Hon Jackie Trad MP

Deputy Premier
Minister for Transport, Minister for Infrastructure,
Local Government and Planning and Minister for Trade

1 4 OCT 2015

Mr Neil Laurie
The Clerk of the Parliament
Parliament House
George Street
BRISBANE QLD 4000

Dear Mr Laurie

I refer to petition number 2411-15, lodged with the Legislative Assembly by Mr Ray Stevens MP, Member for Mermaid Beach, on 15 September 2015, about the proposal by Gold Coast Airport Pty Ltd to install an Instrument Landing System (ILS) at Gold Coast Airport (GCA).

I understand residents in the Division of Mermaid Beach are concerned about implementation of the new ILS, as it will result in a new flight path over residential homes with impacts including an increase in aircraft related noise. Residents have requested the Queensland Government call upon the Australian Government to reject this proposal.

Under Commonwealth legislation, the Queensland Government does not have jurisdiction for the assessment of the likely environmental impacts of the proposal or for deciding whether the ILS should be implemented. The proposal for the new ILS at GCA is subject to statutory processes under which the impact of the proposal on the Gold Coast community is being fully assessed and the community provided the opportunity to comment on the proposal.

Specifically, I understand a preliminary draft Major Development Plan (MDP) has been prepared by Gold Coast Airport Pty Ltd regarding the proposal. An assessment of the environmental impacts of the proposed new flight path on residents of the Gold Coast has also been prepared by Airservices Australia. Both the preliminary draft MDP and the environment impact assessment were released for public consultation with over 6500 submissions received. This assessment and the results of public consultation will be referred to the Federal Minister for Transport and the Federal Minister for the Environment for consideration in deciding whether to approve the new ILS for GCA.

If the Australian Government approves implementation of the ILS, I understand that Airservices Australia is committed to minimising the impacts of aircraft noise on the Gold Coast community through the application of several initiatives including:

- implementation of Noise Abatement Procedures

- undertaking a noise monitoring program

- engaging the Aircraft Noise Ombudsman for aircraft noise complaints

- undertaking a post implementation review of the impact of the new flight path 12 months after the commissioning of the ILS.

The petition also raises concerns ILS technology is outdated. The Queensland Government is not in a position to comment on the current relevance of ILS technology. However, I am advised by Airservices Australia that while aircraft are increasingly able to use satellite-assisted technologies, such as Smart tracking, not all commercial aircraft currently flying into the airport are able to make use of this technology. An ILS is a well-established and proven technology which all commercial aircraft flying into the airport are able to use. The ILS will improve the safety and reliability of landing at the Gold Coast Airport by enabling aircraft to land in low visibility conditions, minimising the need for flights to be diverted to Brisbane.

The Gold Coast Airport and its associated aviation facilities are protected under the State Planning Policy (SPP), which protects the safety and operational integrity of airports and aviation facilities while ensuring new development considers and mitigates the adverse impacts of airport operations on the development. Should the Australian Government approve the ILS for GCA, the SPP and supporting implementation tools will be updated to ensure future development in the vicinity of the airport appropriately mitigates impacts of the new flight path to the greatest extent practicable.

I trust this information is of assistance.

Yours sincerely

JACKIE TRAD MP
DEPUTY PREMIER
Minister for Transport, Minister for Infrastructure,
Local Government and Planning and Minister for Trade