



Chief Minister's Department

000113

Chief Minister's Support and Protocol

Request from the Chief Minister's Office

<b>Date Originated:</b> 25/02/2010	<b>Function Date:</b> 01/04/2010
<b>Number:</b> F86/10	<b>Time:</b> 2:00PM - 2:30PM

**Occasion:** CM - Meeting v Canberra Region Aviators Association RE: General  
Aviation Airport

**Venue:** Office

**Responsible Department:** Department of Land and Property Services

**Action Required**

Issue/Info Brief

**Departmental Officer:**  Required  Not Required

*DD attending*

**Further Information:**

Brief requested  
Contact: 0419 244794.  
~~Dennis Mitchell~~ also attending

- If any delay is expected in the delivery of the briefing please advise:  
Angela Lee on 620 50172 or Chris Wilson on 620 50192

**DATE DUE IN CHIEF MINISTERS OFFICE:** 25/03/2010



Date 19 March 2010

To Minister for Land and Property Services

- Acting Chief Executive *Don 3/10*
- Executive Director, Strategic Priorities *ET 19/3*

From Senior Manager, Strategic Priorities

Subject Meeting with – Canberra Region Aviators Association re:  
General Aviation Airport

#### Critical date and reason

To meet with *Canberra Region Aviators Association (CRAA)* on 1 April 2010 to discuss General Aviation (GA).

#### Purpose

To brief you for your meeting with

#### Background

A proposal for a GA airfield at Williamsdale has been under consideration since 2004. Initial studies indicated that the site is suitable for GA operations, including flying training. Part of the identified land, which adjoins the Monaro Highway, is recreation reserve and part travelling stock reserve. Additional rural leasehold land would need to be resumed to establish a 1000m runway.

A GA facility at Williamsdale would be a commercial operation for GA aircraft displaced from Canberra Airport, and act as a forward aerial fire-fighting base, when required, for NSW fixed-wing fire-fighting aircraft to supplement ACT rotary-wing activities in the northern Monaro region (including the Tinderries).

Work was to commence on the public interest study of this proposal, followed by a financial feasibility study to determine cost of establishment, market potential, potential revenue and operating costs. These would establish an information base for further Government consideration.

These studies were deferred when ActewAGL announced that it is considering development of a solar farm at Williamsdale,  
*adjoining the proposed Williamsdale GA site.*

The GA proposal was originally put forward by Mr Chris Price. Mr Price has expressed strong dissatisfaction with progress on evaluating the proposal. It is understood that Mr Price is not associated with the CRAA.

## Issues

### *ActewAGL solar farm*

ActewAGL has advised that it intends submitting a proposal under the ACT's call for private sector proposals to develop a solar farm. It is not clear that the ActewAGL's proposal would proceed if they do not win that process.

The short-list for the Commonwealth's Solar Flagships Program is expected to be announced around May of this year, and the ACT's Request for Proposals (RFP) for its solar farm is likely to follow this announcement. Allowing two months for responses and a similar time for evaluation, it is unlikely that a decision on the ACT's solar farm would occur before the end of September this year.

In addition, it is quite possible that the ActewAGL solar farm development would include a gas-fired power station, as well as a significant gas storage facility. However, discussion with the Civil Aviation Safety Authority (CASA) indicates that airfields (including GA) and power stations routinely co-exist both overseas and in Australia. This should not therefore be a limiting factor.

A secondary issue is the Development Application for the new TransGrid transmission line shows the line running parallel to, and within 300-400m of, the western boundary of the proposed airfield. This limits the potential for future development of a cross-runway.

### *Options for Studies*

A bid for \$50 000 for studies on the Williamsdale GA proposal has been put forward for 2010-11. It was anticipated that these studies would take place once specific information is available on the ActewAGL proposal.

It may, however, be worth proceeding with the financial feasibility study before the solar farm decision is known, if funds can be found. Whilst Williamsdale is the only site identified in the ACT as suitable for GA operations, there may be suitable sites in adjoining NSW. A private development of a nearby site in NSW would still yield local economic development benefits to the ACT, without the associated issues for the ACT of land resumption and development funding.

A financial feasibility study of Williamsdale which includes a market survey would remain largely applicable for nearby sites in NSW. This study could therefore either be used by the ACT if the Williamsdale site proves suitable, or made available to third parties if

Williamsdale proves unsuitable. It would have the added advantage of indicating that the ACT is actively seeking to respond to the concerns of the regional GA community.

Mr Dawes will attend your meeting with:

**Consultation**

DECCEW, CASA.

**Financial**

\$50,000 is being sought in the 2010-11 Budget process. A decision to undertake the financial feasibility study earlier would require finding this amount from current funds.

