strategies as specified in the conditions. Documentary evidence providing proof of the date of publication and non-compliance with any of the conditions of this approval must be provided to the Department at the same time as the compliance report is published. The person taking the action must continue to publish the annual report until such time is agreed in writing by the Minister. | Compliant                                     | Commencement of the action occurred on 10 December 2019.<br>The first annual compliance report covers the period 10 December 2018 to 9 December 2019.<br>The second annual compliance report covers the period 10 December 2019 to 9 December 2020.<br>The third annual compliance report covers the period 10 December 2020 to 9 December 2021.<br>The fourth annual compliance report covers the period 10 December 2021 to 9 December 2022. |
| 8                                | Upon the direction of the Minister, the person taking the action must ensure that an independent audit of compliance with the conditions of approval is conducted and a report submitted to the Minister. The audit must not commence unless independent auditor must be approved by the Minister prior to the commencement of the audit. Audit criteria must be agreed to by the Minister and the audit report must address the criteria to the satisfaction of the Minister.                                                                                                                                                                                                            | Not applicable                                | To date, no requests for an audit have been received.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| 9                                | The approval holder may choose to revise a management plan approved by the Minister under conditions 3 and 4 without submitting it for approval under section 143A of the EPBC Act, if the taking of the action in accordance with the revised plan would not be likely to have a new or increased impact. If the approval holder makes this choice they must:<br>i. notify the Department in writing that the approved plan has been revised and provide the Department with an electronic                                                                                                                                                                                               | Compliant.                                    | Following annual review in accordance with Condition 3, the RAAF Base Williamtown BANMP revised or updated, submitted to the Department of the Environment and uploaded to the Defence Aircraft Noise website by:<br>6 December 2019<br>6 December 2020<br>6 December 2021<br>6 December 2022                                                                                                                                                  |

| Condition Number / Reference | Condition                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | Is the project compliant with this condition? | Evidence / Comments                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
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|                              | copy of the revised plan;<br>ii. implement the revised plan from the date that the plan is submitted to the Department; and<br>iii. for the life of this approval, maintain a record of the reasons the approval holder considers that taking the action in accordance with the revised plan would not be likely to have a new or increased impact.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |                                               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• RAAF Base Darwin Base Aircraft Noise Management Plan – 2021</li> <li>• RAAF Base Townsville Base Aircraft Noise Management Plan – 2021</li> <li>• RAAF Base Tindal Base Aircraft Noise Management Plan – 2021</li> <li>• RAAF Base Amberley Base Aircraft Noise Management Plan – 2021</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| 10                           | The approval holder may revoke their choice under condition 9 at any time by notice to the Department. If the approval holder revokes the choice to implement a revised plan, without approval under section 143A of the Act, the plan approved by the Minister must be implemented.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | Not applicable                                | Noted.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| 11                           | If the Minister gives a notice to the approval holder that the Minister is satisfied that the taking of the action in accordance with the revised plan would be likely to have a new or increased impact, then:<br>i. Condition 9 does not apply, or ceases to apply, in relation to the revised plan; and<br>ii. The approval holder must implement the plan approved by the Minister.<br>To avoid any doubt, this condition does not affect any operation of conditions 9 and 10 in the period before the day the notice is given. At the time of giving the notice the Minister may also notify that for a specified period of time that condition 9 does not apply for one or more specified plans required under the approval. | Not applicable                                | Noted.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| 12                           | Conditions 9, 10 and 11 are not intended to limit the operation of section 143A of the Act which allows the approval holder to submit a revised management plan to the Minister for approval.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | Not applicable                                | Noted.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| 13                           | If, at any time after ten years from the date of this approval, the person taking the action has not substantially commenced the action, then the person taking the action must not substantially commence the action without the written agreement of the Minister.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | Compliant                                     | Commencement of the action occurred on 10 December 2018.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| 14                           | Unless otherwise agreed to in writing by the Minister, the person taking the action must publish all management plans, reports or strategies referred to in these conditions of approval on their website. Each management plan or report must be published on the website within one (1) month of being approved.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | Compliant                                     | The following management plans and reports have been published to the Defence website within the specified timeframe:<br><ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• RAAF Base Williamtown Base Aircraft Noise Management Plan 2018.</li> <li>• RAAF Base Williamtown Base Aircraft Noise Management Plan Update 2019.</li> <li>• RAAF Base Williamtown Base Aircraft Noise Management Plan Update 2020.</li> <li>• RAAF Base Williamtown Base Aircraft Noise Management Plan Update 2021.</li> <li>• RAAF Base Williamtown Base Aircraft Noise Management Plan Update 2022. Signed SADFO RAAF Base Williamtown 6 Dec 2022; uploaded to Defence website Feb 2023.</li> </ul><br><ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• F-35A Noise and Flight Path Activity December 2018 - December 2020.</li> <li>• F-35A Biennial Reporting - Noise and Flight Path Monitoring System Review</li> </ul> |

