

SMART TRACKING – MELBOURNE RUNWAY 16

Airservices is updating satellite-assisted Smart Tracking at Australian airports to make air travel safer, cleaner and more dependable.

Satellite technology has proved to be a quantum leap in aircraft navigation capability and new aircraft are being designed to accommodate this technology.

For simplicity, we refer to the most advanced satellite based technology currently available as 'Smart Tracking'. Smart Tracking was permanently implemented for aircraft arriving at Melbourne Airport in 2013.

To enable a wider range of aircraft to use Smart Tracking at Melbourne Airport, Airservices is implementing a new international standard Smart Tracking procedure on Runway 16 to improve safety, noise and emissions outcomes for Melbourne Airport.

WHAT IS 'SMART TRACKING'?

A growing number of modern aircraft are now fitted with navigation systems that use satellite-assisted guidance. Specialised flight management systems in the cockpit use GPS information to fly aircraft with high accuracy and only a small variation in the actual tracks flown from one aircraft to another. These systems are known in aviation circles by the technical term 'Required Navigation Performance' or 'RNP' meaning the aircraft can perform in accordance with a strict set of navigation parameters.

Satellite-assisted navigation is recognised internationally for its safety benefits which are achieved through navigation with high precision.

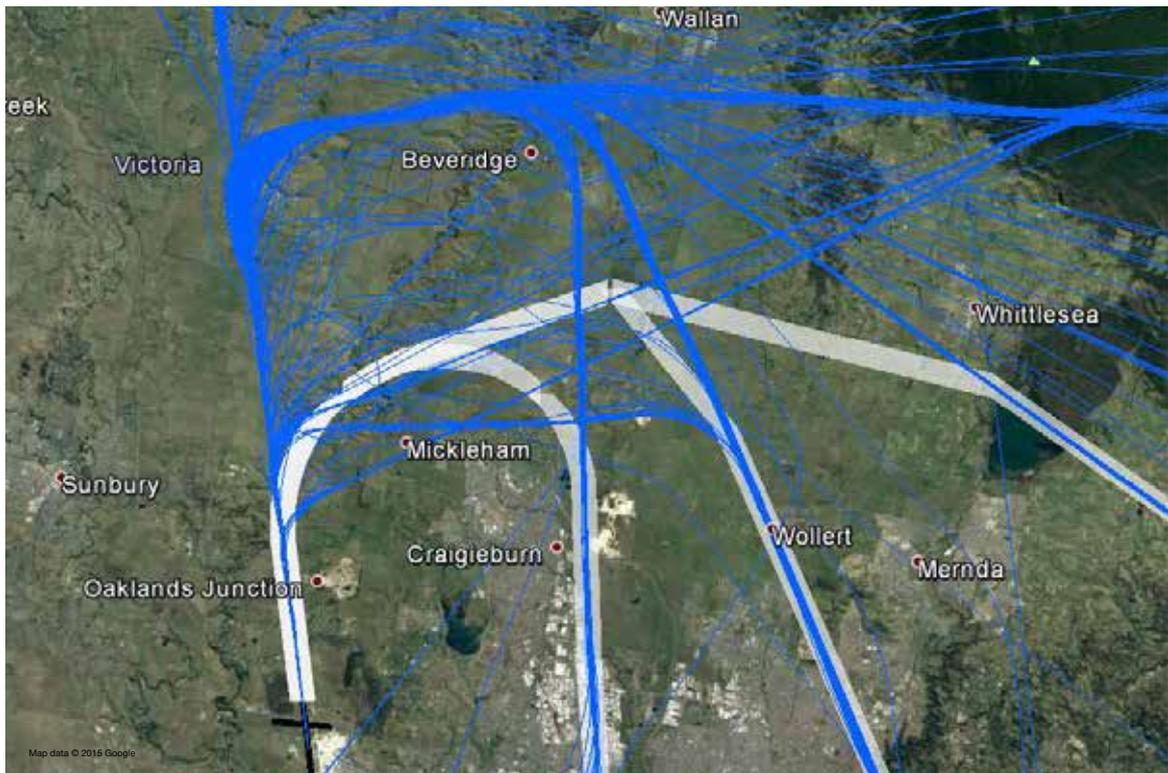
HOW DOES SMART TRACKING CHANGE THE WAY AIRCRAFT FLY?

Smart Tracking aircraft fly with greater accuracy than those using conventional navigation means. This provides the ability to follow flights paths with high precision, and to make smooth curved approaches in all weather conditions.

Smart Tracking provides an accurate vertical glide path which often allows aircraft arriving at an airport to place their engines at idle and glide until close to the runway under minimal power. This can reduce noise where aircraft have previously been flown manually requiring sharp changes in throttle to adjust the angle of descent.

Smart Tracking has been developed using existing and longstanding flight paths, but where possible, flight paths can be designed to curve around obstacles or to avoid noise sensitive areas in favour of overflying industrial land or other non-residential areas.

Smart Tracking also increases the reliability of landing at the airport in low visibility conditions, such as heavy rain and low cloud, which means fewer delays for passengers. This makes air travel safer, cleaner, more dependable, and can provide better noise outcomes for communities living close to airports.



Above: New Smart Tracking flight path shown in white. Existing flight tracks (which will not change) shown in blue.

WHAT IS GOING TO CHANGE?

Most aircraft around Melbourne Airport will continue to fly as they currently do. Residents in the Kalkallo, Craigieburn, Dannybrook, Mickleham and Oaklands Junction areas may visually notice that aircraft arriving to Melbourne Airport are following slightly different flight paths than they were previously, however no new areas will be overflown by aircraft.

On a busy day, approximately 280 jet aircraft arrive on Runway 16. Of these flights, it is estimated that up to 30 (approximately 10% of arrivals to runway 16) may use Smart Tracking to land (based on 1 July 2013–30 June 2014 data). Arrivals to Runway 16 are generally highest during spring and summer due to wind directions.

WHEN WILL THIS CHANGE BEGIN?

The updated flight paths will be available for all suitably-equipped operators from 10 November 2016.

WILL THERE BE MORE AIRCRAFT NOISE?

No new areas will be exposed to aircraft noise as a direct result of the updated Smart Tracking flight paths, as these areas are already currently overflown by aircraft (both arriving to Runway 16 and departing from Runway 34). While there may be a slight increase in the level of noise from these flights, it is not likely to be distinguishable due to the number of flights that already fly over these areas.

WHERE CAN I GET MORE INFORMATION ABOUT SMART TRACKING?

Further information on Smart Tracking can be found on the Airservices website at www.airservicesaustralia.com/projects/smart-tracking or by contacting the Noise Complaints and Information Service on 1800 802 584 (free call), using our online form at www.airservicesaustralia.com/aircraftnoise/about-making-a-complaint/how-to-make-a-complaint or by mail to Noise Complaints and Information Service, PO Box 211, Mascot NSW 1460. An interpreter service is available on 131 450.