**Media**

It is not anticipated that your meeting with ~~Mr Monck~~ will generate media coverage. However, if you wish to proceed with the financial feasibility study, and funds for the study can be identified, a media release will be prepared announcing that decision.

**Recommendation**

That you:

- note the information contained in this brief;

*NOTED/PLEASE DISCUSS*

consider whether you wish to proceed with a financial feasibility study prior to a decision on the solar farm; and

*AGREED/NOT AGREED/PLEASE DISCUSS*

- note that early initiation of the financial feasibility study will require finding \$50 000 in current funds.

*NOTED/PLEASE DISCUSS*

Andrew Wilson  
Phone: 70274

*Jon Stanhope MLA ..... / /*

000102

**Please put my on your contact list for possible membership of the  
CRAA**

**Sent:** Saturday, 27 March 2010 11:54 AM

**To:** vp@craa.org.au

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Hi,

Can you please add me to you contact list of interested people who want to join the association.

The lack of a suitable airfield here in Canberra meant that I had to go elsewhere to house my aircraft and as such I have just brought a house/hangar block over at Temora. I am still interested in what's proposed in Canberra and may choose to sell the Temora property if the right opportunity comes along for a reasonable facility in Canberra.

My details are as follows:

And I will be at the NatFly meeting

Cheers

000101

**Wilson, Andy**

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**From:** Blume, Steve  
**Sent:** Thursday, 11 March 2010 12:30 PM  
**To:** Wilson, Andy  
**Subject:** Solar Power Plants and General Aviation Airports

Andy

Just a quick follow up on your call re solar power plants and general aviation airports arising from Williamsdale as a site for both a solar power facility and a GA airport.

The trend worldwide is a massive adoption of building integrated PV (BIPV) installations at airports of all types - a natural choice as they are on flat land and also have large generally low rise buildings with roofs and walls that are unshaded, are generally isolated from urban structures, and solar PV offers a new revenue stream and energy savings opportunities to the owners.

So in Australia Adelaide airport has a PV system on its Terminal 1 and the Canberra Airport has PV systems on the roofs of adjacent office space. A common approach is to combine carpark roofs with PV installations - large in the US and Europe. These use a range of technologies - flat PV as well as trough types. There is more of a concern for the impact on the plant than there is risk to flights (a tiny risk of glare flashes, but no more than other glass facades or reflections from water etc) - solar panels need to be kept clean so proximity to airports raises issues of dust and exhaust residues etc. All solar installations have cleaning regimes - it's an issue of higher maintenance costs.

In Spain there are a number of tower & heliostat installations that are not far from airports near Seville - and they are treated the same as any tall object near airports or in flight paths (like wind turbines) for which there are existing rules by various aviation authorities. The original and oldest tower facility (Solar I which became Solar II) was adjacent to the small airport of Daggett in California for more than 20 years, but was dismantled at the end of 2009.

If the technology were concentrated solar (or for that matter gas turbine) then there might be other issues, but I can't think of any show stoppers for most technologies - of course a tower-type would be a concern. I think the consensus at the moment would be that there is much synergy between solar power plants and an actual airport so a facility that was merely adjacent or within a few kms would not be problematic.

Let me know if you need any more on this.

Regards

Steve

**Steve Blume**  
**Senior Project Manager ACT Solar Power Facility**  
ACT Department of Environment, Climate Change, Energy & Water  
Phone: (+61) 02 6207 6745  
Mobile:  
Email: [Steve.Blume@act.gov.au](mailto:Steve.Blume@act.gov.au)  
Fax: 02 6207 2316

*Science: a careful, disciplined, logical search for knowledge about any and all aspects of the universe, obtained by examination of the best available evidence and always subject to correction and improvement upon discovery of better evidence. — James Randi*  
*If your theory is found to be against the second law of thermodynamics, there is nothing for it, but to collapse in deepest humiliation. — Sir Arthur Eddington*

*What can be done with less, done with more, is done in vain. — William of Occam*  
*The difficulty lies not with the new ideas, but in escaping the old ones. — John Maynard Keynes*

000100

**Scrivener, Sharon**

**From:** Layland, Penelope  
**Sent:** Wednesday 3 February 2010 5:10 PM  
**To:** ; Scrivener, Sharon  
**Subject:** RE: General aviation airfield for Canberra  
**Importance:** High

11/4/10  
 2pm

Dear

Sorry for the delay. The Chief Minister would very much like to meet a delegation from the CRAA and talk through your plans and aspirations and talk about the need for a GAA. The Chief's Executive Assistant, Sharon Scrivener, will be in touch shortly to arrange a meeting time.

I look forward to seeing you soon.