| Condition Number / Reference | Condition                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | Is the project compliant with this condition? | Evidence / Comments                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
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|                              |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |                                               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• RAAF Base Darwin Base Aircraft Noise Management Plan - 2021.</li> <li>• RAAF Base Darwin Base Aircraft Noise Management Plan – update 2023</li> <li>• RAAF Base Townsville Base Aircraft Noise Management Plan - 2021.</li> <li>• RAAF Base Townsville Base Aircraft Noise Management Plan – update 2023.</li> <li>• RAAF Base Tindal Base Aircraft Noise Management Plan – 2021</li> <li>• RAAF Base Tindal Base Aircraft Noise Management Plan – update 2023</li> <li>• RAAF Base Amberley Base Aircraft Noise Management Plan – update 2021</li> <li>• RAAF Base Amberley Base Aircraft Noise Management Plan – 2023</li> </ul> <p>The following management plans and reports were not published to the Defence website within the specified timeframe:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fauna Management Plan 2016 published 26 March 2018.</li> <li>• Fauna Management Baseline report published 5 March 2020.</li> </ul> <p>All management plans and reports listed above are now available on the Defence website. <a href="#">Defence Aircraft Noise: Department of Defence</a></p> |
| 15                           | Unless otherwise agreed to in writing by the Minister, the person taking the action must provide a copy of each approved management plan or report referred to in these conditions of approval to members of the public upon request. Copies must be provided within a reasonable time of the request. | Compliant                                     | Defence has made copies of each management plan and report to date available for download from the Defence website and to members of the public on request.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |

### **3. Correcting Non-Compliances**

Not applicable

### **4. New Environmental Risks**

There were no new environmental risks observed for the approved action.

## 2022 ANNUAL COMPLIANCE REPORT – F-35A LIGHTNING II FLYING OPERATIONS - Attachment A

|  | Criterion # | Indicator # | Indicator                                                                                                                                                                | Response                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
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|  | 2-M01       |             | Schedule operations on weekdays, where possible (training flights on weekends and public holidays will not generally occur).<br>[WLM, TDL, DAR, TVL]                     | <b>Ongoing.</b> Condition met through application of RAAF Base Williamtown Aircraft Noise Management Plan (BANMP). Base NMPs for TDL, DAR and TVL were developed prior to F-35A operations at those locations and are available on the Defence Aircraft Noise website – see link <a href="#">Defence Aircraft Noise: Department of Defence</a> – Noise Management Plans.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|  | 2-M02       |             | Schedule the majority of aircraft movements generally between 7.00 a.m. and 10.00 p.m. (11.00 p.m. during daylight saving).<br>[WLM]                                     | <b>Ongoing.</b> Condition met through application of RAAF Base Williamtown Aircraft Noise Management Plan (BANMP). Details can be found on the Defence Aircraft Noise website – see link <a href="#">Defence Aircraft Noise: Department of Defence</a> – Noise Management Plans.<br>RAAF Base Williamtown/Newcastle Airport runway works occurred from 1 November 2022 through to early December 2022. Media releases and community advisories were issued to local residents (Please refer to Attachment B.) The approved hours of operation for RAAF Base Williamtown is 6am to 10pm and up to 11pm during Australian eastern daylight time. |
|  | 2-M03       |             | Comply with flight path requirements as specified in the Defence policies.<br>[WLM, TDL, DAR, TVL]                                                                       | <b>Ongoing.</b> Condition met through application of RAAF Base Williamtown Aircraft Noise Management Plan (BANMP). Base NMPs for TDL, DAR and TVL were developed prior to F-35A operations at those locations and are available on the Defence Aircraft Noise website – see link <a href="#">Defence Aircraft Noise: Department of Defence</a> – Noise Management Plans.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|  | 2-M04       |             | Follow the Air Combat Group Fly Neighbourly Policy guidelines where training and operational requirements and flight safety circumstances allow.<br>[WLM, TDL, DAR, TVL] | <b>Ongoing.</b> Condition met through application of: -<br>RAAF Base Williamtown Aircraft Noise Management Plan (BANMP)<br>RAAF Base Tindal Aircraft Noise Management Plan (BANMP)<br>RAAF Base Darwin Aircraft Noise Management Plan (BANMP)<br>RAAF Base Townsville Aircraft Noise Management Plan (BANMP)<br><br>Base NMPs for TDL, DAR and TVL were developed in accordance with the Air Force Noise Management Strategy prior to F-35A operations at those locations. ACG continues to apply principles of the ACG Fly Neighbourly Policy at all locations.                                                                               |
|  | 2-M05       |             | Limit night flying at SAAWR to the minimum required to achieve operational and training targets.<br>[WLM]                                                                | <b>Ongoing.</b> Condition met through application of RAAF Base Williamtown Aircraft Noise Management Plan (BANMP). Details can be found on the Defence Aircraft Noise website – see link <a href="#">Defence Aircraft Noise: Department of Defence</a> – Noise Management Plans.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |

|  |       |  |                                                                                                                                                                                        |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
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|  | 2-M06 |  | <p>Comply with noise complaint handling procedures as specified in Defence instructions.</p> <p>[WLM, TDL, DAR, TVL]</p>                                                               | <p><b>Ongoing.</b> Condition met through application of RAAF Base Williamtown Aircraft Noise Management Plan (BANMP). Base NMPs for TDL, DAR and TVL apply a consistent approach to complaint handling procedures in accordance the Air Force Aircraft Noise Management Strategy, and is adopted across all Base noise management plans.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|  | 2-M07 |  | <p>Adopt a 60% thrust setting during climb, as a standard procedure where training and operational requirements and flight safety circumstances allow.</p> <p>[WLM, TDL, DAR, TVL]</p> | <p>In preparation for the commencement of F-35A operations at Williamtown, Air Force adopted a 60% engine thrust required (ETR) setting as a planned standard procedure, as documented in the approved RAAF Base Williamtown Base Aircraft Noise Management Plan of December 2018.</p> <p>In early 2019, shortly after commencement of the first F-35A operations at Williamtown, it became clear that the F-35A cannot safely depart the airfield in 60% ETR setting. In late 2019, after 10 months of trialing various departure profiles, Air Force concluded that flight safety is compromised and a safe departure profile cannot be achieved at 60% ETR setting.</p> <p>Throughout 2020/21 transition period, Air Force trialed F-35A departure profiles aiming to develop suitable profiles to minimise the impacts of aircraft noise, whilst ensuring training and operational requirements, and safe operations of the aircraft were achieved. The first biennial noise report, F-35A Noise and Flight Path Activity December 2018 - December 2020 published in July 2021 assessed the implications of the first stage of the trials, including comparisons with EIS predictions for the years 2019 and 2020.</p> <p>Throughout 2021 and 2022, Air Combat Group, which operates the F-35A Lightning II aircraft, continued to carry out and assess specific departure profiles to provide the best options and balance for minimising the impacts of aircraft noise, whilst ensuring training and operational requirements and safe operations are maintained.</p> <p>In 2022, Air Force flew these specific profiles and conducted stringent ongoing noise monitoring to assess the success of this corrective measure in accordance with Condition 1 and Condition 3. The outcomes of the trials – stage four of the five stage Noise and Flight Activity Verification Program (an enclosure of the RAAF Base Williamtown Base Aircraft Noise Management Plan) will be published in the next biennial reports due in July 2023.</p> |



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|  | 2-M08 | Limit afterburner take-offs to only those that are required for training, operational and safety reasons.<br>[WLM, TDL, DAR, TVL]                                    | In accordance with condition 3, F-35A Lightning II aircraft only conduct afterburner takeoffs when required for safety reasons or for specific noise mitigation activities currently conducted at RAAF Base Williamtown.                                                                                                                                                          |
|  | 2-M09 | Implement and maintain an airfield emergency plan.<br>[WLM, TDL, DAR, TVL]                                                                                           | <b>Ongoing.</b> Condition met through Aerodrome Emergency Plans implemented to fulfil Defence Aviation Safety Manual requirements.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|  | 2-M10 | Maintain emergency base response kit.<br>[WLM, TDL, DAR, TVL]                                                                                                        | <b>Ongoing.</b> Condition met through Aerodrome Emergency Plans implemented to fulfil Defence Aviation Safety Manual requirements.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|  | 2-M11 | Provide periodic training in support of the airfield emergency plan.<br>[WLM, TDL, DAR, TVL]                                                                         | <b>Ongoing.</b> Condition met through Aerodrome Emergency Plans implemented to fulfil Defence Aviation Safety Manual requirements.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|  | 2-M12 | Maintain an emergency operations centre for use as required.<br>[WLM, TDL, DAR, TVL]                                                                                 | <b>Ongoing.</b> Condition met through Aerodrome Emergency Plans implemented to fulfil Defence Aviation Safety Manual requirements.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|  | 2-M13 | Maintain aircraft accident emergency response teams.<br>[WLM, TDL, DAR, TVL]                                                                                         | <b>Ongoing.</b> Condition met through Aerodrome Emergency Plans implemented to fulfil Defence Aviation Safety Manual requirements.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|  | 2-M14 | Maintain command and control interface with civil authorities during incidents.<br>[WLM, TDL, DAR, TVL]                                                              | <b>Ongoing.</b> Condition met through Aerodrome Emergency Plans implemented to fulfil Defence Aviation Safety Manual requirements.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|  | 2-M15 | Manage incidents through command and control interface.<br>[WLM, TDL, DAR, TVL]                                                                                      | <b>Ongoing.</b> Condition met through Aerodrome Emergency Plans implemented to fulfil Defence Aviation Safety Manual requirements.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|  | 2-M16 | Conduct periodic crash training exercises with Defence and civil authorities to practice and test command and control procedures.<br>[WLM, TDL, DAR, TVL]            | <b>Ongoing.</b> Condition met through Aerodrome Emergency Plans implemented to fulfil Defence Aviation Safety Manual requirements.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|  | 2-M17 | Modify habitat and attractants on or in the vicinity of the base to reduce nesting and roosting of bird species at high risk of bird strike.<br>[WLM, TDL, DAR, TVL] | <b>Ongoing.</b> Condition met through implementation of Wildlife Hazard Management Plans prepared with reference to the Civil Aviation Safety Regulation (CASR) – Manual of Standards (MOS) Part 139 – Aerodromes Section 10.14; Bird and Animal Hazard Management, Defence Safety Manual, <i>National Parks and Wildlife Act No. 80 1972</i> (NSW) and supporting documentation. |

