

Committee Secretary  
Senate Standing Committees on Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport  
PO Box 6100  
Parliament House  
Canberra ACT 2600

5 March 2024

To whom it may concern,

**REF: Inquiry into the Impact and mitigation of aircraft noise**

Thank you for the opportunity to make a submission to the inquiry into the impact and mitigation of aircraft noise.

Committee for Melbourne (the Committee) is an apolitical, not-for-profit, member-based organisation that brings together over 140 organisations from Melbourne's business, academic and civic sectors whose common purpose is to shape a better future for Melbourne. As an independent organisation, we represent no single interest group but seek to develop innovative ideas to continue to enhance Melbourne's position as an economically prosperous and highly liveable global city.

This submission highlights that Melbourne needs an integrated transport plan that considers transport, land use and economic development. Such a plan would help ensure that urban development appropriately plans for and safeguards freight movements and key strategic assets. These assets, including Melbourne Airport, need to be able to grow and develop to support Victoria's ongoing prosperity and to continue operating in a way that accommodates a growing city and state.

Melbourne's population is growing rapidly. Between 2006 and 2016, it grew by nearly one million and by 2018, the overall population surpassed 5 million. It is forecast to reach about 9 million by mid-century, making it one of the fastest growing cities in the OECD. Its freight task and visitor arrivals also continue to rise steadily. While this growth has underpinned Melbourne's economy, it has also given rise to several challenges related to housing affordability, transport connectivity and social equality. These themes are captured in the Committee's [Benchmarking Melbourne 2023](#) report, which highlights the continued emergence of a 'tale of two cities,' risking a deepening divergence between Melbourne's world-class city centre and a disadvantaged metropolis.

A comprehensive, integrated transport plan would consider how to address these challenges, including the pressing need for residential and commercial development, while protecting the operations of key strategic assets, including the Port of Melbourne and Melbourne Airport. The Committee's [Transporting Melbourne](#) report calls for the publication of such a plan, with targets, timeframes and accountabilities, to ensure effective implementation. The report emphasises the need for strategic decision making, with its core economic assets, including the port and airport, as well as prospective key assets, like the proposed Western Interstate Freight Terminal and the Beveridge Intermodal Freight Terminal, forming the basis of a larger vision. Robust planning controls and land reservations are needed to ensure they can operate productively.

The strategic significance of Melbourne Airport cannot be understated. It serves as Melbourne and Victoria's major national and international gateway, facilitating the movement of Victorians to cities

and regions across Australia and around the world, and connecting the world to Victoria. Last financial year, Melbourne Airport facilitated the movement of nearly 31 million passengers, including over 22.5 million domestic travellers and almost 8.3 million international passengers. Operating 24 hours per day, seven days a week, it provides Melbourne with a competitive advantage vis-à-vis other global cities. As a key component of Australia's domestic aviation network, it is crucial that Melbourne Airport be able to continue operating in a favourable environment.

The economic contribution Melbourne Airport makes to the state and national economies is profound. It supports Victoria's tourism industry by connecting people with friends and relatives, and opens the state's natural attractions, major events and business conferences to the world. A single daily international flight is estimated to contribute over \$154 million in Gross Value Added to the state economy and support over 1,380 jobs per annum. Melbourne Airport is a vital component of Victoria's supply chain, moving time-sensitive goods like perishables and pharmaceuticals. Last financial year, it moved over 205 million tonnes of airfreight worth almost \$22 billion. The airport is also a major economic participant. As the largest employment precinct outside of the CBD, it supports the direct employment of over 18,000 people in diverse industries, including aviation, freight, retail and transport.

As Melbourne and Victoria grows, it is crucial that Melbourne Airport grows too. It needs to increase capacity to manage future aviation demand and support more competition, and to grow as an economic hub to attract investment and create jobs. Melbourne Airport's 2022 Master Plan, which includes forecasts over a 20-year time horizon, estimates that by 2041-2042, annual passenger movements will increase from 37 million to almost 76 million, annual freight movements will increase from 448,000 to 980,000 tonnes, and annual aircraft movements will grow from 246,000 to over 429,000 movements. The airport needs to be able meet these challenges for the ongoing wellbeing and prosperity of all Victorians and Australians.

The Committee thanks the Senate Standing Committees on Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport for providing the opportunity to make a submission in relation to its aircraft noise inquiry. For further information, contact Senior Policy and Advocacy Officer, Brett Van Duppen, at [bvanduppen@melbourne.org.au](mailto:bvanduppen@melbourne.org.au)

Yours sincerely,



Mark Melvin  
CEO



Leanne Edwards  
Director of Policy and Advocacy