

# Frequently Asked Questions & Answers



## Runway Safety @ SYD

**Q:** What does the runway safety project involve?

**A:** The project involves reconstructing the 9,200 square metre concrete slab at the northern end of Sydney Airport's main north-south runway. The location of the worksite is shown at **Attachment A**.

**Q:** Why is the project necessary?

**A:** The existing concrete slab was constructed in 1968 and is now nearing the end of its life. To ensure runway safety, it must now be replaced.

**Q:** How long will the project take to complete?

**A:** The project will commence on 31 July 2021 and last for up to four months (subject to weather). Work will be undertaken 24-hours a day to complete the project as soon as practicable.

**Q:** Will there be an impact on flights to and from Sydney Airport?

**A:** There will be an unavoidable (but limited) impact on some flights to and from Sydney Airport for the duration of the project.

For the local community, the main impact will be on the flight path currently used by aircraft landing on the main north-south runway from the north. **This flight path will be unavailable during the project.** This is because aircraft cannot land over the worksite as to do so would expose workers on the site to low flying aircraft and an unacceptable risk to their health and safety.

The location of this flight path is shown at **Attachment B**.

**Q:** How will the project affect flights in my local area?

**A:** There will be an unavoidable but temporary impact on the number of aircraft using particular flight paths to and from the airport:

- People living in areas beneath or close to the flight path used by aircraft landing on the main north-south runway from the north will likely notice fewer flights.
- People living beneath or close to Sydney Airport's 17 other flights paths may therefore notice more flights during the four month life of the project.

**Q:** How will the flight path in my area likely be affected?

**A:** Charts showing how the number of aircraft using each flight path will likely be affected during the project have been prepared.

One chart shows flight paths used by jet aircraft and the other chart shows flight paths used by non-jet (turbo-prop) aircraft.

The charts show:

1. Average number of flights per day using each flight path in August 2019 (pre-COVID)
2. Forecast average number of flights per day using each flight path in October 2021 (with the runway safety project)
3. Forecast average flights per day using each flight path in October 2021 (without the runway safety project)

Note: **The forecast number of flights shown in the charts is the average number of flights across Sydney Airport's 17-hour operational day, that is, between 6am and 11pm.**

Depending on prevailing weather conditions, the number of flights using a particular flight path on any given day will likely vary. On some days, the actual number of flights could be higher than the average. On other days, it could be less than the average, and sometimes it could even be zero.

The chart showing jet flight paths is shown at **Attachment C**.

The chart showing non-jet (turbo-prop) flight paths is shown at **Attachment D**.

**Q: How do I read these charts?**

**A:** The following four examples show how to read the charts.

Jet aircraft (see Attachment C)

1. For the area beneath or close to **flight path D**, there were an average of 40 flights between 6am and 11pm in August 2019, pre-COVID. On some days, there would have been more flights, on others less, even zero. When the runway safety project is underway, there is likely to be an average of 22 flights over that same 17-hour period. Were the project not being carried out, there would have been an average of 18 flights a day.
2. For the area beneath or close to **flight path L**, there were an average of 33 flights between 6am and 11pm in August 2019, pre-COVID. When the runway safety project is underway, there is likely to be an average of 67 flights over that 17-hour period. Were the project not being carried out, there would have been an average of 54 flights a day.
3. For the area beneath or close to **flight path C1**, there were an average of 79 flights between 6am and 11pm in August 2019, pre-COVID. When the runway safety project is underway, that number will drop to zero because this flight path won't be used for worker safety reasons. Were the project not being carried out, there would have been an average of 29 flights a day.

Non-jet (turboprop) aircraft (see Attachment D)

4. For the area beneath or close to **flight path G2**, there were an average of 14 flights between 6am and 11pm in August 2019, pre-COVID. When the runway safety project is underway, there is likely to be an average of 20 flights over that 17-hour period. Were the project not being carried out, there would have been an average of 25 flights a day.

**Q: I live in an area beneath the flight path used by aircraft landing on or taking off from Sydney Airport's east-west runway. Why are there suddenly more aircraft using this flight path?**

**A:** There are two reasons.

First, the east-west runway was closed for 13 months in 2020 and 2021 to allow airlines to securely park grounded aircraft. There were no aircraft at all using those flight paths during that period. When it was reopened on 30 April 2021, aircraft started using the runway again.

Second, with the runway now open and with flight numbers still below pre-COVID levels, the east-west runway is able to again be used for noise sharing purposes in accordance with the Australian Government's noise sharing policy, known as the Long Term Operating Plan for Sydney Airport (LTOP). More information on the LTOP can be found [here](#).

**Q: Why wasn't this project undertaken in 2020 when Sydney Airport was less busy?**

**A:** The COVID-19 pandemic delivered a crisis of unprecedented magnitude to the global aviation industry. The number of domestic and international flights to and from Sydney Airport fell sharply throughout 2020. With so few aircraft in the air, Sydney Airport closed the east-west runway in March 2020 so airlines could securely park their grounded aircraft.