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|  | 2-M18 | <p>Modify wildlife behaviour through dispersal, harassment and other means of behaviour disruption to prevent roosting of bird species near runways.</p> <p>[WLM, TDL, DAR, TVL]</p>                                             | <p>Condition met through implementation of Wildlife Hazard Management Plans prepared with reference to the Civil Aviation Safety Regulation (CASR) – Manual of Standards (MOS) Part 139 – Aerodromes Section 10.14; Bird and Animal Hazard Management, Defence Safety Manual, <i>National Parks and Wildlife Act No. 80 1972</i> (NSW) and supporting documentation.</p> |
|  | 2-M19 | <p>Reduce or otherwise alter water catchments and areas that pond on-base to minimise roosting of birds.</p> <p>[WLM, TDL, DAR, TVL]</p>                                                                                         | <p>Condition met through implementation of Wildlife Hazard Management Plans prepared with reference to the Civil Aviation Safety Regulation (CASR) – Manual of Standards (MOS) Part 139 – Aerodromes Section 10.14; Bird and Animal Hazard Management, Defence Safety Manual, <i>National Parks and Wildlife Act No. 80 1972</i> (NSW) and supporting documentation.</p> |
|  | 2-M20 | <p>Maintain grass height on-base to deter foraging and nesting around runways.</p> <p>[WLM, TDL, DAR, TVL]</p>                                                                                                                   | <p>Condition met through implementation of Wildlife Hazard Management Plans prepared with reference to the Civil Aviation Safety Regulation (CASR) – Manual of Standards (MOS) Part 139 – Aerodromes Section 10.14; Bird and Animal Hazard Management, Defence Safety Manual, <i>National Parks and Wildlife Act No. 80 1972</i> (NSW) and supporting documentation.</p> |
|  | 2-M21 | <p>Disperse birds from runway areas through harassment and annoyance routines.</p> <p>[WLM, TDL, DAR, TVL]</p>                                                                                                                   | <p>Condition met through implementation of Wildlife Hazard Management Plans prepared with reference to the Civil Aviation Safety Regulation (CASR) – Manual of Standards (MOS) Part 139 – Aerodromes Section 10.14; Bird and Animal Hazard Management, Defence Safety Manual, <i>National Parks and Wildlife Act No. 80 1972</i> (NSW) and supporting documentation.</p> |
|  | 2-M22 | <p>Monitor and document bird and bat movements, behaviour, dispersal techniques and strikes to measure the impacts and performance of mitigation measures.</p> <p>[WLM, TDL, DAR, TVL]</p>                                       | <p>Condition met through implementation of Wildlife Hazard Management Plans prepared with reference to the Civil Aviation Safety Regulation (CASR) – Manual of Standards (MOS) Part 139 – Aerodromes Section 10.14; Bird and Animal Hazard Management, Defence Safety Manual, <i>National Parks and Wildlife Act No. 80 1972</i> (NSW) and supporting documentation.</p> |
|  | 2-M23 | <p>Minimise bird nesting, roosting and habitat areas of high-risk bird species in accordance with the Bird and Wildlife Operational Management Plan.</p> <p>[WLM]</p>                                                            | <p>Condition met through implementation of Wildlife Hazard Management Plans prepared with reference to the Civil Aviation Safety Regulation (CASR) – Manual of Standards (MOS) Part 139 – Aerodromes Section 10.14; Bird and Animal Hazard Management, Defence Safety Manual, <i>National Parks and Wildlife Act No. 80 1972</i> (NSW) and supporting documentation.</p> |
|  | 2-M24 | <p>Minimise available food sources and foraging opportunities for birds and wildlife on base in accordance with the Bird and Wildlife Operational Management Plan and Airfield Fauna Hazard Reduction Strategy.</p> <p>[WLM]</p> | <p>Condition met through implementation of Wildlife Hazard Management Plans prepared with reference to the Civil Aviation Safety Regulation (CASR) – Manual of Standards (MOS) Part 139 – Aerodromes Section 10.14; Bird and Animal Hazard Management, Defence Safety Manual, <i>National Parks and Wildlife Act No. 80 1972</i> (NSW) and supporting documentation.</p> |

