

## > Environment



Camden Airport

Master Plan  
2004/05



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### 15.1 Overview

Management of the environmental impacts of Camden Airport's operation is an integral part of the overall management of the Airport. CAL's management team includes a dedicated environmental management resource with responsibility for the development and implementation of CAL's AES. CAL has a strong commitment to environmental management at Camden Airport which is reflected in the policies and strategies it has adopted to date. Environmental achievements to date have been listed in CAL's AES.

To assist in the overall understanding of how environmental issues are managed at Camden Airport, this MP includes the following aspects:

- an explanation of the environment regulatory framework;
- details of CAL's AES;
- the environment management framework at Camden Airport;
- the environmental issues raised by this MP and the way in which these issues are proposed to be addressed; and
- on-going regulation and management of environment issues at CAL.

CAL's objectives of sustainable environmental management are:

- energy efficient development;
- reduction in greenhouse gas emissions wherever possible;
- water and wastewater reuse;
- waste avoidance, recycling and reuse to reduce waste to landfill;
- noise management;
- building design using Green Building Council of Australia or similar guideline;
- mitigation of direct adverse social impacts and optimisation of social benefits of Camden Airport; and
- structured and transparent engagement with the community throughout the life of the Master Plan.

### 15.2 Regulatory Framework

Environmental management at Camden Airport is regulated through the Airports Act 1996, the Airports (Environment Protection) Regulation 1997 and the AES. The regulatory requirements are administered by DoTaRS' representative, the Airport Environment Officer (AEO). The Airport is also subject to other Commonwealth legislation such as the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation (EPBC) Act 1999. CAL has responsibility to comply with the regulatory requirements and to encourage its tenants to comply with the regulatory requirements.

The AEO works with CAL's Environment Manager in managing the environmental impacts of Camden Airport's activities. The AEO decides whether regulatory action is required in relation to regulatory non-compliances. The AEO has the authority to issue notices and orders in the event of breaches of the Act, Regulations and AES. The AEO also regulates the performance of CAL's tenants. CAL provides assistance to its tenants in meeting their regulatory obligations.

Development at the Airport is regulated via this MP, the planning and approval process prescribed by the Airports Act 1996, the Airports (Environment Protection) Regulation 1997 and the Airport (Building Control) Regulations.

### 15.3 CAL's Airport Environment Strategy

CAL commits to undertake the initiatives included in the AES.

Environmental issues at Camden Airport are managed in accordance with the AES, which has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Airports Act 1996 and the Airports (Environment Protection) Regulations 1997. The AES outlines the Airport's overall approach to environmental management and includes the following information:

- the Airport's Environmental Policy;
- description of airport operations and environmental regulatory regime;
- overview of the Airport's environmental management system;
- summary of environmental initiatives undertaken during the life of the previous Environment Strategy;

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- description of the sources of environmental impact at the Airport; and
- objectives, targets and proposed initiatives to manage the impacts of activities at the Airport on the environment.

The environmental issues addressed in the AES include:

- air quality;
- water quality;
- soil quality;
- noise;
- flora and fauna;
- heritage;
- waste;
- resource use;
- social and economic;
- environmentally significant areas; and
- sites of indigenous significance.

The AES is required to be updated every 5 years. The current AES was approved in February 2005 and is due for updating by February 2010. A summary of the issues in the AES is discussed in Section 15.5.

The AES takes into consideration the development framework identified in this MP and provides the basis for management of the environmental impacts associated with the implementation of the Master Plan.

A summary of environmental issues and management measures at the Airport over the next 20 years is presented in this MP. Further information regarding environmental management at the Airport over the next five years is contained in the AES.

### 15.4 Environmental Management Framework

The Airport maintains an Environmental Management System (EMS) which contains many of the elements of the international standard AS/NZS ISO14001:1996 *Environmental management systems – Specification with guidance for use*.

The EMS documentation comprises the AES, Environmental Policy, an Environmental Management Manual, an Environmental Site Register, and various procedures, reporting frameworks and guidelines.

