



**Community Aviation Consultation Group  
Minutes of Meeting  
Thursday 31 May 2018  
Launceston Airport Boardroom**

<b>Present:</b>	James McKee Des Jennings Paul Godier Sarah Tink  Cris Cano  Peter Neilson Tim McLean Neil Grose Donna Bain Arun Kendall Travis Prins	Chair Northern Midlands Council Northern Midlands Council Department of Infrastructure, Regional Development and Cities Department of Infrastructure, Regional Development and Cities QMS Airservices Australia Launceston Chamber of Commerce Premier's Disability Advisory Council Department State Growth Department State Growth
<b>Apologies</b>	Leanne Costin Louise Clark Andrew Collins Bede Clifton Angie Hart Damien Blackwell Martin Gill Nick Walker Georgette Findlay David Groer	Airservices Australia Bell Bay Aluminium Airservices Australia Country Club Tasmania City of Launceston West Tamar Council Meander Valley Council Melbourne Airport Launceston Airport ARFF
<b>Also in Attendance were:</b>	Paul Hodgen Michael McLeod Michael Cullen Peter Holmes Ilya Brucksch-Domanski Cathy Bolt	Launceston Airport (APAL) Launceston Airport Launceston Airport Launceston Airport Launceston Airport Launceston Airport

**1. Introduction and apologies – James McKee (Chairman)**

The meeting was opened at 1100 hrs by the Chairman, James McKee. Attendees and apologies are listed above.

There being no changes to the previous minutes from 12 December 2017, they were accepted by the Committee.

James congratulated Launceston Airport on its 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary since privatization.

**2. Airport Update – Paul Hodgen (General Manager APAL) provided attendees with an update on airport performance and developments since the previous meeting.**

**2.1 - Passenger traffic:**

- Paul Hodgen advised that traditionally January is the busiest month and that passenger traffic for January was up by 2.6% over the previous year however February was disappointing being marginally down on the previous year.
- March passenger traffic increased 9.4% over the previous year. This result was influenced by a number of factors including Ed Sheeran concerts in Melbourne, Easter fell during March and it was also the start of the AFL season. April also saw an increase and was up by 4.3% compared to the previous year and this result was associated with school holidays as well as the Hawks vs St Kilda match which was played in Launceston.
- Paul Hodgen advised that the result was all the more welcome, given April the previous year had also been a big month, with events being held in Tasmania including Mountain-biking Enduro World Series , Targa, the National Band Championships and the V8 Supercars.
- YTD passenger numbers are up just 2.4% compared to the same time last year and this increase is despite airline seat capacity reductions. Airlines have not been growing seat capacity as they have no new additional aircraft coming into their fleets in the short-term.

**2.2 – Baggage Delivery Performance:**

- Paul Hodgen advised that baggage delivery performance is an area currently attracting public comment. The actual delivery of bags is the responsibility of the airlines through their ground handlers. The airport has built aircraft parking bays as close to the baggage hall as possible but baggage delivery performance will depend on individual contractual arrangements between the airlines and their respective ground handlers.
- Paul further advised that a survey of typical baggage times conducted prior to the installation of the external flight information sign indicated an average wait time of 14-17 minutes, however current performance is poor and appears to have deteriorated following the recent consolidation of ground handling with the number of companies operating reducing from 3 to 2 (with one company handling both Qantas Group airlines).

**2.3 – Noise Complaints:**

- Paul Hodgen reported that during 2017 a total of 5 noise complaints were received which is relatively low. One repetitive complaint related to an aerobatic plane.
- There were 6 noise complaints received in 2016.

**2.4 – Terminal Facility Upgrades:**

- Paul Hodgen reported that following the recent terminal reshaping to create a larger sterile area, extra furniture has been installed including tables, stools and large bench-style tables. Charging devices have also been installed.
- The Security Services provider (ISS Security) has introduced queue monitoring displays working off thermal cameras, displaying predicted wait-times.
- The changes made to the configuration of the terminal continue to work in a positive way with regards to security processing times and airline punctuality improvement.