However, there were still aircraft flying to and from Sydney Airport throughout 2020, repatriating Australians from other countries and carrying essential workers. There were also record numbers of freight flights carrying urgent medical supplies and allowing for the export of agricultural products, the latter being subsidised by the Australian Government.

With the east-west runway closed throughout most of 2020 and into 2021, the main north-south runway had to be kept fully open to accommodate these flights, many of which were operated by larger aircraft types. Carrying out the runway safety project was therefore not an option while the east-west runway was closed.

**Q: Will there be any change to the limited number of overnight freight and other flights permitted to operate during the curfew?**

**A:** Subject to the *Sydney Airport Curfew Act 1995*, limited numbers of overnight freight aircraft have always been allowed to operate between 11pm and 6am. These flights can only use the main north-south runway and they must take off to the south or land from the south over Botany Bay.

Emergency Air Ambulance flights can also operate between 11pm and 6am, and are allowed to use any runway.

During the four month life of the project, there will be limited times when other safety or maintenance work needs to be undertaken on other sections of the main runway. This is work that can only be undertaken during the airport curfew.

The limited number of overnight freight and Air Ambulance flights operating during this period will instead use the parallel north-south runway.

For the up to 20-nights when this runway is used during the project, people living in Kurnell, La Perouse, Phillip Bay, Little Bay and parts of Botany may notice more flights between 11pm and 6am.

Sydney Airport apologises for the temporary impact this change will have.

**Q: Where can I get further information?**

**A:** For further information, contact Sydney Airport's Special Adviser Government and Community Relations, Mr Ted Plummer, on:

Phone: (02) 9667 6182

Email: [runwaysafety@syd.com.au](mailto:runwaysafety@syd.com.au)

**Q: How do I lodge a formal aircraft noise complaint?**

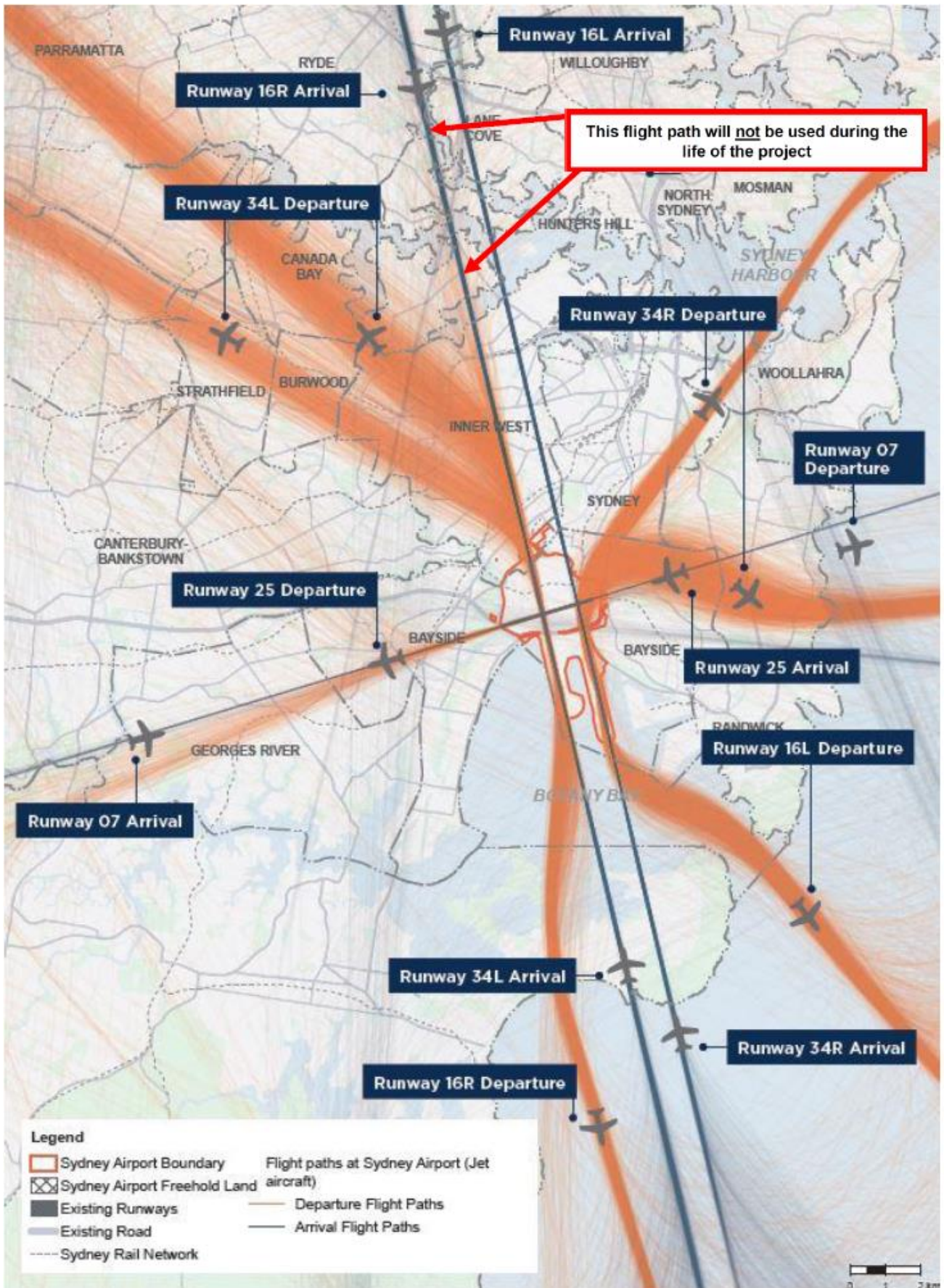
**A:** Airservices Australia is the Australian Government agency responsible for managing complaints about aircraft noise and operations. Details of how to lodge a complaint or make an enquiry through the Noise Complaints and Information Service can be found [here](#).

