

ARCHERFIELD AIRPORT CHAMBER OF COMMERCE INC.

Registered Office: 2nd Floor 380 Queen Street Brisbane
Postal: GPO Box 2511 BRISBANE QLD 4001
www.aacci.org.au
President: Mr Lindsay Snell Ph 07 32741477

MEDIA RELEASE

Failure Revisited - 2011 Airport Plan

The newly released proposals for changes to Archerfield in the 2011 preliminary draft master plan are a backward step both for the Queensland community and for the aviation industry as the landlord Archerfield Airport Corporation continues to diminish the safety and capability of the airfield.

For example just one of the changes in the proposed plan, a dramatic change in runway directions, is a re-run of a proposal put forward and rejected in the last airport planⁱ five years ago by the Federal Minister for Transportⁱⁱ as being contrary to community interest.

There are no valid operational or aviation reasons for this change, a change which will tangibly diminish the assurance of safe operations on this airport. The most noticeable community effect will be to subject residents and businesses in Western Acacia Ridge, Rocklea, and Moorooka to the distraction of the heavy noise from landing and climbing aircraft as the new runways place them squarely under approach and departure tracks. Up to the present they have not had to put up with this aircraft noise under the present circuit patterns.

The supporting arguments used to attempt to justify this change do not stand up under rigorous analysis. The present runways are aligned with the most commonly experienced winds. The landlord claims that wet weather prevents the use of the 04/22 runway complex for more than 25 percentⁱⁱⁱ of the year – no professional opinion by an impartial body to support this claim has been made available to the public to support this claim. They further omit to say that if the 04/22 runways are sealed they will be usable all of the time.

Before the Second World War Archerfield was Brisbane's civil airport. When Japan entered the war, from 1942 onwards, the Americans took the dairy farm where Kingsford Smith had landed in 1928, drained the swamp and built Eagle Farm. The main RAAF field for Brisbane was Archerfield. It was an operational base, a training base, a logistic terminal and a very large maintenance base. It handled huge volumes of aircraft including all the four engine bombers and transports, aircraft many times heavier than the common very light training aircraft in use today. How could it have done that when all of the runways were grass if they were unusable for much more than 25% of the time?

Today Archerfield, among other things, is a major training airport. Landing an aircraft is the most difficult part of basic flying training and for this reason it is in most cases practiced directly into wind until skill levels can cope with cross winds which are both difficult and dangerous for the uninitiated. The proposed relocation will subject trainees to cross wind conditions on most occasions.

Secondly the new directions can only be made to fit into the field by greatly reducing the length of the new runways. The reduction amounts to an 18% reduction in runway length, a significant reduction which again has safety implications.

Having based an argument for change on the weather, the lease holder then goes on to state that the proposed solution obtained by realignment will yield an improvement of 3.1% or 11.32^{iv} days per year in utilisation. The Chamber does not agree with this statement, as professional analysis^v of the Commonwealth Bureau of Meteorology wind data^{vi} for Archerfield Airport reports that wind blows at a daily maximum North South less than 17 days per year or less than 5 percent of the time^{vii}, which is the reason the Commonwealth constructed the 04/22 runways.

How can such a paltry alleged gain be justified when balanced against a cost of millions of dollars, money which has to come from the community through increased airport charges?

The relocation of the runways from their present position will not only restrict the field of vision from the existing Control Tower, but the tower itself may present an unacceptable obstacle for aircraft taking-off or landing on the new Runways requiring a possible relocation and further costs.

An airport without fuel is like a pub with no beer. The fuel farms, purposely sited at present in a safe and remote area will have to be relocated. Moving the existing fuel farms to a new site on the airport would be extremely costly and it is highly unlikely the fuel companies will oblige, opting instead to deliver fuel to the airport by transit tankers from a source outside the airport. The effect of such a move would mean fuel tankers would join traffic on the already busy roads around the airport, and aircraft would have to wait for fuel trucks to arrive leading to delays or interruptions affecting air operations.

The only conclusion to be reached is that the leaseholder, by proposing a scheme previously rejected by the highest authority in the land namely the Transport Minister who has to approve it, is attempting to convert aviation essential requirements into more lucrative non aviation industrial sites.

- END -

Tuesday 15th March 2011

www.aacci.org.au

Media Contact:

AACC Inc.

President

Mr Lindsay Snell

W 07 32741477

M (04) 18737707

E-mail president@aacci.org.au

Website: www.aacci.org.au

ⁱ 2005-2025 Preliminary Draft Master Plan

ⁱⁱ Former Department of Transport and Regional Services Minister Warren Truss

ⁱⁱⁱ AAC Fact Sheet "Grass Runway Alignment" Page 1, "Existing Grass Runways 04/22 are closed 27 percent of the time due soft wet surface"

^{iv} AAC's own Technical Paper: TP02/10 (Revision 2) Runway System Design Wind Useability Analysis "Archerfield Airport Planning Issues - Runway Unserviceability and Useability" Page 14

^v Engineering report dated 16/2/11 of C Grehan B. Surveying, Dip. Bldg. Sc., M.Sc. Project Construction Management

^{vi} Bureau of Meteorology wind data for station 42011 – Archerfield Airport

^{vii} Sample year 2010 calendar year



Archerfield Airport Post WWII Aerial Survey Photo showing the two runways NE/SW (04/22) runway (top left to bottom right) and E/W (10/28) runway (top right to mid bottom) 31.7. 1955