**2.5 – Rentable Baggage Lockers:**

- Paul Hodgen advised that baggage lockers have been installed. Users will have a choice of 3 sizes – small, medium or large.

- Pricing discussions have been entered into with operators SmartCarte regarding the introduction of short-term rates to assist passengers who arrive early prior to airline check-in opening.

#### **2.6 Access Facility Plan:**

- A dedicated Service Animal Relief Area has been established. The area will also benefit passengers or visitors to the airport, travelling with dogs.
- New designated disability-seating has been identified in the terminal and gates.

#### **2.7 Water Mains Works:**

- Paul advised that an extensive replacement to water mains has been completed, reducing water consumption.

#### **2.8 – 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary:**

- Paul Hodgen advised that the airport celebrated its 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary since privatization on 29 May. A celebration was held for staff, with a number of long-term employees receiving gifts to recognize their contribution. The event also provided an opportunity to highlight the investments made by the airport, to endorse our role in the community and the wider regional economic stimulation provided by the airport, as well as its contribution to the tourism industry.

#### **2.9 – National Volunteers Week:**

- Paul Hodgen advised that Launceston Airport has an active team of 8 volunteers. A morning tea was held on 23 May to thank them and present certificates of appreciation. Ian Kerrison was nominated for Tourism Volunteer of the Year which is sponsored by the Tourism Industry Council of Tasmania. Unfortunately on this occasion, Ian's nomination was not successful.

#### **2.10 – Jet Gateway to Cradle Mountain:**

- Paul Hodgen stated that the airport is keen to position Launceston as the logical jet gateway to Cradle Mountain. The airport has invested in Cradle Mountain imagery in an effort to remind passengers that Launceston is the closest jet airport.

#### **2.11 – Airport Shuttle:**

- Paul Hodgen advised that for the last year, the airport shuttle was operated by Redline who withdrew from their contract. A new contract has been entered into with Tas2Go for the period of one year (who were originally sub-contracted by Redline). Their vehicle size is more suitable for the shuttle service.

#### **2.12 – Environment Management:**

- Paul Hodgen reported that a number of key features have been completed including LED lighting being fitted to the parking apron as part of a replacement program. The team originally fitted LED lights in the carparks and have now moved into replacing airside lighting.
- Paul Hodgen further reported that there is an ongoing enhanced water sampling program for contaminants. Elgin are contracted to conduct sampling on a quarterly basis.

#### **2.13 – Pedestrian Access:**

- Paul Hodgen advised that a new pedestrian path extending to the entrance of the airport has been installed (as the airport had not been designed for pedestrian access). The existing path was mainly for use by airport staff when maintaining the landscaping. The path now has a full length barrier installed to ensure safe passage for people transiting to/from off-airport premises.

#### **2.14 – Website Upgrade:**

- Paul Hodgen advised that a recent upgrade to the Launceston Airport website includes enhancements to the Arrivals and Departures information and also includes a link to “flight – tracker”.
- Paul Hodgen further advised that the airport has been focusing on providing an effective car-parking calculator to assist passengers in their choice of one of the airport’s four car-parking options.

#### **2.15 – Senate Inquiry Submissions:**

- Paul Hodgen advised that in 2017 a Senate Inquiry was held into the operation, regulation and funding of regional air routes in Western Australia. This was then extended to a nationwide inquiry as regional communities continued to express concerns.
- Launceston airport has put forward a submission focusing on the need for additional capacity and the maintenance of competitive airfares. A second element was to call out the small proportion that airport charges actually play in the construction of airfares and to highlight the transparency which occurs in their negotiation with airlines. There were hundreds of submissions to the Inquiry. Information is accessible on the web. The Inquiry has been extended to September as a result of the volume of submissions to be considered.

