

Stawell Aerodrome Committee

Minutes



Date: June 18th 2025 **Time:** 1 pm

Location: Stawell Aerodrome Terminus Building

Attendees:

Heath Pohl – Manager Operations (Airport Manager) (Interim Chair)

Michael McQueen - Coordinator of Works (Airport Reporting Officer)

Brittany Burns - Risk & Lease Management Officer

Rob Boschen - Committee member

Grant Harrison - Committee member

Paul Reichenbach – Senior Forest Fire Management Officer – Emergency Preparedness

Apologies:

Lauren Todman – Manager, Operational Infrastructure & Assets

Justin Neofitou – Committee member

Rob McIntosh - Committee member

Brent McAlister – CEO (NGSC)

Cr Jack Blake (Councillor)

Cr Jenny Greenberger (Councillor)

1. Opening

PURPOSE OF THE COMMITTEE (extract TOR)

To research and act as a consulting and advising body to the Northern Grampians Shire Council to support and guide the strategic management and development of the Stawell Aerodrome and its surrounds.

2. General Business: Interim Chair

Outcome: Heath Pohl to act as Interim Chair.

3. Appointment of Chair

Mr Pohl had received contact from Cr Greenberger as she was an apology for the meeting. Cr Greenberger stated that was per the Terms of Reference she would be happy to take on the chairperson.

Outcome: Cr Greenberger appointed as Chairperson.

4. Confirmation of Previous minutes

Outcome: Minutes from 27 September 2023, were accepted.

5. Setting of meeting schedule

Discussion around last meeting date being 2 years ago. Mr Pohl will be scheduling meetings twice yearly, as per the Terms of Reference.

Outcome: Mr Pohl will be scheduled twice yearly, with next meeting date around October/November 2025.

6. Confirmation of Terms of Reference

Terms of Reference have been updated to reflect current formatting of Northern Grampians Shire Council. Mr Pohl stated that there was one change to ToR, which is to have them set for a four-year period instead of annually. There were no additional changes.

Outcome: Terms of Reference were accepted by committee.

7. Airport Managers Report – Heath Pohl

➤ **Projects Update - September 2023 – June 2025**

Mr Pohl began by acknowledging the contribution of Mr John Hunt, who contributed to the Airport project, and who was the Aerodrome Manager at the time of their inception and development.

8. Completed Project 11/29 Runway & Taxiway Lighting Upgrades

Mr Pohl gave a project update on the works that had been completed as part of the Runway and Taxiway Lighting Upgrade. This included installation of approximately 2,800 meters of conduits and wiring, as well as the conversion of the primary wind indicator to LED lights. Mr Pohl also stated that the replacement of runway and taxiway-edge lights had also been undertaken with 90 lights replaced. This project has been flight tested by an authorised CASA pilot.

9. Current Project Precision approach path indicator (PAPI)

Mr Pohl gave an update on the PAPI project, summarised below. He stated that Paul Fitzgerald will be conducting surveying at the end of the month, and then this will be signed off on. Flight check has been completed and approved.

- Precision approach path indicator (PAPI)
- An under Runway 11/29 bore (Pit R36 to Pit R27) with conduit to allow the South PAPI installation;
- Strip topsoil, placement and compaction of a very small area of fill at the West end PAPI installation;
- Installation of a short run of conduit with pits along the South side of the Runway to allow the South PAPI installation (North side conduit is already in place);
- Installation of footings, pits and conduit for both North-side and South-side PAPI units;
- Installation of all required cabling to feed the PAPI units;
- Installation of the PAPI units;
- Installation of suitable Constant Current and Transformer equipment to suit and all electrical checks; and
- Conduct of installation check survey and pilot check prior to commissioning of the PAPI.

10. Airport Maintenance Report

Mr Pohl gave a report on the airport maintenance schedule. Paul Fitzgerald and his team will be updating the Aerodrome Manuals in June, and the Obstacle Limitation Surface [OLS] will also be undertaken in June. Update from ACN/PCN to ACR/PCR to take place in July and will be updated on the ERSA. Serviceability inspections undertaken a minimum of two times a week and any additional as necessary.

11. MOS Requirements

Mr Pohl gave an update on MOS requirements. The Aerodrome Manual Validation is due, and once this has been completed by Paul, Mr Pohl will reissue to all committee members. As part of the CASA regulations, Council has now endorsed a *Drug and Alcohol Policy*, for all SSAA employees. If there are any concerns, aerodrome users can raise with Mr Pohl and can now be tested.

Discussions were had around airport security. The main gate and side gate have had coded locks installed. Both entrance points have the same code. Mr McQueen raised the question to users, if they would like all entrances to the aerodrome done, and if it would be easier if they all had the same code. User groups agreed on this suggestion. Mr Reichenbach asked if this would affect the DEECA gates and Mr McQueen said no. Mr Pohl said that revised

gate numbers with emergency rally points had been installed, but chemical manifests were not. Mr Boschen has installed his own and Council is satisfied with this outcome.