Cheers

Penelope

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**From**  
**Sent:** Friday, 29 January 2010 11:10 AM  
**To:** Layland, Penelope  
**Subject:** RE: General aviation airfield for Canberra

Hi Penelope,

Just wondering if you had heard anything back yet. Even over the Christmas break we have been receiving a large number of enquiries from aviators and other interested parties including flying schools both within and outside of the capital region. With this in mind we will be holding a meeting with the community in the next month or so and would like to know where we stand in terms of getting some support from the government be it financial or otherwise. It would be great to be able to line up a meeting before this so we can get some views from your end.

Cheers,

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**From:** Layland, Penelope [mailto:Penelope.Layland@act.gov.au]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, 15 December 2009 9:51 AM  
**Subject:** RE: General aviation airfield for Canberra

I'm just checking with Andy Wilson and David Dawes to see if there has been any movement or development since we last spoke. I'll get back to you after I have heard back from them.

More than happy to give this another burst.

Penelope

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08/02/2010

**Sent:** Tuesday, 8 December 2009 5:33 PM  
**To:** Layland, Penelope  
**Subject:** General aviation airfield for Canberra

000099

Hi Penelope,

It has been some time since we have spoken about the possibility of establishing a second airfield for general aviation use in the Canberra region. Since then some 40 or so aviators have convened and formed a group known as the Canberra Region Aviators Association Inc. (CRAA). This group was recently incorporated and was given the responsibility of finding a suitable site and establishing a field for the use of non-commercial aviators in the area. Interest in the project is growing strongly amongst the aviation community with new pilots and aircraft owners contacting us regularly for information about membership.

As we previously discussed private aviators and general aviation businesses in the area face considerable difficulties in terms of costs and operational delays when operating from the main facility in the area. The alternatives are to leave the capital region and operate from areas in surrounding NSW which is not attractive but is fast becoming a necessity. Canberra is unique in the sense that it lies on the doorstep of the Snowy region, is close to the coast and Sydney and of course has its own range of tourist attractions. Unfortunately, the lack of general aviation facilities means the vast majority of the some 13,000 aircraft on the register opt to avoid Canberra when transiting the east coast.

Nearby townships in the region have opted to promote aviation in their regions and have thrived as a result. Temora is an obvious example with the well recognised aviation museum but there are other examples such as Narromine, Mudgee and so on that have also benefited by embracing general aviation. Canberra has a relatively high level of income in comparison to most locations and also a relatively high level of interest in aviation. There are around 200 or so aircraft with a registered address in the ACT yet only a fraction of these operate from Canberra. The revenues and jobs associated with operating these aircraft is clearly not remaining in the area.

The CRAA would like to see this situation reversed and establish an area where these activities can remain within the region. This would see opportunities arise in the areas of aircraft maintenance and manufacture/assembly, flying training, fuel sales and associated services and tourism. Furthermore, the field would be established in such a way that it would encourage the participation of groups such as the Canberra Aero Club, local scouting groups, the Australian Air League and other community based organisations.

With several hundred aviators in the area working with the support of the government we could turn the region into an aviation centre of excellence and reinvigorate aviation in the territory. With this in mind we would welcome the opportunity to arrange a meeting between our association, CRAA, and your office to see how we can work together to progress this project further. I would love to hear your thoughts and would be willing to be flexible in terms of attending a meeting at a time that is suitable for your office.

I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Regards,

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08/02/2010

**Issues**

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Proposed General Aviation (GA) Airfield at Williamsdale, ACT

There is an existing proposal for the development of a new GA airfield at Williamsdale, ACT. Business and Industry Development, CMD has advised that there is no strong argument for government financial support for this proposal and that due to this and a range of other issues, it is unlikely that the proposal would be supported at this stage. The proposal's proponent has obtained the support of around 80 local GA pilots for his proposal. At this time, we consider there are risks for the ACT to be seen to be directly involved in supporting an alternative proposal outside the ACT.

the ACT

Recently, an area at Williamsdale was proposed as an alternative airfield for Canberra light aircraft pilots. However, further investigation showed that the site was not suitable with high turbulence due to the surrounding mountains, close proximity to the flight path approaching Canberra and the potential for noise nuisance to local residents including those at Royalla Estate. Finally the cost of providing even a basic safe airfield for light aircraft and the necessary facilities (runways, fuel etc) would be many millions of dollars.