#### **2.16 – Engagement Activities:**

- The Australian Airports Association (AAA) has conducted a campaign highlighting that more than 60% of regional airports are operating at a loss and the small ratepayer base is often finding it impossible to maintain airports in an appropriate manner. The AAA is working to ensure government funding for regional airport upgrades remains in place. The Tasmanian Division of AAA are campaigning for support.
- Paul Hodgen reported that there have been a number of political figures visiting the airport for briefings and familiarization tours during December–May.
- Recent community engagement has included Volunteering Services Australia, RAAF C17 visits involving local school participation and attendance at the Anzac dawn service held at Evandale.
- Paul Hodgen also reported that stakeholder engagement includes regular meetings with the General Manager of City of Launceston; face-to-face Quality Service Monitor surveys of passenger satisfaction. The information from the biannual survey of 250 passengers each time will be used to inform investments and to identify appropriate customer service initiatives.
- The CEO of Tourism Northern Tasmania and City of Launceston’s General Manager have attended Launceston Board meetings this year. Other key local stakeholders will be invited to present at future Board meetings.
- The airport is currently engaged in passenger surveys on the Brisbane route to gauge customer preference for additional capacity (what day and time of the week).

#### **2.17 – Protect Regional Airports Campaign:**

- Paul Hodgen reported that the AAA has mounted a campaign highlighting the important role played by regional airports and their funding challenge. A meeting has occurred with the state Minister for Infrastructure to solicit support for the campaign.
- Launceston has 29 staff with 400 in total on site from all operators.
- Paul Hodgen highlighted that the airport continues to seek new revenue streams, and surprisingly was contacted by a couple who wanted to hold their wedding in the Boag’s Upper Deck Bar.

### **2.18 – Qantas Pilot Academy Scheme:**

- Paul Hodgen advised there has been a lot of media commentary around the Pilot Training Scheme. The Airport, University of Tasmania and Tourism Tasmania representatives have engaged with Qantas senior management in Sydney on the matter. There are certainly some compelling elements in the Launceston bid.
- Launceston's bid is a dual-strategy. The airport satisfies many of the technical requirements and together with the UTAS relocation and AMC these all make very strong complementary elements to the bid. The Office of the Co-ordinator General is compiling the bid. In response to a question on route development Paul Hodgen replied that the airport continues to look at potential markets, doing much of the research on behalf of the airlines, in readiness to present a suitable business case for additional capacity/routes.

### **3. Property – Michael McLeod (Manager Finance & Property)**

#### **3.1 – Royal Flying Doctor Service:**

- Michael McLeod advised that at the time of privatization, the airport had a lease with RFDS who occupied a hangar that was constructed in 1998. The RFDS has subsequently taken over the head lease of an adjoining building to accommodate its successfully expanding business in other sectors, including patient transfer. Discussions are ongoing with RFDS in relation to lease renewals.

#### **3.2 – Sharp Airlines Amenities Building:**

- Michael McLeod advised that the airport has entered into a ten (10) year agreement with Sharp Airlines who have taken over the former Qantas Amenities Building. The refurbished building will house their expanding Engineering team.

#### **3.2 – Upcoming Valuation:**

- Michael McLeod advised that it is a busy time for airport valuations with three (3) currently underway, including an asset valuation for insurance purposes and a site-wide valuation.

### **4. Security and Operations – (Peter Holmes, Manager Aviation Operations & Compliance)**

#### **4.1 – ISS Contract Renewal:**

- Peter Holmes advised that ISS who is the airport's current security screening provider, has been re-engaged for a further four (4) years. The contract is currently being executed.

#### **4.2 – Screening Equipment Enhancements:**

- The airport is currently working on proposed screening equipment enhancements. Launceston is moving from a Category 3 to a Tier 1 airport (along with the 9 majors in Australia) in line with the major airports including Hobart. This will see screening equipment upgrades and trials are already currently underway in Melbourne. It is a constantly evolving picture with a number of significant challenges and a major public education piece is involved.
- James McKee queried what is driving increased security to which Peter Holmes advised that it is drawn out of the findings following the recent Sydney terrorism incident which was successfully averted.
- Paul Hodgen highlighted the significant process changes arising from the new technology which may require less items to be removed from cabin baggage for separate scanning, which may initially cause some customer confusion at the entry point and thus throughput reductions.