Discussions were had around airside vehicle registrations. Airport users raised no concerns and said they had not seen any unregistered users. Mr Pohl was happy to maintain the current system; however, it should be noted that this continues as a standing item.

Action: Mr Pohl to ensure Airside Vehicle Registrations are a standing item on future agendas.

12. Airport Safety

Mr Pohl gave an update on the Airport Safety refreshers. Mr Pohl will meet with local emergency responders at least once every two (2) years to review local procedures. Mr Pohl also reported that on 28 August 2024, Victoria Police conducted an airside familiarisation and rescue day. As part of the airport safety a Desktop refresher will be conducted after the next scheduled meeting. Airport users said they would be happy to be involved in any planning or preparation required.

Action: Mr Pohl to organise desktop training refresher for next meeting and liaise with airport users as required.

13. Other, Maintenance & General

Discussions were had around the central tie down areas. Airport users stated that this would always be an ongoing issue. There were reports of some issues during the fires to access the fuel bowzers. Mr Pohl asked about the usage of the older central tie downs and if they should only be used as a last resort. Mr Boschen stated that there were ongoing issues for crews and pilots and that it caused crowding of the area. Mr Harrison stated that there were too far between anchor points and that the cables were too slack which could cause rocking. Mr Boschen stated that pilots are putting in safety reports and that this will continue to be brought up as long as the pilots continue to report. No viable solution came to and Mr Pohl stated that Council will continue to work with Mr Harrison and Mr Boschen to explore best use scenarios.

Mr Pohl said that the slashing and spraying program was continuing. Mr Harrison reported that if the Prison were continuing maintenance discussions would need to take place as they are smashing windows and chipping paint. Mr McQueen said that we get them on a last resort, and that we will try and keep the areas close to windows etc. for Council to maintain.

Mr Pohl said that the web-based security cameras had been installed terminus tarmac and building.

Action: Mr Pohl to further investigate options for central tie down areas.

14. Draft Master Plan Review

Mr Pohl gave a summary of the Airport Master Plan as per the below dot points. He said there have been no changes to the Master Plan and that this will dependent on funding in the future.

- Continue the staged development of taxiways, aprons, hangars, utility requirements and internal access roads to meet ongoing demand.
- Continue discussions regarding the requirements to extend Runway 11/29 in the future if larger fire suppression aircraft are required to be based at the aerodrome. Consider purchasing the land west of the aerodrome when it becomes available to cater for future runway extension to the west.
- Prepare development guidelines for GA hangars so that the buildings are standardised to assist in orderly development on leased sites and to ensure the protection of access by taxiing aircraft.
- Negotiate with GWM Water to allow for the realignment of a section of Aerodrome Road, parallel with the proposed Stage 1 hangar development area, to provide suitable taxiway clearance for aircraft accessing the most northerly hangar site on the Main Apron.
- Close the road reserves that cross the aerodrome site and convert the reserves to freehold land titles then consolidate all land titles covering the aerodrome site held by NGSC onto one title.
- Note: Amend the AMP trigger points to include - as the RAP funding program has ceased, NGSC with committee support start the process to advocate at the federal level funding for regional airports development projects.

15. Lease Management Officers

Ms Burns gave an update on lease information. She said that there will be annual CPI increases due in July 2026. Additionally, a market review will be conducted in July 2026. She also said that tenants will be due to exercise their right for another term between the dates of 1 January 2026 and 31 March 2026. This will be the final term of the lease, due to expire 30 June 2031. If tenants require a new lease, negotiations will occur 12 months prior.

16. Other Business

Mr Harrison asked if DEECA had conducted any reviews of the Summer period. Mr Reichenbach said that it was the highest capacity that the facility has run out, and it certainly tested their capabilities. Mr Reichenbach said one thing to note was that they would be exploring ways to stop the rocks from the helipad flying into the aircraft. Mr Pohl stated that the only solution to that would be to have concrete around the pad, but Mr Reichenbach stated that this could cause a potential issue of the fuel trucks being too close to the aircraft. DEECA is also upgrading their holding tank from 9,000L to 20,000L which will increase their capacity, and it was stated that the old tank could be relocated in the aerodrome.

Mr Boschen raised concerns of the use of TaxiWay Charlie, and the East-West runway being the preferred runway. He said that this caused minor amounts of crowding and suggested that DEECA place in their Airbase Manual a drawing so that aircraft were not lining up to far down. Mr Reichenbach agreed this would be a good idea.

17. Operators update.

Nothing to report from operators.

Stawell Aerodrome Committee

Minutes



Meeting closed – 1.36pm

**Next Committee Meeting Scheduled – TBC (Approximately October/November
pending weather action)**