

24 March 2019

The Manager  
Productivity Commission of New South Wales

## ECONOMIC REGULATION OF AIRPORTS: SUBMISSION RE AIRCRAFT NOISE

Dear Sir/Madam

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the Economic Regulations of Airports report. Our response is focused on feedback relating to aircraft noise impacts and curfew at Sydney airport.

### **We strongly oppose any change to the current hours of operation of Sydney Airport.**

#### 1. NOISE IMPACT

Living directly under the flight path in the Boronia Park area of Sydney, our health and lives are impacted by the significant noise pollution produced from airlines utilising Sydney airport.

Social functions and general relaxation, watching TV, having conversations and other everyday activities, have been continuously adversely effected due to the increased aircraft noise we experience being situated on one of Sydney Airport's primary flight paths.

AirServices Australia website provides the statistical evidence of the hourly distribution of noise events above 70dBA. The Hunters Hill Environmental Monitoring Unit 116 (EMU116) records these events as part of the Noise and Flight Path Monitoring System or NFPMS.

The extracted graphs included with this submission demonstrate the consistently high number of events from April 2018 to December 2018. At a lot of times, the actual number of occurrences have increased over this period.

Putting in perspective, a typical vacuum cleaner is often referred to at 70dBA noise level and an alarm clock is 80dBA. Note – ASA NFPMS are recorded as “events above 70dBA”. The actual noise level will be greater; eg a typical propeller plane at 1000ft is 88dB; a jet plane flying over is typically around 110dBA at 1000ft. Planes at our location are approximately 2000ft. This means it is like having a vacuum go on, then off outside your window for 30 seconds, every 3 to 5 minutes in peak periods, which are usually at the start and end of the non curfew period.

Referring to Figures 1 to 3 and using as example the period from 6am to 7am - on average between April to December 2018, there are around or above 12.5 instances of 70dBA+ noise events.

ASA information on the following page.