CAL will progressively update the EMS to reflect initiatives contained in the AES and ensure consistency with ISO14001. As part of the EMS development, CAL is exploring options for a computer based Airport Risk Management System to facilitate day-to-day management of environmental risks at the Airport. When completed, the EMS will be subject to internal audits every two years.

Environmental Management Plans (EMPs) are used by CAL to manage particular environmental issues such as water quality, and the impacts of individual developments. Tenants with moderate (Tier 2) to high (Tier 1) environmental risks are also required to develop an EMP for the management of their activities. This is discussed in more detail in the AES.

CAL implements environmental training programs where necessary to provide its personnel and tenants with the required skills to effectively manage the potential impacts of their activities.

Environmental monitoring is undertaken as needed to investigate particular environmental issues, such as stormwater and groundwater quality.

CAL undertakes a program of audits of tenant facilities in cooperation with the AEO. Tier 1 tenants are audited annually. Tier 2 and Tier 3 tenants are audited every two years. Non-conformances identified through environmental audits, routine inspections and incidents are managed through CAL's non-conformance, corrective and preventive action process.

CAL submits an Annual Environmental Report to DoTaRS each year. CAL also prepares an Annual Public Environment Report which is made available to the public via the Internet or upon request.

National Pollutant Inventory (NPI) reporting is undertaken by those tenants who exceed the thresholds for reporting under NPI legislation. Such reporting is made public via the NPI website.

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### 15.5 Environmental Issues

A detailed description of key environmental issues and management measures at the Airport is presented in the AES. A summary of the environmental issues and management measures at the Airport over the planning period is provided below.

The key environmental issues which will be required to be managed during the implementation of the Master Plan include:

- air quality;
- surface water quality;
- groundwater quality;
- contaminated soil;
- ground-based noise;
- aircraft noise (this issue is dealt with separately in Section 16);
- flora and fauna;
- heritage; and
- built form and urban design.

#### 15.5.1 Air quality

The NSW Government's Air Quality Management Plan, entitled Action for Air (NSW Government, 1998) identified the key areas for action for managing Sydney's air quality over the next 25 years.

Airport related air quality issues were not regarded as significant in the Action for Air document. Instead motor vehicles and wood fire heating were identified as the major sources of concern for pollutants in the Sydney Basin. Aviation emissions were found to be a very minor contributor to total airshed emissions.

Emissions from Camden Airport comprise a minor component of total aviation emissions in Sydney. Ground-based emissions comprise a relatively small proportion of the emissions from Camden Airport. A review of such emissions at Bankstown Airport concluded that general ambient monitoring of Airport emissions would not provide useful information on the effectiveness of control measures. This conclusion is considered to also apply to Camden Airport.

The focus of management of air emissions at Camden Airport is on point source emissions.

NPI reporting by the tenants containing the main point sources of air emissions are used by CAL to track the quantity of emissions. Audits of tenant facilities are used by CAL to inspect and promote effective management of the point sources to reduce the quantity of emissions of air pollutants.

The types of development likely to be undertaken at the Airport site are considered to not be significant emitters of air pollution.

An appropriate level of assessment of the air quality associated with new developments would be undertaken during the development planning and approval stage.

Emissions generated from vehicle traffic to, from and on Camden Airport are not expected to be significant as Camden Airport is not used for commercial passenger services.

The development which may occur on part of the Airport under the MP would involve construction activities and operations which may result in increases in diffuse source emissions of some air pollutants, particularly associated with road vehicle movements. However, these emissions are considered likely to be insignificant. These potential increases will be offset to some extent by measures such as:

- energy efficient designs of buildings;
- upgrade of older facilities and replacement with modern facilities; and
- use of environmental management plans to reduce emissions during the construction stage of new developments.

CAL will continue to manage air emissions via the development assessment and approval process, use of environmental management plans during construction and auditing of tenants' operations. Monitoring of point sources will be undertaken in the event of identified concerns and the presence of applicable standards to evaluate performance

#### 15.5.2 Surface Water Quality

The whole of Camden Airport is located within the catchment of the Nepean River. A number of activities undertaken at the Airport have the potential to affect the water quality of the Nepean River, including:

- spills and leaks through aircraft servicing and maintenance (including washing and refuelling);

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- vehicle refuelling, washing and maintenance;
- construction and maintenance activities;
- bulk liquids storage and handling; and
- vehicle traffic to and from the Airport.

