



## **Fly Neighbourly Agreement 2016 – example only**

### **Voluntary guidelines to manage aircraft noise in residential areas**

#### **Introduction**

The City of Melbourne is a local government body. As prescribed by the Local Government Act (1989), the City is responsible for (in part):

- planning and providing services, facilities and infrastructure for the local community
- strategically planning and regulating land use in the municipality

This Agreement applies to helicopters only although some general conditions apply to all aircraft operating in proximity to Melbourne. The City of Melbourne municipal area is covered by the Melbourne Control Zone (CTR) and Class G airspace. In Class G there are limited restrictions although helicopters are required to ensure they are 1000 feet over a populated area unless they have a dispensation from CASA, or are landing /taking off or involved in an emergency operation.

The main helicopter activity within the City of Melbourne relates to:

- tourist joy flights (operating from several origins, not just the central city helipads. This includes Essendon airport and to a lesser extent Moorabbin airport)
- police helicopter operations over the city and suburbs
- traffic reporting where the helicopter from departing from Essendon Airport operates mostly in the early morning and the evenings
- television reporting including sport and news events

There are currently six main companies flying helicopters within City of Melbourne boundaries.

#### **Airspace management above and within the City of Melbourne**

This Fly Neighbourly Agreement is made between aircraft operators and the City of Melbourne to guide procedures when operating in the airspace above and within the City Of Melbourne.

These procedures include minimum heights for aircraft, scheduled times for pilot training, recommendations for considerate flying and adoption of flight curfews so as to help protect resident amenity while still maintaining tourist and business activity.

Safety is always paramount. Pilots are expected to the best of their ability comply with the Fly Neighbourly Agreement, however there will be times where weather or operational and safety factors may lead to not all the Fly Neighbourly procedures being complied with.

## **1. Considerate flying**

Aircraft pilots are expected to demonstrate consideration for nearby residents and operate in a Fly Neighbourly manner at all times. Pilots are asked to:

- Be conscious of the times of operation and the noise generated
- Avoid prolonged engine run-ups
- Climb to cruising altitude as soon as practical after departure
- Avoid rotor slap noise
- Avoid tight manoeuvres and turns when flying over residential areas
- Minimise time taken for approach and departure from the Melbourne city helipads
- Fly in accordance with extended final approach and departure procedures so as to avoid cutting corners and overflying built up areas adjacent to the river corridor.

Aircraft operators should use aircraft with low noise signatures wherever possible.

## **2. Flying above residential areas**

Aircraft pilots are encouraged to operate in a Fly Neighbourly manner when flying over densely populated residential areas. Wherever possible, flight tracks that avoid sensitive areas should be selected. East Melbourne has been identified as a particularly noise sensitive area.

Where practical, hovering should take place over freeways, commercial areas and industrial precincts. If hovering must take place over residential areas, operators should maintain a hover/circling altitude as high as possible above 1,000 feet. This recognises that flying heights are subject to many factors including weather, control zones and air traffic control clearances.

## **3. Flying high to reduce noise impacts**

Pilots are required by Air Navigation regulations to fly at a minimum of 1,000 feet over residential areas. This however does not apply when a helicopter is in the process of departing or arriving at a helipad.

While most of the flying near the Melbourne city helipads will be below 1,000 feet (as the aircraft are either departing or arriving), pilots will as soon as practical climb to at least 1,000 feet to decrease the noise impact on nearby residents.

All aircraft operators should aim to operate at the maximum height permissible where possible.

## **4. Helipads**

The two Melbourne city helipads (at Batman Park and North Wharf) are popular bases for aircraft operators due to the proximity of the city. It is recognised that the helipads are located in close proximity to residential areas. To decrease the noise impact on residents, signatories to this document will limit operations at helipads to between the following hours:

- Monday to Friday 7am and 8pm\*
- Weekends and Public Holidays: 9am and 8pm\*.

\*Note: Dispensation will be given to existing bookings outside these times. This agreement also recognises that helicopters may land and take off outside these times for 'special purposes'. This acknowledges that especially in summer there are assignments involving photography or return from events that occur in twilight.

Any flights landing or taking off after 8pm will be notified in advance via email to the Flinders Wharf apartment concierge.

Licences for the helipads are issued by Parks Victoria under the Water Industry Act (1994) and are subject to the guidelines set out in the Crown Land Reserve Act (1978). When determining licence renewals, Parks Victoria will consider the requirements of other external agencies and stakeholders.

## **5. Training**

To ensure pilots operate to the highest possible safety standard, pilot training is required at the Melbourne city helipads. Wherever possible, aircraft operators will limit training exercises to weekdays between 11am and 2pm.

Environmental awareness and noise levels are to be included in pilot training. The City of Melbourne will provide relevant information regarding resident's amenity for inclusion in any formal training.

## **6. Ground running of engines**

Aircraft operators are encouraged to minimise the use of ground running while located at the Melbourne city helipads. Any ground running required for maintenance or testing purposes will, as far as practical, be conducted elsewhere.

## **7. Special Conditions**

All parties recognise that there are a number of special events throughout the year that will lead to more aircraft operations in and around the city. These include the Australian Open, Australian Grand Prix and Melbourne Cup. Residents should anticipate increased aircraft activity during these times.

## **8. Emergency services**

All parties to this agreement acknowledge that emergency services, including police, fire, search and rescue, and infrastructure-monitoring operations, may not always be able to comply with this Fly Neighbourly Agreement.

Although Victoria Police cannot be a signatory to this Agreement given the nature of police operations, they will endeavour to operate in a Fly Neighbourly manner where possible. This includes keeping pro-active patrols of the CBD to a minimum outside of the designated operating times.

## **9. Noise complaint line**

Residents that wish to register an aircraft noise complaint or make further enquiries about aircraft noise matters can contact the Noise Complaints and Information Service (NCIS) at Airservices Australia:

- Telephone 1800 802 584 (note Airservices generally records all calls to or from the NCIS)
- Or visit [Making a complaint](#)<sup>1</sup> at Airservices Australia

## **10. Roles and Responsibilities**

Aircraft operators agree to abide by the terms of this agreement.

The City of Melbourne will issue Fly Neighbourly certificates to all participating aircraft operators which will then be recorded and publicised on the City of Melbourne website and other relevant forums.

Copies of this Fly Neighbourly Agreement will be lodged with Airservices Australia, Parks Victoria, the Civil Aviation Safety Authority (CASA) and the Aircraft Noise Ombudsman.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.airservicesaustralia.com/community/environment/aircraft-noise/about-making-a-complaint/>

All complaints will be recorded. The City of Melbourne will discuss any breaches of the agreement with operators.

## **11. Review process**

The City of Melbourne will review the Fly Neighbourly Agreement each year in collaboration with aircraft operators and residents, taking into account:

Aircraft noise concerns raised by Airservices Australia, City of Melbourne, Parks Victoria or any other agency.

Any opportunities to improve the noise outcome.

Updates to the Fly Neighbourly Agreement will be sent to Airservices Australia, CASA, Parks Victoria, and the Aircraft Noise Ombudsman and published on the City of Melbourne website.