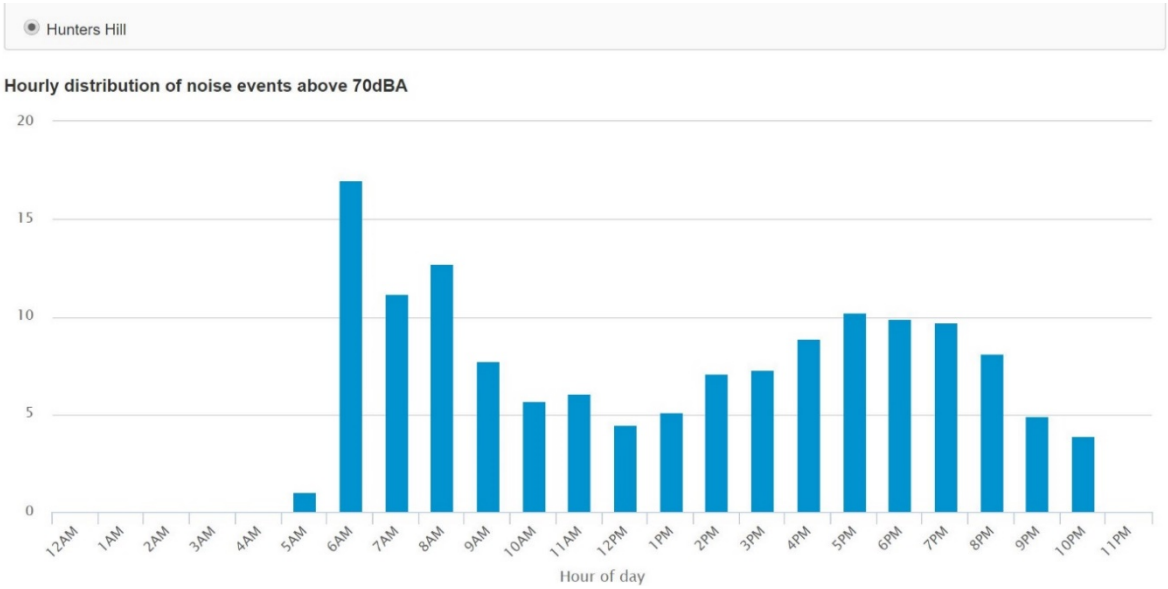


Figure 1: Apr to Jun 2018

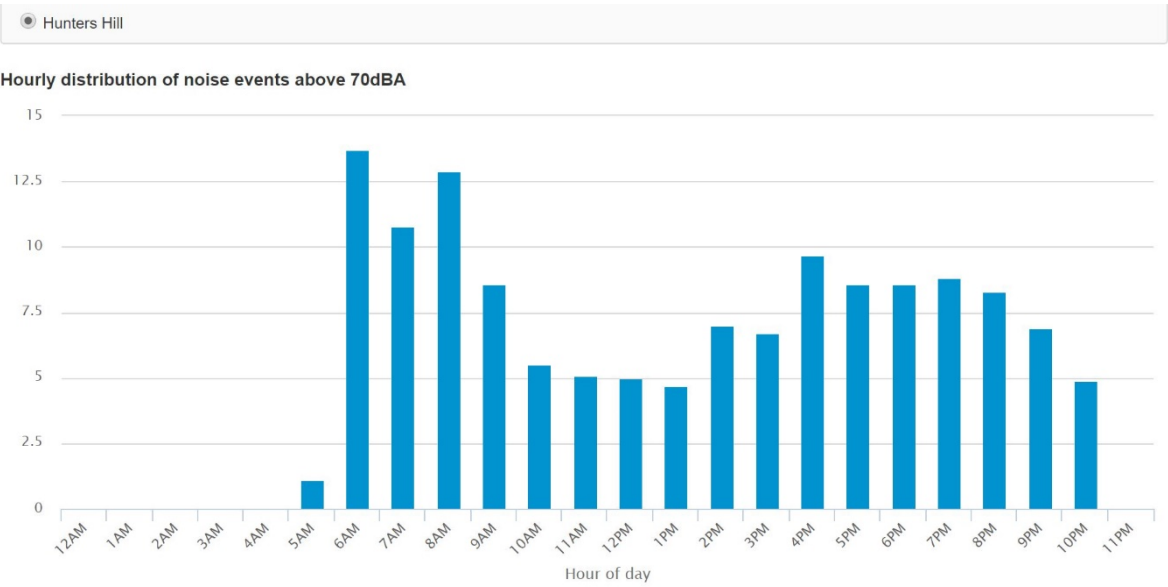


Figure 2: July to Sept 2018

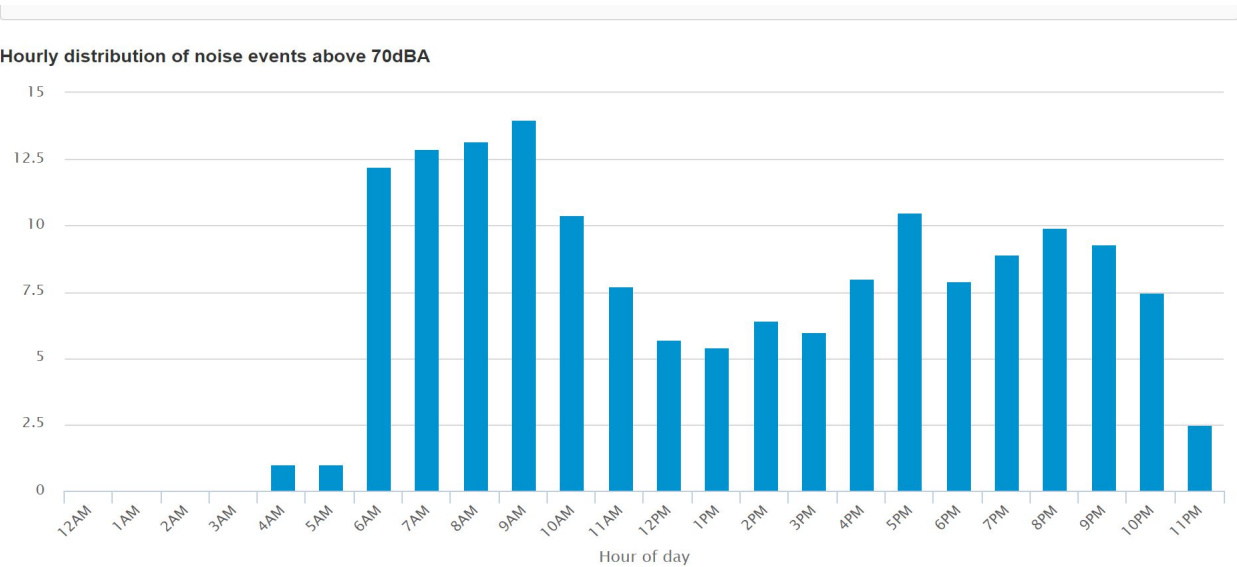


Figure 3 - Oct to Dec 2018

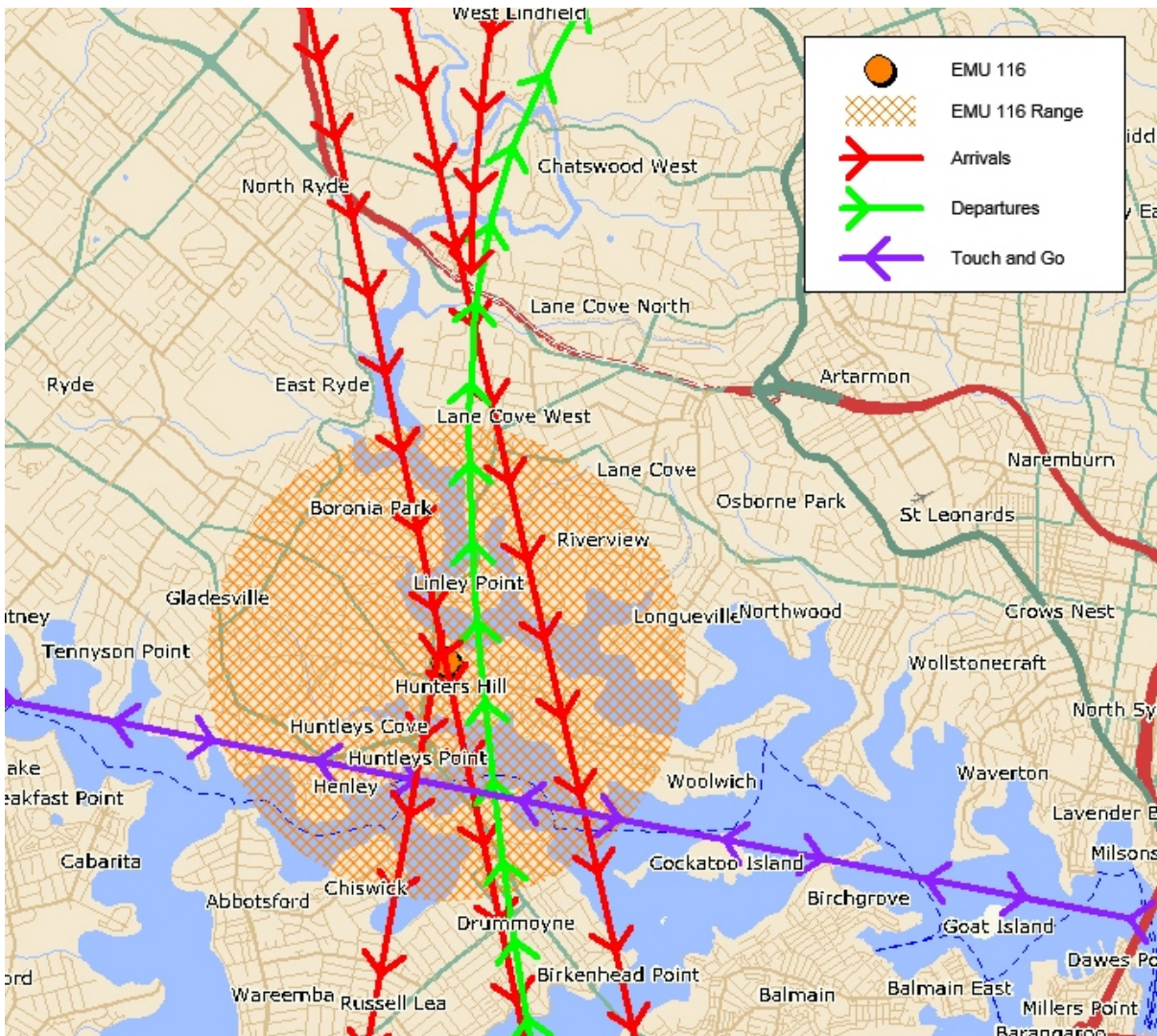


Figure 4: ASA EMU116 location

## 2. MOVEMENT CAP

In general, we support the need for a more common-sense approach to managing the rolling hour cap on aircraft movements, particularly when the airport is recovering from weather events. This flexibility will need to be monitored to ensure there isn't institutionalised abuse of the flexibility i.e. modifications to schedules that result in constantly needing to exceed the cap. The efficiency of airport operations is one matter, but in the end, this is an issue of helping people get to their destination with minimal delays and frustration.

## 3. CURFEW

The curfew should remain intact. The 11:00 pm till 6:00 am curfew (with limited exceptions) does balance the liveability of Sydney with the productivity of Sydney. However, the criteria for breaching curfew should be further reviewed. The impact of delayed flights being redirected due to not meeting the curfew by 5 minutes can be significant and far-reaching. If a more robust consideration of landing paths, landing profiles (deceleration etc) and weather conditions allowed for the occasional slightly outside of curfew landing, this would be a more common-sense approach. This is primarily an issue for not meeting the 11:00 pm curfew cut off and not the early landing scenario described in the report.

#### 4. NOISE PROFILES

We agree with the proposition to consider noise on a performance and monitoring basis, and not based on specific aircraft models. I would go further and perhaps be even more stringent to encourage airlines for both passenger and freight movement to use more efficient and newer aircraft for landing in Sydney.

#### 5. SUGGESTED AREAS OF FURTHER STUDY

- A) International study into aircraft landing operating procedures to ensure Australia is adhering to world's best practice.
- B) Commission a survey of all international airline fleets with access to or potential access to Sydney Airport, with a view on current and future aircraft type, and noise levels. Maintained and updated on an annual base.
- C) If it can be clearly demonstrated that noise reduction will be an outcome of modifying the Sydney airport curfew

Yours faithfully,

Karen McWilliam and Nick Miller