The findings of tenant audits and airport inspections are used to develop management actions to reduce the discharge of pollutants to surface waters. The impacts of construction works on water quality are managed via the Airport's environmental assessment and approval process for new developments.

Development of the Airport in accordance with the MP will provide opportunities to improve the design and condition of existing facilities at the Airport to reduce emissions of pollutants to surfaced water.

Construction impacts on surface water quality will be managed through the development planning and implementation process, including use of EMPs.

### 15.5.3 Groundwater

The groundwater beneath Camden Airport is not a significant resource and is not used for drinking water supply. The groundwater yield is generally low and the groundwater saline. Nonetheless the groundwater is required to be protected from pollution. Potential sources of groundwater pollution at the Airport include:

- contaminated sites, resulting from historical activities such as landfilling;
- leakage from underground fuel tanks;
- spillage of fuels and chemicals; and
- chemical use (such as pesticides/herbicides).

Environmental audits and groundwater monitoring will continue to be used to trigger improvements in site operations and reduce the risk to groundwater quality at the Airport.

Future developments will be planned so as to manage the risk to groundwater quality.

### 15.5.4 Soil Contamination

Since the Airport was established, it has housed various processes and activities that have been identified as potential sources of soil contamination (eg waste dumping, refuelling and light aircraft maintenance). The potential and actual sources of soil contamination have been reviewed and documented in a Contaminated Site Register.

Management of the contamination risk presented by current tenants is generally done through the provisions of the Airports (Environment Protection) Regulations 1997 and strict lease clauses concerning environmental performance and development controls that are imposed upon all tenants.

CAL also has procedures that allow for CAL and the AEO to investigate soil quality at the commencement and termination of tenant leases.

The areas of the Airport proposed for future development are not suspected of being contaminated.

However, appropriate inquiries will be made regarding potential contamination prior to development. In the event of a significant contamination risk being identified, the area will be investigated and if necessary remediated prior to development.

The AEO has not directed preparation of expert site examination report on soil contamination as per Regulation 6.09 with respect to an area of the airport where a change of use of a kind described in sub-regulation 6.07(2) is proposed. The environmental impacts of individual developments will be undertaken as part of CAL's development assessment process. This process considers soil contamination issues as required by the Regulations. CAL's environmental auditing program will be used to promote operational practices which will also reduce contamination risks.

### 15.5.5 Ground Based Noise

The major sources of ground-based noise at the Airport include:

- ground running of aircraft;
- aircraft servicing;
- mechanical plant and servicing equipment;
- operation of fixed audible alarm or warning systems; and
- construction activities.

Noise emissions from tenant activities are addressed in the annual environmental audits of Tier 1 and selected Tier 2 tenants.

CAL will continue to manage noise emissions via the development assessment and approval process, use of environmental management plans during construction and auditing of tenants' operations. Monitoring of noise sources will be undertaken in the event of significant concerns being identified.

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### 15.5.6 Flora & Fauna

Camden Airport has been largely cleared of its original, native vegetation except for a narrow belt of stream fringing River Flat Forest, which has been classified as an endangered ecological community under the NSW Threatened Species Act 1995. This area of the Airport is subject to a Management Plan and a Registered Property Agreement between CAL and the NSW Government which commits CAL to conserve areas of open forest, woodland and grassland. This area has been zoned in the MP as Environmental Protection.

The development proposed by the MP will not impact upon the River Flat Forest. Development would be restricted to the operational parts of the Airport which do not contain significant stands of vegetation.

The impacts of any vegetation removal required for development would be assessed during the development planning stage for each development. Current initiatives to manage flora and fauna at the Airport would continue under the implementation of the MP.

### 15.5.7 Heritage

The Airport has been largely cleared of its original, native vegetation except for a narrow belt of River-flat Forest adjacent to the Nepean River. Part of this remnant vegetation is regrowth following several years of sand mining. Some undisturbed areas of River-flat Forest do occur and these areas particularly have the potential for Aboriginal sites and artifacts to be present. No sites of indigenous significance have been identified on, or adjacent to, the Airport. The Thurawal local Aboriginal Land Council have been consulted in the preparation of the MP and the AES.

