

WHY AIRCRAFT FLY WHERE THEY DO

Airservices is responsible for the management and control of the flight paths used by aircraft approaching and departing from major airports. In most cases, aircraft fly approved flight paths that have been developed over time in consultation with government, councils and residents.

Aircraft fly within a corridor known as a flight path, rather than along a precise, straight line. Over time, as navigation technology has improved, these corridors have generally been getting narrower. Factors such as aircraft type, weight and weather conditions can also determine how precisely aircraft fly within corridors. From the ground, it can appear that aircraft that should be flying the 'same' path, are flying a different path. This leads to the perception that aircraft are flying on the 'wrong' or a 'new' flight path, which is rarely the case.

ARRIVING AND DEPARTING AIRCRAFT

Air traffic controllers keep aircraft at safe distances from each other in the air and on the ground, while arranging them in a sequence for landing or take-off along organised flight paths. The management of aircraft by air traffic control is a complex issue,

particularly at major airports. That is why strict procedures are in place to manage arriving and departing aircraft.

Take-off and landing phases are when aircraft have the greatest noise impact. Aircraft take off and land into the wind, or with minimal tail wind. As a result, the wind direction dictates the selection of runway(s) in use at any time. This in turn determines which flight paths are used.

Arriving aircraft must be stabilised and aligned with the runway at least three to four kilometres from the runway end. In bad weather this increases to 15 km. These areas will always be most impacted by aircraft noise. There are no alternatives to this.

The procedures for departing aircraft are designed to take a number of factors into account, including safety and noise impacts.



CHANGING WHERE AIRCRAFT FLY

Changes to flight paths for arriving and departing aircraft are made for a variety of reasons, including safety and the environment. However, changes are not easy to make as they have to take into account the impact on the entire terminal airspace. Airservices aims to minimise the impacts of changes while ensuring the safety of the air navigation system and the provision of critical infrastructure.

Airservices is committed to providing information to and consulting with stakeholders and the community on changes to flight paths. Community Aviation Consultation Groups (CACGs), which have been established at all federally leased airports, are the primary forums for Airservices and the wider aviation industry to engage with communities on airport management issues—including potential changes to flight paths.

Information on CACGs is available at:
www.airservicesaustralia.com/aircraftnoise/community-aviation-consultation-groups

Airservices also undertakes a range of additional consultation methods as necessary. Airservices Communication and Consultation Protocol is available online at www.airservicesaustralia.com/publications/corporate-publications/communication-and-consultation-protocol

FURTHER INFORMATION

Airservices website – www.airservicesaustralia.com/aircraftnoise contains information and fact sheets about airports, aircraft noise and related resources.

WebTrak – www.airservicesaustralia.com/aircraftnoise/webtrak

Guide to our operations –
www.airservicesaustralia.com/publications/corporate-publications