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|  | 2-M25 | Minimise available food sources and foraging opportunities for birds and wildlife on base in accordance with the Wallaby and Wildlife Management Plan.<br>[TDL]                                                                              | Condition met through implementation of Wildlife Hazard Management Plans prepared with reference to the Civil Aviation Safety Regulation (CASR) – Manual of Standards (MOS) Part 139 – Aerodromes Section 10.14; Bird and Animal Hazard Management, Defence Safety Manual, supporting documentation.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|  | 2-M26 | Conduct controlled burning at the beginning of the dry season to clear grassland to discourage black kites from foraging on the airfield.<br>[TDL]                                                                                           | Condition met through implementation of Wildlife Hazard Management Plans prepared with reference to the Civil Aviation Safety Regulation (CASR) – Manual of Standards (MOS) Part 139 – Aerodromes Section 10.14; Bird and Animal Hazard Management, Defence Safety Manual, and supporting documentation.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|  | 2-M27 | Prune and clear flying fox roost trees and replace with trees and shrubs in accordance with the Flying Fox Management Plan and Vegetation Replacement Management Plan.<br>[TDL]                                                              | Condition met through implementation of Wildlife Hazard Management Plans prepared with reference to the Civil Aviation Safety Regulation (CASR) – Manual of Standards (MOS) Part 139 – Aerodromes Section 10.14; Bird and Animal Hazard Management, Defence Safety Manual, and supporting documentation.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|  | 2-M28 | Minimise available food sources and foraging opportunities for birds and wildlife on base in accordance with the Wildlife Hazard Management Plan.<br>[TVL]                                                                                   | Condition met through implementation of Wildlife Hazard Management Plans prepared with reference to the Civil Aviation Safety Regulation (CASR) – Manual of Standards (MOS) Part 139 – Aerodromes Section 10.14; Bird and Animal Hazard Management, Defence Safety Manual, and supporting documentation.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|  | 2-M29 | Minimise available food sources and foraging opportunities for birds and wildlife on base in accordance with the Bird and Animal Hazard Management System.<br>[DAR]                                                                          | Condition met through implementation of Wildlife Hazard Management Plans prepared with reference to the Civil Aviation Safety Regulation (CASR) – Manual of Standards (MOS) Part 139 – Aerodromes Section 10.14; Bird and Animal Hazard Management, Defence Safety Manual, and supporting documentation.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|  | 2-M30 | Abide by the no-fly zone over Cabbage Tree Island and Boondelbah Island during Gould's petrel breeding season. Under the no fly zone, F-35A aircraft will have altered flight paths to avoid flying close to, or above the islands.<br>[WLM] | The RAAF Hazard and Noise Database (HAND) identifies "no fly" zones over Cabbage Tree Island and Boondelbah Island within one nautical mile (horizontal) and 2000ft vertical noise avoid over the islands. The HAND informs aircraft navigation systems.<br><br>For further information go to <a href="#">Defence Aircraft Noise: Department of Defence</a> Noise and Flight Path Activity December 2018 - December 2020 page 43, Figures 17 & 18. An updated compliance analysis will be provided in the F-35A Noise and Flight Activity Dec 2021 – Dec 2022 Report to be published in July 2023. |
|  | 2-M31 | Maintain habitat and infrastructure on the base to discourage the proliferation of fauna, including conservation significant species, in accordance with the Bird and Wildlife Operational Management Plan (Avisure, 2009).<br>[WLM]         | <b>Ongoing.</b> Condition met through implementation of Wildlife Hazard Management Plans prepared with reference to the Civil Aviation Safety Regulation (CASR) – Manual of Standards (MOS) Part 139 – Aerodromes Section 10.14; Bird and Animal Hazard Management, Defence Safety Manual, <i>National Parks and Wildlife Act No. 80 1972</i> (NSW) and supporting documentation.                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |

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|--|-------|--|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  | 2-M32 |  | Maintain habitat and infrastructure on the base to discourage the proliferation of fauna, including conservation significant species, in accordance with the Wallaby and Wildlife Management Plan produced by HLA Envirosciences, 2007 and the Flying Fox Management Plan (Defence, 2012).<br><br>[TDL] | <b>Ongoing.</b> Condition met through implementation of Wildlife Hazard Management Plans prepared with reference to the Civil Aviation Safety Regulation (CASR) – Manual of Standards (MOS) Part 139 – Aerodromes Section 10.14; Bird and Animal Hazard Management, Defence Safety Manual, and supporting documentation.                                                                                                                                                                           |
|  | 2-M33 |  | Maintain habitat and infrastructure on the base to discourage the proliferation of fauna, including conservation significance species, in accordance with the Wildlife Hazard Management Plan produced by Townsville Airport, 2013.<br><br>[TVL]                                                        | <b>Ongoing.</b> Condition met through implementation of Wildlife Hazard Management Plans prepared with reference to the Civil Aviation Safety Regulation (CASR) – Manual of Standards (MOS) Part 139 – Aerodromes Section 10.14; Bird and Animal Hazard Management, Defence Safety Manual, and supporting documentation.                                                                                                                                                                           |
|  | 2-M34 |  | Maintain habitat and infrastructure on the base to discourage the proliferation of fauna, including conservation significance species, in accordance with the Bird and Animal Hazard Management System produced by Darwin International Airport (2011).<br><br>[DAR]                                    | <b>Ongoing.</b> Condition met through implementation of Wildlife Hazard Management Plans prepared with reference to the Civil Aviation Safety Regulation (CASR) – Manual of Standards (MOS) Part 139 – Aerodromes Section 10.14; Bird and Animal Hazard Management, Defence Safety Manual, and supporting documentation.                                                                                                                                                                           |
|  | 2-M35 |  | Liaise with relevant land use planning agencies and authorities in the areas in which the F-35A aircraft operates.<br><br>[WLM, TDL, TVL, DAR]                                                                                                                                                          | <b>Ongoing.</b> Defence maintains a Directorate tasked with providing input to planning schemes and responds to development applications Australia-wide, including in the areas in which the F-35A aircraft operates.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|  | 2-M36 |  | Consult with key stakeholders regarding flying operations, compliance with approved flight paths and operational controls, and future plans.<br><br>[WLM, TDL, TVL, DAR]                                                                                                                                | Defence continues to consult stakeholders regarding flying operations, compliance with approved flight paths and operational controls, and future plans, including: Williamtown Advisory Group (up to 2 meetings each year), Darwin International Airport Community Consultation Group (up to 3 meetings each year), Amberley Consultative Group (up to 5 meetings each year), Townsville Community Aviation Consultation Group.                                                                   |
|  | 2-S01 |  | Implement an Aircraft Noise Management System that will require each RAAF Base or Force Element Group to develop an aircraft noise management plan.                                                                                                                                                     | Condition met through application of RAAF Base Williamtown Aircraft Noise Management Plan (BANMP) 2018. Base NMPs for TDL, DAR and TVL were developed prior to F-35A operations at those locations. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• RAAF Base Williamtown Base Aircraft Noise Management Plan Update 2019.</li> <li>• RAAF Base Williamtown Base Aircraft Noise Management Plan Update 2020.</li> <li>• RAAF Base Williamtown Base Aircraft Noise Management Plan Update 2021.</li> </ul> |

|  |       |                                                                                                                                                                       |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|--|-------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  |       |                                                                                                                                                                       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• RAAF Base Williamtown Base Aircraft Noise Management Plan Update 2022. Signed SADFO RAAF Base Williamtown 6 Dec 2022; uploaded to Defence website Feb 2023.</li> <li>• RAAF Base Darwin Base Aircraft Noise Management Plan - 2021.</li> <li>• RAAF Base Darwin Base Aircraft Noise Management Plan – RAAF review 2023.</li> <li>• RAAF Base Townsville Base Aircraft Noise Management Plan - 2021.</li> <li>• RAAF Base Townsville Base Aircraft Noise Management Plan – RAAF review 2023.</li> <li>• RAAF Base Tindal Base Aircraft Noise Management Plan – 2021</li> <li>• RAAF Base Tindal Base Aircraft Noise Management Plan – RAAF 2023</li> </ul> |
|  | 2-S02 | Maintain a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Aircraft Noise Ombudsman (ANO) to independently review F- 35A aircraft noise management and complaint handling. | Defence agreed an MOU with the Aircraft Noise Ombudsman in January 2015. The MOU remains current.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|  | 2-S03 | Introduce new noise abatement procedures for RAAF Base Williamtown in October 2014.                                                                                   | Noise abatement procedures were implemented at RAAF Base Williamtown in October 2014. These noise abatement activities continue to be observed by all fast jet military aircraft operating from WLM including other bases, or visiting overseas military aircraft.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|  | 2-S04 | Conduct additional noise assessments at child care centres on RAAF Base Williamtown, RAAF Base Darwin, and RAAF Base Amberley.                                        | Noise testing at childcare centres at RAAF Bases Amberley, Darwin and Williamtown took place in late August 2015. In September 2015, Defence advised parents that the initial results of noise testing research had not alleviated Defence's concerns. Given the assessed health and safety risk to children, Defence closed affected centres. See link: <a href="#">Defence Aircraft Noise : Department of Defence</a> for Defence reports.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|  | 2-S05 | Investigate engineering options that would provide practical solutions to reduce the exposure of children on RAAF bases to aircraft noise.                            | Defence investigated engineering options for practical solutions to reduce the exposure of children on RAAF Bases to aircraft noise in January 2015. In September 2015, Defence advised parents that the initial results of noise testing research had not alleviated Defence's concerns. Given the assessed health and safety risk to children, Defence closed affected centres.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|  | 2-S06 | Provide updated noise information for the F-35A aircraft as it becomes available, particularly information on the noise from cannons.                                 | Noise information for the F-35A has been made available via the Environmental Impact Statement.<br>F-35A Lightning II use of SAAWR has been minimal since aircraft introduction in 2018.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |

|  |       |  |                                                                                                                                                                                    |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|--|-------|--|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  |       |  |                                                                                                                                                                                    | <p>On 7-Oct-2021, two F-35As used the SAAWR, including the use of gunnery, between 2-2.30pm. There was a total of 18 passes of the SAAWR, seven of these involved the use of cannons. From the data noise monitoring terminals recorded, noise from the cannons can be heard separate to the aircraft for approximately one second. The noise is no louder than the noise from the aircraft.</p> <p>At noise monitors located in Salt Ash and Medowie and Lemon Tree Passage, cannon noise is heard, but is not recorded separately to the aircraft. When compared with historic F/A-18A/B Hornet noise data at SAAWR, the noise levels for F-35A are slightly higher. However due to limited operations, the data source is limited until F-35A aircraft use of SAAWR more often. This remains the single source of data.</p> |
|  | 2-S07 |  | Continue publication of noise and flight path monitoring data for RAAF Base Williamtown, RAAF Base Darwin, and RAAF Base Townsville on the Defence Aircraft Noise website.         | Defence continues to publish noise and flight path monitoring data for RAAF Base Williamtown, bed RAAF Base Townsville. RAAF bases Tindal and Darwin noise monitoring began as from November 2021. Go to <a href="#">Defence Aircraft Noise: Department of Defence</a> for information on the Noise and Flightpath Monitoring System and reporting                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|  | 2-S08 |  | Maintain and continue to participate in forums for community consultation such as the Williamtown Advisory Group and the Darwin International Airport Community Consultation Group | Defence continues to participate in a number of forums for community consultation, include the Williamtown Advisory Group and the Darwin International Airport Community Consultation Group. Senior Australian Defence Force Officers continue to organise and/or attend forums on a regular basis.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |

## **2022 ANNUAL COMPLIANCE REPORT – F-35A LIGHTNING II FLYING OPERATIONS**

### **Attachment B – Consultation and Notices - 2022**

#### **Community Consultation and Engagement**

Defence continues to consult stakeholders regarding flying operations, compliance with approved flight paths, operational controls and future plans. The key groups include: - Williamstown Advisory Group (up to 2 meetings each year); Darwin International Airport Community Consultation Group (up to 3 meetings each year); Amberley Consultative Group (up to 5 meetings each year); and Townsville Community Aviation Consultation Group.

#### **Air Force Advisories**

Air Force issues social media posts associated with all exercises and flying activities as well as posting flying activity on the Flying Operations page - <https://www.airforce.gov.au/operations/flying-operations/flying-activity>. This link is displayed at the bottom of every media release and noise mitigation/information social media post.

In addition to the ongoing advisories, public information is distributed to local residents via public affairs campaigns to support the extensive deployment/exercise training requirements that occur around Australia for military fast jet flying operations.

For example, publicity campaigns were associated with two major Australian Defence Force exercises at RAAF Bases Darwin and Tindal since late May 2022: -

- Air Warfare Instructor Course – 30 May to 24 June 2022 - [Next generation of Top Guns to strike in Top End Storm | Defence](#)
- EXERCISE Pitch Black 2022 - 19 August – 8 September 2022 - [Exercise Pitch Black | Air Force](#)

In addition, F-35A aircraft also deployed to RAAF Bases Amberley and Townsville as a result of the extensive runway works program at RAAF Base Williamtown/Newcastle Airport from 27 June to 2 September 2022. Public information activities occurred to inform local residents of the nature and extent of the impacted operations.