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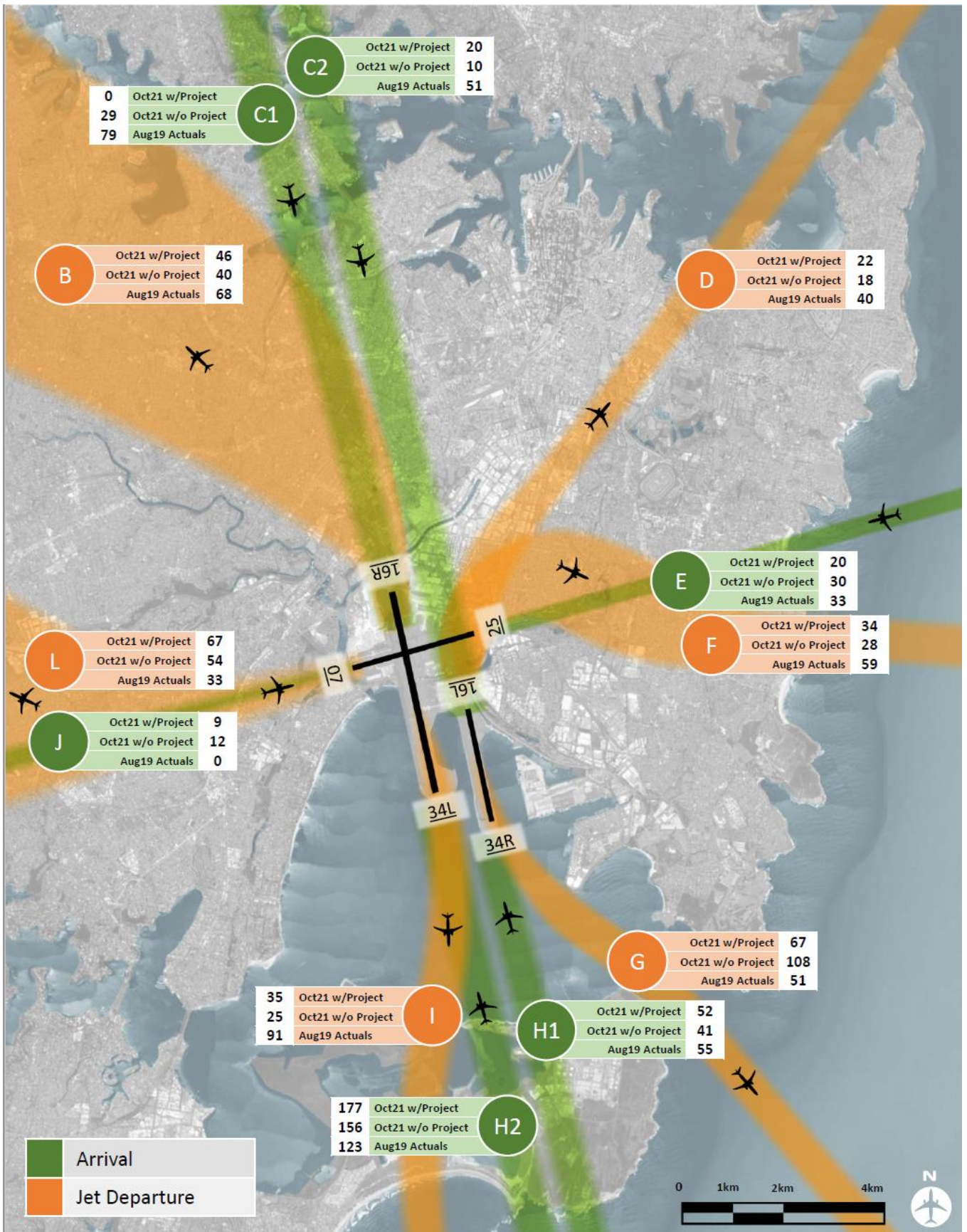
Location of worksite



Flight paths to and from Sydney Airport used by jet aircraft



Likely change in the number of jet aircraft using flight paths to and from Sydney Airport



Likely change in the number of non-jet (turboprop) aircraft using flight paths to and from Sydney Airport