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*Proposed General Aviation (GA) Airfield at Williamsdale, ACT*

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**Edgecombe, Ron**

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**From:** Cox, Ian  
**Sent:** Monday, 18 September 2006 11:11 PM  
**To:** Edgecombe, Ron  
**Cc:** McKeveatt, Anne; Sutton, Paul  
**Subject:** RE: Polo Flat Air Park - CM reps

ron

nothing i can really add to the earlier email i sent you ... no one left here knows anything about the gliding club one.

you will be aware that there is another proponent of a GAA facility circling the government - the williamdale proposal - it was with you guys for some time but found its way here during the shane gilbert era. CM met with Chris Price about 6 weeks ago and agreed to have another quick look at some of the issues. We have sought advice from actpla and gso and it looks very difficult to achieve. a brief and letter are in the thro's of completion.

Ian

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thks

Ron

Ron Edgecombe  
Manager, Policy  
Economic, Planning and Regional Branch  
Cabinet and Policy Group

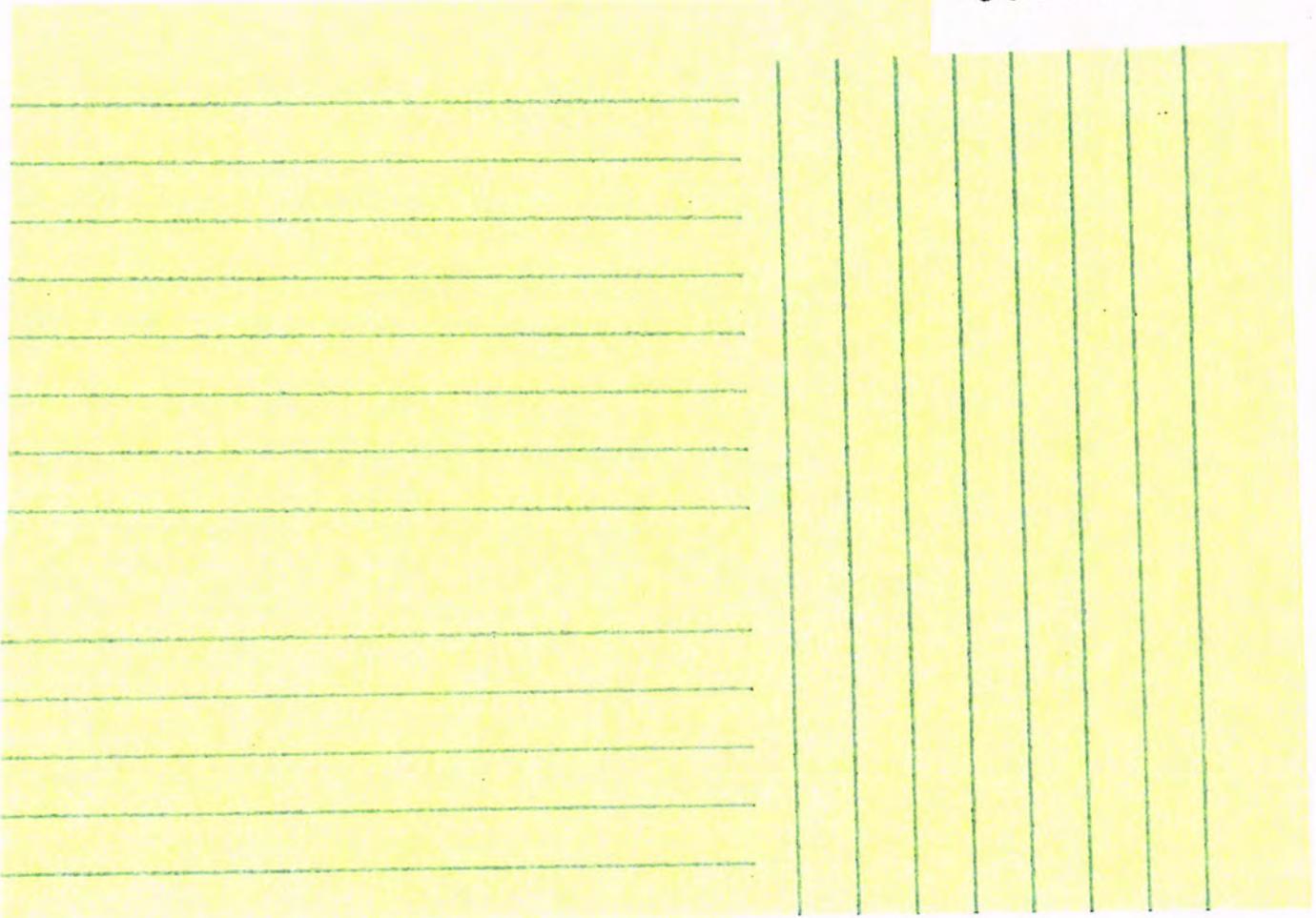
000011

ACT Chief Minister's Department

ph: 620 50364

fax: 620 70025

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