

AIRPORT MASTER PLANS

This factsheet outlines Airservices role in the master plan process.

The *Airports Act 1996* (as amended) requires federally-leased airports¹ in Australia to produce a Master Plan every five years. This is effectively a blueprint for the future coordinated development of an airport over a twenty year period, with an emphasis on the first five years. It includes information relating to forecast growth, airport terminals and facilities, runways and incorporates an environmental strategy.

Purpose and objectives

The broad purpose and objectives of a master plan are set out in the *Airports Act 1996* to:

- establish the strategic direction for efficient, economic development at the airport over the planning period
- provide for the development of additional uses of the airport site
- indicate to the public the intended uses of the airport site
- reduce potential conflicts between uses of the airport site and to ensure that these are compatible with the areas surrounding the airport

- ensure that all operations at the airport are undertaken in accordance with relevant environmental legislation and standards
- establish a framework for assessing compliance at the airport with relevant environmental legislation and standards
- promote the continual improvement of environmental management at the airport.

Roles in the master planning process

Airports are responsible for producing the master plan, while the overall process is administered and regulated by the Department of Infrastructure and Regional Development. More detail on this process is available at www.infrastructure.gov.au/aviation/airport/Planning/index.aspx

As an airport tenant, Airservices has an interest in the content of master plans as they relate to our own facilities, infrastructure and services provided at an airport. We engage airports early in the drafting stage to provide technical and operational expertise to assist the airport and protect our facilities and operations.



¹ These are: Brisbane, Archerfield, Townsville, Gold Coast, Sydney, Bankstown, Camden, Canberra, Melbourne, Essendon, Moorabbin, Hobart, Launceston, Adelaide, Parafield, Darwin, Alice Springs, Perth and Jandakot. (Mount Isa and Tennant Creek, while federally-leased airports, are not required to prepare a master plan under the Act.)

Australian Noise Exposure Forecast (ANEF)

A master plan must include an Australian Noise Exposure Forecast (ANEF) in the form of an ANEF chart. An ANEF is the forecast of future noise exposure patterns around an airport and constitutes the contours on which land use planning authorities base their controls, as described in Australian Standard *AS2021-2000 Acoustics - Aircraft noise intrusion – Building siting and construction*.

ANEFs are prepared by airports before the draft master plan is published for community consultation and are produced with a forecast of 20 or more years, or the ultimate practical capacity of the airport.

Airservices is responsible for endorsing an airport's ANEF for technical accuracy. This involves checking that:

- modelling inputs include appropriate selection of aircraft types
- modelling inputs include operationally feasible runway use and flight path data
- modelling inputs include operationally feasible aircraft movement forecasts
- contours have been modelled correctly
- that the airport identifies who is responsible for the modelling assumptions
- the airport has paid due regard to all issues raised by state and local government authorities in relation to the ANEF.

Importantly, other than testing that forecast activity is operationally feasible, Airservices makes no assessment of an airport's activity forecasts.

More information about ANEFs is available from the Department of Infrastructure and Regional Development at www.infrastructure.gov.au/aviation/environmental/transparent_noise/expanding/app_a.aspx

Flight path design

Master plans may propose increases in demand or major developments (such as a new runway) at an airport, which would necessitate changes to flight paths. In such cases, the airport is required to map indicative new flight paths where required.

Airservices has responsibility for airspace design and flight paths can only be designed after taking into account wider regional issues close to the time of implementation. For that reason, Airservices carries out detailed flight path design close to the time when changes are actually required – normally around two years prior to operation. As a result during the endorsement process Airservices cannot validate the indicative flight paths used in an ANEF. The endorsement process requires the airport to demonstrate the rigor to which technical input into the design of future flight paths has been applied.

Public Consultation and approval

Airports are required to consult with airport users, state or territory governments, local authorities and the community in developing master plans.

More detail on consultation and approval requirements is available at www.infrastructure.gov.au/aviation/airport/Planning/index.aspx

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