As a result of extensive runway works at RAAF Base Williamtown and Newcastle Airport, F-35A Lightning II aircraft conducted early morning departures to avoid training restrictions as a result of runway works as from Monday 1 November 2022. The early morning flying activities were halted in December 2022 as a resolution and agreements were reached with contractors. The approved hours of operation for RAAF Base Williamtown is 6 am to 10 pm and up to 11 pm during Australian eastern daylight time.– See [F-35A Lightning II Squadrons conduct early morning departures to allow for runway works program at RAAF Base Williamtown | Air Force](#)

A period of sustained military flying activities in Darwin, for up to six months, led to an increase in noise complaints from 30 in 2021 to 42 in 2022 (some of the complaints were from the same individuals). An extensive public information and engagement campaign was conducted for each of these major military exercises with dedicated PA/CE teams on the ground.

Local people expressed general frustration with the duration of military flying – however all flying activities occurred within strict flying procedures and guidelines outlined in the RAAF Base Darwin Noise Management Plan. All flying activities were part of essential training in support of key ADF operational requirements.

#### **Local notifications**

RAAF Base Williamtown local flying notifications are issued on a regular basis to local, state and federal government representatives. Notification are also issued to advise Williamtown Advisory Group members and local residents of non-routine flying activity, or specific announcements such as low passes over the Base where possible.



RAAF Bases Amberley, Darwin and Townsville have developed stakeholder email contact points to distribute information for exercises.

In excess of 10 local advisories/updates were issued in 2022 designed to keep people informed of RAAF Base WLM or SAAWR flying activities.

#### RAAF Base Williamtown F-35A flying activities

| Information distributed to local residents in 2022                                                                                                      |                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Notice                                                                                                                                                  | Date            | Topic                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| Media Alert x 5                                                                                                                                         | Ongoing         | F-35A Diverts<br>RAAF Base Richmond/Tamworth/Coffs Harbour                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| Media Alert x 18                                                                                                                                        | Ongoing         | Flypasts – WLM// Nelson Bay/Canberra, Sydney/<br>Darwin//East Sale                                                                                                                                                                               |
| Media Release x 1                                                                                                                                       | Oct             | Evans Head Air Weapons Range – community<br>engagement; media; release; public notifications                                                                                                                                                     |
| Media Alert x 2                                                                                                                                         | May/July        | F-35A early arrivals - New aircraft ferries– WLM                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| Media Release x 3                                                                                                                                       | Jan/July 22     | F-35A SAAWR Ops - community engagement; media;<br>release; public notifications                                                                                                                                                                  |
| Media Release x 9                                                                                                                                       | Ongoing         | Exercises and Operations – RAAF Bases WLM, AMB,<br>Dar, TVL                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| Media Release x 1                                                                                                                                       | November 22     | Williamtown/Newcastle airport runway works<br>Early morning departures due to runway works program –<br>RAAF Base Williamtown                                                                                                                    |
| Media Alert x 8                                                                                                                                         | May 22 – Dec 22 | Operations at Multiple locations to account for the Runway<br>works program at RAAF Base Williamtown– Darwin,<br>Townsville, Amberley, Richmond<br>Information program for each location including media<br>releases and community notifications |
| Media Release –<br>multiple<br><br>Sustained RAAF<br>public relations and<br>community<br>engagement campaign<br>– prior to and during<br>the Exercises | May – Dec 22    | Major Exercises – Air Warfare Instructor Course –<br>Multiple releases for multiple locations – NT, QLD<br><br>Pitch Black 22 - Multiple releases for multiple locations –<br>NT                                                                 |



| <b>Information available for stakeholders/residents</b> |                      |                                                     |
|---------------------------------------------------------|----------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Notice</b>                                           | <b>Date</b>          | <b>Topic</b>                                        |
| Darwin Information Sheet                                | May 2022             | F-35A deployment as result of Base WLM runway works |
| Amberley Information Sheet                              | May and October 2022 | F-35A deployment as result of Base WLM runway works |
| Townsville Information Sheet                            | 2022                 | F-35A deployment as result of Base WLM runway works |

| <b>Consultation Forums</b>                                |                                                                 |
|-----------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Forum</b>                                              | <b>Date</b>                                                     |
| Williamstown Advisory Group                               | Single Meeting – 6 June 22.<br>Ongoing notifications/advisories |
| Darwin International Airport Community Consultation Group | Three meetings – 3 March 2022; 28 July 2022; 3 November 2022.   |
| Amberley Community Consultation Forum                     | Two meetings – 8 June 2022, 17 November 2022.                   |
| Townsville Community Aviation Consultation Group          | Townsville Airport lead                                         |