Thank you for the opportunity to present to the Committee today.

The Planning Institute of Australia is the peak professional body for urban and regional planners and related professions in Australia. We have around 5000 members represented in all states and territories and internationally.

On behalf of its members, PIA advocates for better planning systems and actively promotes economically, socially and environmentally sustainable communities.

PIA has an established National Policy Committee which develops and manages PIA policy positions. This committee has developed a position on Development on Airport Land after many concerns were raised by members about the proliferation of non-airport related activities on airport land.
At the outset PIA believes that airports are significant economic and social assets for a city or region. This is demonstrated already by many of Australia’s Capital city airports and overseas airports which generate and create significant business and employment hubs. There are a range of activities that have synergies with being located adjacent to an airport hub and these are supported. There are also arguments for non-airport development to be located on airport sites if supported by metropolitan or local plans.

PIA also believes that control of aviation activities warrants a national regulatory regime.

PIA supports the current amendments which seek to improve the consultation regime, though understands there are some concerns with the timeframes for local governments.

PIA supports development on airport land which fits strategically in with development of the region, is subject to the same rules as other developers, and takes into account infrastructure requirements. Unfortunately this is not happening with development at many, if any airports.

During the deliberation of the PIA airport policy position many planning issues were bought forward to the committee and these are some examples:
• Non-airport related developments are being proposed on smaller regional airports (such as in Tasmania) and this will have severe impacts on the ability of smaller local governments to properly plan and manage development and infrastructure for their area and of course they are not funded other than by existing rate payers to support this despite wide community use and service provision.

• In one capital city a large well known brand hardware store has been built on airport land, just a few kilometers away from an existing zoned and serviced industrial area – potentially cannibalizing or affecting the economic viability of existing traders.

• Many airports end up with mega retail or commercial developments which compete directly with current centres and don’t necessarily cater well for additional traffic generated, parking requirements or managing the catchment generation.

I am sure you have heard many more examples of this today so I won’t go on.

Ongoing planning concerns and disputes between airport operators, state/territory and local governments and major developers will continue under this system. A better way to capitalize on the economic opportunities provided by airports and make them and our cities and regions globally competitive is to have greater integration
and a proper process for engaging all 3 tiers of government into decision making and funding where appropriate.

For these reasons, PIA urges that these amendments should go further to ensure that planning decisions on airport land (for non-aviation activities) must comply with the planning instruments that are in force. (whether that be state, regional and and/or local). Conversely airport sites and proposals must be integrated into metropolitan or local plans through the proper channels. In this regard PIA supports the position of the Australian Local Government Association whereby if a proposal is contrary to a state or local planning instrument reasons need to be provided, if it is approved.

PIA wants to see better planning outcomes for our airports and trusts the issues raised in our submission will be considered in the Committee’s deliberations.

Thank – you

Liz de Chastel
National Policy Co-ordinator