



Western Sydney International (Nancy-Bird Walton) Airport

Frequently Asked Questions

Airport delivery and flight paths

When will we see the flight paths?

The Australian Government is scheduled to release the preliminary flight paths and draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for Western Sydney International Airport (WSI) flight paths in mid-2023.

Why do we have to wait until 2023 to see the flight paths?

The design team have to optimise flight paths on the basis of safety, efficiency, capacity, noise, environmental and community considerations, while minimising changes to the existing airspace arrangements in the Sydney Basin.

Flight path design must also consider the 12 Airspace Design Principles set out in the Western Sydney Airport Plan, which was developed following public consultation on the 2016 WSI Stage 1 Development EIS.

Balancing these considerations is a complex task that requires careful and thorough processes.

It is also important to note that flight path planning cannot be done too far in advance of operations to ensure outdated aircraft types are not used for modelling.

We are currently preparing the draft EIS for preliminary flight paths for release in mid-2023. The draft EIS will be a crucial piece of contextual information that will assist the community to understand and provide informed feedback on the preliminary flight paths.

Will there be limits on the number of flights per hour?

The first runway at WSI will be capable of handling up to 49 aircraft movements per hour at full capacity.

Will there be a curfew?

WSI has always been planned to operate on a 24/7 curfew-free basis. Operating without a curfew is important to the economic viability of WSI.

Will the Airport have the ability to increase capacity?

Stage 1 Development of WSI is for single runway operations. A second runway (part of the overall Western Sydney Airport Plan) may be required around 2050. The development of a second runway would be a matter for the government of the day.

What is being done to reduce noise?

The flight paths are being designed to minimise, as far as reasonably possible, the noise effects of aircraft operations on residential areas and noise-sensitive areas.

The Australian Government is committed to ensuring the community understands and is consulted on the potential noise impacts of aircraft overflight. This will include a clear outline of preliminary flight path noise impacts in the draft EIS, which will be publicly exhibited for comment in mid-2023.

Noise insulation and property acquisitions

What is the Australian Government doing about noise insulation and property acquisitions?

Under the Western Sydney Airport Plan, the Australian Government has committed to developing a noise insulation and property acquisition policy in relation to aircraft overflight noise for buildings outside the Airport site. This will have regard to the 24/7 operations at WSI.

What are the details of the Australian Government's noise insulation and property acquisition policy?

The Australian Government is currently developing the noise insulation and property acquisition policy for WSI. A draft policy will be released for public consultation in mid-2023, as well as the draft EIS for preliminary flight paths.

Development controls

Will the new flight paths result in planning restrictions?

Planning controls outside the Airport boundary are determined by the NSW Government.

Land use planning must be compatible with the long-term growth and development of WSI. This means land is developed in a way that is appropriate for immediate use, but also for generations to follow.

This principle is set out in the National Airports Safeguarding Framework. The Framework is a national land use planning framework that aims to improve community amenity by minimising noise-sensitive developments near airports. The Framework also improves safety outcomes by ensuring aviation safety requirements are recognised in land use planning decisions.

Environment

What impacts will the flight paths have on Warragamba Dam, Prospect Reservoir and the Greater Blue Mountains World Heritage Area?

The 2016 WSI Stage 1 Development EIS found there would be a low risk to surface water at Warragamba Dam and Prospect Reservoir, and low risk to the World Heritage values of the Greater Blue Mountains Area.

In developing the preliminary flight paths, consideration is being given to the impact of aircraft operations on natural and visually sensitive areas, such as the Greater Blue Mountains World Heritage Area.

The environmental impact of the preliminary flight paths will be outlined in the draft EIS when it is released for public consultation in mid-2023.

Will aircraft dump fuel over Western Sydney?

Fuel jettisoning (also known as fuel dumping) is only required in extremely rare circumstances in the event of an emergency, and is only relevant for certain types of aircraft. In any given year, it occurs in around 0.001 per cent of all civilian aircraft movements in Australia.

In the event that fuel jettisoning is required, Airservices Australia enforces strict regulations on when and where it can occur.

Jettisoned fuel vaporises rapidly and disperses widely. This means it is highly unlikely to reach the ground and will have a negligible effect on air or water quality, or the environment.

The environmental impact of the preliminary flight paths will be outlined in the draft EIS when it is released for public consultation in mid-2023.

Will aircraft contribute to air pollution?

The efficiency of aircraft operations has been a key consideration in the development of preliminary flight paths for WSI, as more efficient flight paths will reduce greenhouse gas emissions and air quality impacts associated with those operations.

Aircraft are also becoming more fuel efficient, with modern aircraft emitting far less CO₂ than in previous decades, and airline operators assessing the viability of bio fuels.

The draft EIS (to be released in mid-2023) will analyse and describe the contribution and impacts of the preliminary flight paths on air quality at the local, regional and national scales, having regard to the relevant weather characteristics, including wind, fog, temperature inversions and any topographic features which may affect the dispersion of air pollutants.

Consultation

How can I have my say?

The Australian Government is committed to consulting the community on WSI flight paths.

Feedback received during public exhibition of the draft EIS for the overall WSI Stage 1 Development in 2015 continues to inform design development and environmental assessment of the preliminary flight paths.

The Government will be seeking further formal feedback from the community during public exhibition of the draft EIS in mid-2023. During this time there will be easy to access and meaningful opportunities for you to understand the preliminary flight paths and their impacts, and a wide range of channels for you to provide feedback.

Where can I get information in my language?



If you require the services of an interpreter, please contact the Translating and Interpreting Service on **131 450** and ask them to call the WSI Flight Paths team on **1800 038 160**.

Please scan this QR code to view project information in languages other than English.