#### **4.3 – Grass Runways:**

- Peter Holmes advised that we are in the early stages of addressing a business case to establish why we should be able to close the grass runways permanently. There are a number of challenges in executing this; it is necessary to ensure that the airports lease conditions are not breached. The airport was previously spending money maintaining the grass runways, which are not used.
- The closure has been prompted by CASA having conducted an audit of the air traffic control tower and they identified the grass runways as a possible but not likely, safety risk.
- James McKee asked if there is a question of demand arising and if there will be any issue regarding the community. A question was also asked in relation to the use of the grass runways for training purposes. Peter Holmes advised that the vast majority of pilots prefer not to land on grass and there are very few aircraft that are built to use rough surfaces and that alternative airports exist. It was acknowledged that when they were open the runways received very little use. A previous report conducted in conjunction with the 2015 Master Plan had addressed the lack of an operational imperative for use (crosswind component on the most restrictive aircraft)

#### **4.4 – Cleaning RFP:**

- Peter Holmes stated that for the last 3 years, Launceston has won AAA “Major Airport of the Year” and that a contributory factor had been that the airport presents extremely well, which can in part largely be attributed to the cleaning contractors. The airport is in the final stages of executing a new four (4) year contract with the present incumbent who is locally-based.

#### **5. Commercial/Sponsorship & Activations - Michael Cullen (Manager, Commercial & Development Manager)**

- Michael Cullen advised there have been a number of visits from the RAAF C-17 aircraft, with the airport engaging with the RAAF in facilitating school children visits which has been well received.
- In terms of continued community engagement, February was a very busy month with Festivale. The Chinese New Year also saw the airport working in partnership with Bridestowe Lavender Farm, handing out a small gift of lavender soap and there was signage welcoming “Year of the Dog”. From a community point of view, it was extremely well received.
- There have been changes in terms of car-parking. The long-term car park has been expanded by 40 bays and a pick-up and set-down area provided for users of the Sharp Airlines terminal. There has also been some changes in car parking fees with 14 days in the Saver carpark (the airports largest capacity car park) now costing only \$74.00.

#### **6. Projects – Ilya Brucksch-Domanski (Planning & Development Manager)**

##### **6.1 – Sharp access and car park:**

- Ilya Brucksch-Domanski advised that the new Sharp access and carpark is nearing completion and will be opened when signage, fencing and lighting are installed.
- The carpark has been a \$200K investment.

##### **6.2 – Taxiway Alpha and RPT Apron Remediation:**

- Ilya Brucksch-Domanski advised that work is progressing on the first stage which includes a 47-slab replacement, 9 of which are on the aircraft parking apron.
- Portions of Taxiway Alpha, Taxiway Charlie, as well as two aircraft parking T bays have had to be closed to allow works to proceed, which has temporarily limited aircraft parking capacity, during the program which is anticipated to take another 8-10 weeks to complete.

### **6.3 – Terminal Front Walkway Investigations:**

- Ilya Brucksch-Domanski acknowledged that the pathway outside the terminal between arrivals and departures can be unfriendly during inclement weather and advised that the airport is currently considering options to provide improved protection to users across that zone.
- The use of bollards at front-of-house is under consideration to further enhance security.

### **6.4 – Airport Entrance Landscaping:**

- Ilya Brucksch-Domanski reported that landscaping in the northern precinct is being addressed to create a more welcoming space when arriving at the airport. This will be a staged project.

## **7. Environment**

### **7.1 – Sampling:**

- Ilya Brucksch-Domanski reported that there have been some changes to the sampling program. Storm-water sampling that has previously been carried out on a monthly basis, will now be done on a quarterly basis. Elements/Contaminants, including PFAS and heavy metals coming onto site are also being sampled. A consultant has been engaged to provide a new regime in line with regulatory requirements.