Therefore the operation and future development of the Airport will not involve disturbance of the River-flat Forest and is not likely to have a significant impact upon indigenous heritage. In the event that any items of indigenous heritage significance are identified during a development, the items would be investigated and protected in accordance with regulatory requirements.

The Airport site was established as an airfield by the Macarthur-Onslow family in the 1930s. A small hangar was erected in approximately 1934. During World War II the airport was used by the RAAF for training, anti-submarine and convoy escort roles, reconnaissance, and general air and meteorological roles. The Airport has some Commonwealth, State and local level heritage

value as an early private airfield and as a satellite wartime airfield. A number of buildings on the site date back to 1930s and 1940s and have heritage significance.

The MP takes into account the heritage significance of the Airport and provides for the conservation of the site's heritage values. A Heritage Management Strategy is being prepared for the Airport, taking into account recent changes to the Department of Environment and Heritage and heritage protection provisions under Commonwealth legislation. Specific heritage management plans will be prepared for those developments which involve areas containing aspects identified as having heritage significance. The heritage management plans will take into account the heritage management policies and guidelines defined in the Heritage Management Strategy. A copy of the Heritage Management Strategy will be provided to the DEH once it is completed.

### 15.5.8 Built Form and Urban Design

The MP establishes various zonings over the site encouraging development of both Aeronautical and Non-Aeronautical activities. The construction of building forms, paved areas and infrastructure on the Airport site will involve the potential for environmental impacts including the range of issues described in the above sections, together with impacts associated with the visual and scenic quality of the area and the potential for amenity-related impacts on nearby residential properties. The MP contains broad objectives that call for the integration and cohesive planning of areas within the airport site, the recognition of the character of the area and development that addresses environmental and natural assets.

More detail and appropriate controls will be developed to assist in implementing these objectives and to address the range of potential impacts arising from construction activity and built form. Future development on the Airport will be required to consider sustainability, built form and urban design issues as part of the sustainability development assessment process.

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### 15.6 On-Going Regulation & Management

All construction projects at Camden Airport are subject to environmental assessment and approvals processes under the Airports Act 1996, the Airports (Environment Control) Regulations 1997 and the Airports (Building Control) Regulations 1996. Construction projects must also be consistent with the AES, the Airport Master Plan and any approved Major Development Plans.

Generally, a proponent would submit a DA application to CAL, which is then assessed for potential environmental impacts and the effectiveness of the proposed management measures.

Development may also be subject to subsequent approval by the ABC, depending on the nature of the development proposed. The proponent is required to notify the ABC of proposed exempt building activities under the Airports (Building Control) Regulations 1996.

The DA may contain conditions relating to environmental management of the development and in particular the preparation of an environmental management plan for the development. The environmental management plans are subject to audit and inspection by CAL and the AEO.

If a development is of environmental significance, the preparation of a MDP under the Airports Act 1996 will be required. In general this requirement applies to developments such as runways, taxiways, terminals, major road works, and developments which exceed a cost threshold or add significantly to airport capacity; or developments of a kind that are likely to have significant environmental or ecological impact, or which affect an area identified as environmentally significant in the AES. The development may not proceed until approved by the Minister and must be referred to the Commonwealth Environment Minister under the EPBC Act as part of the assessment process. DAs for developments subject to an MDP also require the approval of CAL as well as the approval of the ABC where non-exempt building activities are involved.

To assist CAL in deciding whether a proposal is environmentally significant, CAL can require a proponent to prepare a Review of Environmental Factors (REF), which will detail all potential impacts, and all measures to be undertaken to mitigate the impacts.

Once the DA process is complete, the proponent submits a Construction Application (CA) to CAL. If potential impacts of construction are considered to be environmentally significant, CAL will require a Construction EMP to be prepared.

CAL will liaise with Camden Council on DAs relevant to Council. CAL will also identify other stakeholders who may be impacted by the proposed development, and consult with these stakeholders prior to deciding whether to grant development approval.