



Australian Government

**Department of Infrastructure,
Transport, Regional Development,
Communications, Sport and the Arts**

Ref: MC26-004833

Professor Marcus Foth
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Dear Prof Foth

Thank you for your correspondence of 10 April 2026 to the Hon Catherine King MP, Minister for Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government, regarding the Brisbane Airport draft Master Plan 2026 (dMP). The Minister has asked me to respond on her behalf.

I want to note that at the time of writing, the Minister has not yet made a decision whether to approve, or refuse to approve, the dMP under subsection 81(2) of the *Airports Act 1996* (the Airports Act). Following on from the Minister's response of 24 March 2026, please find below responses to the matters you have raised.

Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (EPBC Act) considerations

As noted in the Minister's response of 24 March 2026, neither Airservices Australia's (Airservices) technical endorsement of an Australian Noise Exposure Forecast (ANEF), nor the Minister's consideration of a dMP in which an ANEF is specified, reflects a change in flight paths or airspace operations.

When Airservices is considering changes to flight paths or airspace operations, it does so in accordance with its statutory functions and operational frameworks, which give primacy to aviation safety and require a balanced consideration of operational, environmental and community impacts. Where relevant, consideration is also given to whether a proposed action may require referral under section 161 of the EPBC Act.

With regard to section 28 of the EPBC Act, neither the Commonwealth nor a Commonwealth agency is taking any action in relation to the ANEF. The Minister is considering whether to approve, or refuse to approve, the dMP submitted under the Airports Act.

Regardless of any decision by the Minister on the dMP, actions on or around the Brisbane airport site are subject to requirements under the EPBC Act.

Environmental Management of Changes to Aircraft Operations – National Operating Standard (AA-NOS-ENV-2.100)

When Airservices is considering changes to flight paths or airspace operations, environmental considerations form part of the broader decision-making process undertaken by Airservices. The standard you have referenced, AA-NOS-ENV-2.100, is intended to prescribe the requirements for these environmental impact assessments, alongside other matters. This occurs parallel to (and does not displace) Airservices' primary obligation to ensure the safety of air navigation when undertaking such a consideration.

Given that neither Airservices' technical endorsement of an ANEF, nor the Minister's approval of a dMP in which an ANEF is specified, reflects a change to flight paths or airspace operations, the standard is not relevant to the dMP consideration process.

Gap analysis

As Airservices' technical endorsement of an ANEF does not reflect a change in flight paths or airspace operations, AA-NOS-ENV-2.100 is not relevant to the consideration of the ANEF, and the gap analysis referenced in the standard has not been undertaken.

In circumstances where Airservices *is* considering a change in flight path or airspace operations, it is undertaken in a manner consistent with the standard (which would include undertaking any gap analysis set out in the standard).

ANEF currency

The ANEF included in the preliminary dMP does not take into account potential future flight path changes being considered under the *Noise Action Plan for Brisbane*, as decisions around whether these flight path changes will be implemented have not yet been made by Airservices.

Airservices and Brisbane Airport Corporation (BAC) have confirmed that they will ensure that information on these potential flight path changes will be publicly available once decisions have been made about their implementation, regardless of the outcome of the Minister's decision to approve or refuse to approve the dMP.

These changed flight paths would also necessarily inform any ANEF outlined in future dMPs put to the Minister for consideration under subsection 81(2) of the Airports Act. Such an ANEF would require technical endorsement by Airservices in a manner consistent with requirements under the Airports Act.

Departmental assurance

In making a decision under subsection 81(2) of the Airports Act, the Minister must have regard to matters specified in subsection 81(3) of the Airports Act.

The department provides advice to the Minister around conformity with relevant procedural and content requirements under the Act, and matters to which the Minister must have regard under subsection 81(3) of the Airports Act. The department takes this responsibility seriously to ensure that requirements under the Airports Act are met.

In providing this advice to the Minister, the department considers material provided by the airport-lessee company, and consults with relevant Australian Government agencies, including (amongst other agencies), Airservices, the Civil Aviation Safety Authority (CASA), and the Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water.

The department recognises Airservices' statutory role and technical expertise in relation to flight path design and aircraft noise, and considers its views in providing advice to the Minister. The Minister must give regard to the views of Airservices (and CASA), insofar as they relate to the safety and operational aspects of the plan.

Separately, the government is continuing to implement initiatives to reduce the impact of aircraft noise on Australian communities outlined in the *Aviation White Paper – Towards 2050*, including:

- establishing an independent Aircraft Noise Ombuds Scheme with the authority to conduct independent investigations into community consultation processes
- appointing an Airservices executive for noise and environment to lead the agency's work on noise minimisation
- producing new guidance to pilots on 'Flying Considerately' to minimise noise impacts in residential areas; and
- improving engagement with communities affected by changes to airspace and flight paths.

Airservices is also continuing to implement the *Noise Action Plan for Brisbane*, including considering opportunities to improve airspace operations around Brisbane Airport and mitigate noise impacts on surrounding communities.

Thank you for taking the time to write and I trust that this information will be of assistance.

Yours sincerely



Sarah Nattey
Assistant Secretary, Airports Branch
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29 / 05 /2026