### **7.2 – Waste Management:**

- Ilya Brucksch-Domanski reported that Stacey Polomka the airport's Environment Officer is working on a Waste Management Plan for the site which will establish a baseline for current practices on-airport. There will be a stronger focus on recycling, involving airport tenants.

### **7.3 – Energy Efficiency:**

- An energy efficiency scheme has been initiated to investigate energy use on-site and how it can be made more efficient. Solar and wind turbines are also being considered.

## **8. Master Plan 2020:**

- Ilya Brucksch-Domanski advised that work is progressing on the Launceston Airport Master Plan which is due for signature by the Minister in 2020. The Plan encompasses what the airport will be doing over 5 or 8 to 20 years including a terminal strategic plan, airfield, landside, ground transport, car parking and passenger/aircraft/traffic/noise forecast figures. There will also be an environmental strategy within the document. During the development of the Plan there will be a lot of engagement with the CACG as well as council and the public in line with the Airports Act. An amendment bill to the Act will see the frequency move from 5 years to 8 years.
- James McKee stated that this is the start of the process and highlighted that the Community Aviation Consultation Group can add value and offer support as it moves forward.
- Ilya Brucksch-Domanski stated that the earlier the consultation occurs the better.
- The airport is currently looking at concepts for the arrivals hall expansion which has been identified as an area that needs improving. Paul Hodgen stated that one of the contributing issues to the need for the arrivals hall expansion has been ground handling inefficiencies creating congestion issues within the terminal.
- Donna Bain queried if there is a stakeholder engagement list to ensure everyone is contacted. Ilya replied that the airport has engaged the services of Stephen Douglas to assist. The process is as much about the consultation as it is about the development. The airport will ensure the required parties are involved including airlines, and councils, with many meetings scheduled.

## 9. Committee Member Updates:

### *Premiers Disability Advisory Council:*

- D Bain advised that she was in attendance in her capacity as Chair of the Disability Advisory Council. Donna highlighted the Commonwealth's National Disability Strategy highlighting that there are 4 million people living with disabilities and 800,000 carers, the pool of those affected being enormous.

### *Launceston Chamber of Commerce:*

- Neil Grose advised that when the Qantas Pilot Academy was first announced in February, the LCC started lobbying which went well until it became a political issue. Neil reported that he met with Steve Farquar recently who advised that the Academy will be located in a regional location. A major issue that will be addressed is regional flights and reliability. S Farquar sees Launceston as the gateway to the Cradle Mountain region as opposed to Devonport. The Chamber of Commerce is working to make sure Launceston's business climate grows and sees the airport capacity as crucial.
- Arun Kendall advised he was attending for the first time in his capacity representing State Growth
- Peter Neilsen advised that he has a long-term involvement in tourism. The main role is to take on any issues for referral to Management.

### *Department of Infrastructure:*

- Sarah Tink advised that the Commonwealth Department of Infrastructure, Regional Development and Cities administer the Airports Act, building control, environment, airspace protection and the annual lease review.
- Cris Cano stated that there was some stability now in the Ministers office with Minister McCormack's appointment and with Stephen Campbell, an experienced new advisor.

### *Department of State Growth:*

- Travis Prins advised that following the March state election, Peter Gutwein was announced as the new Minister for State Growth.
- Paul Hodgen stated that in the last election, the Government committed \$5.5M for an upgrade of Evandale Road, from Breadalbane Roundabout to the Airport and queried what the timelines are for prioritizing the works.
- Travis Prins advised he will take the question on notice and will report back to the group.

### *Northern Midlands Council (NMC):*

- Des Jennings reported that NMC have submitted an application to government for \$5M funding for a Stormwater Management Plan and has commenced land purchases for detention basins.
- NMC are also members on a Launceston working group for an extension of Translink towards Mill Road. There are 30-40 hectares that can be built on and discussions are being held with property owners. Work is also being conducted on safeguarding of a potential rail corridor, optimal warehousing locations and direct road linkages to the airport.
- The Translink Estate is home to 67 businesses and 1300-1400 staff and NMC has a keen aspiration to see it grow. Major industries in the area include logging and manufacturing. Haywards is planning a major expansion. Great intermodal connectivity potentially exists



between rail-road-air. A push continues for road upgrades from the Airport to Breadalbane Roundabout.

- P Hodgen believes there has not been enough discussion regarding the future residential area (Ridgeside) being proposed close to Evandale and those discussions need to start with the improvement of Evandale Road, in particular, pursuing an upgrade from Breadalbane Roundabout to Mill Road.
- Des Jennings reported that 'Traders in Purple' (TIP) are looking at a residential/commercial retirement village east of Evandale where they have purchased 600 acres. Consultation has commenced with the local community. A presentation has been made to Council by TIP. They have also held discussions with the airport. Flight paths and location need to be considered in the proposed development. TIP need to apply for rezoning of the area.

*Airservices:*

- T McLean referred to the grass runways issue highlighted earlier by Peter Holmes confirming the lack of demand.
- Tim McLean briefed the group on the Airservices "One-Sky" initiative which is likely to have little impact on Launceston, as it impacts larger towers.
- Tim McLean advised Airservices Australia and the Department of Defence have signed contracts signifying a major milestone in unifying the nation's civil and military air traffic management systems. A series of workshops with key stakeholders are being planned over the next 18 months
- Tim McLean reported that through ASTRA they are partnering with Geoscience Australia to support a test bed trial of SBAS (Space Based Augmentation System). SBAS has the potential to provide low cost precision approaches, particularly to regional airports such as Burnie and Devonport with lower minima. Airservices is supporting this trial as it is a very important activity to promote and foster civil aviation, which is part of their legislative obligation.
- Tim McLean advised that in late February a RAAF C-17A conducted exercises over Tasmania.
- CASA navigation aid calibration occurred throughout Tasmania in early March.
- On 24 March circuits were conducted a Sharp Aviation Metro not above A025 for up to 45 minutes.
- No noise complaints were attributable to these events.
- Tim McLean reported that there was one complainant in quarter 4 of 2017. The complainant resided in White Hills and was concerned regarding an aircraft arrival to Runway 14R.
- There were five individual complainants in 2017, down from six in 2016.
- The main issues of concern in 2017 were night movements, sports aviation (aerobatic activity) and standard flight path movements.
- Five separate suburbs recorded a single complainant in 2017 being Evandale, Kings Meadows, Western Junction, White Hills and Youngtown. Nothing recorded in Devon Hills, Perth or Longford.
- There was only one complainant in quarter one 2018 who was concerned regarding a military aircraft, which they believed was flying in an unusual pattern. This is believed to be an Anzac day low level RAAF pass. Kings Meadows complaints were in relation to fully approved movements.
- Tim McLean also reported that there have been several changes in Hobart air traffic routings. Airservices Australia have decided not to change any air traffic movement procedures (SIDS/STARS) in Launceston at this stage.

- Tim McLean confirmed their capacity to handle the Qantas Pilot Academy.
- Tim McLean reported that a proposal was submitted to change air space classification above Launceston. There will be no change in aircraft movements, just airspace. The main change is to push the boundary up to 6500 feet giving more capacity to move smaller Visual Flight Rules aircraft without restricting larger aircraft. The proposal is currently with CASA for approval. The proposal will make greater use of ADSB and radar and the general public is unlikely to see any significant change.
- Des Jennings queried if any changes in flight paths will go out to the community?
- Tim McLean advised that the noise ombudsman rules classified the extent of changes as insufficient to trigger formal consultation.

#### **10. General Business**

- Peter Nielsen asked if there has been issues with Uber and taxis to which Paul Hodgen advised there has been very little.
- James McKee advised that a local Evandale resident has registered her interest in becoming a member of the CACG and pending outcomes of discussions with her in the coming weeks, resolved to invite her to the CACG.

***Action: Paul Hodgen to forward the Terms of Reference of the CACG to Jacinta Sinclair***

**11. The next meeting will be in October 2018 – date to be confirmed.**

**12. The meeting closed at 1310 hours.**