



VOLUME
A

**BACKGROUND
TO THE PROJECT**

A1

BACKGROUND TO THE PROJECT

INTRODUCTION



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1.1 LOCATION AND HISTORY OF SUNSHINE COAST AIRPORT

1.1.1 Site context

The Sunshine Coast Airport (SCA) is located on South East Queensland's Sunshine Coast, at Marcoola, mid-way between Caloundra and Noosa. SCA is approximately 110 km north of Brisbane and a one hour drive from Brisbane's northern suburbs.

The airport occupies approximately 430 ha of relatively flat, low-lying land, approximately 5 km north of the regional centre of Maroochydore.

The airport is surrounded by a mix of land uses with residential to the north, east and south and National Park to the north-west and south-west. Industrial land adjoins the airport's south-western boundary and former sugar cane farming land and remnant bushland to the west.

The airport is substantially bounded by the Sunshine Coast Motorway to the west, David Low Way to the north and south, and Suncoast Boulevard to the east.

The Maroochy River flows on the western and southern sides of the site, joining the Coral Sea at Maroochydore. There are also tidal canals to the south of the site at Twin Waters and Maroochydore. A little over 1km off the coast is Mudjimba Island.

To the east of the existing runway is Keith Royal Park. The North Shore Multisport Complex lies to the south of the site.

Figure 1.1a shows the SCA site in relation to its surrounds.

1.1.2 A brief history of the airport

The airport's location was decided upon in 1958 and the Queensland Government set aside 300 acres of Crown Land at Marcoola for the development of the airport. Works soon began and on 12 August 1961, The Honourable David Low, then local state Member of Parliament, formally opened the new Maroochy Airport.

When the airport opened, the only infrastructure on site was, one north-south runway (unsealed), one east-west runway (unsealed) and one very small and basic terminal. The initial runway (RWY 18/36) was constructed at a length of 1,372 m and 30 m wide on a north-south alignment.

The runway has subsequently been extended over the past 50 years to accommodate increased aircraft requirements and traffic volumes. The terminal building has also been expanded to accommodate the growth in traffic and passengers.

The airport has grown considerably since those early days and in May 1987 the airport changed its name to Sunshine Coast Airport to better reflect its service for the region.

The main RWY 18/36 is now 1,797 m long and 30 m wide which limits operations to narrow body aircraft types (B737 and A320).

The existing secondary cross RWY 12/30 is 695 m long and 18 m wide and is only suitable for use by smaller General Aviation (GA) aircraft.

The airport handles aircraft movements of around 90,000 per annum and the terminal has a capacity of over 1 million passengers per annum.

A more detailed history of the airport is provided in Chapter B12 – Non-Indigenous Cultural Heritage.

1.1.3 Ownership and operation of the airport

SCA is owned, operated and managed by the Sunshine Coast Regional Council (SCC), having previously been operated by Maroochy Shire Council prior to the amalgamation of local governments in Queensland in 2008.

SCA is a Business Unit of Council's Corporate Strategy and Delivery Department.

SCA is wholly responsible for management of the terminal building, the public car park, all internal access roads, all runways, taxiways and aprons, visual aids and all serviced land at the airport.

SCA also manages airport concessions and leasing activities. Air traffic management services are provided by Airservices Australia (Airservices).

It is notable that the airport is different to other regional airports in Australia in that, at no stage, has it been owned by the Commonwealth Government.

SCA is operated by SCC as a commercial business unit under national competition principles and the *Local Government Act 2009*.

SCC is the Project proponent and details are provided in **Section 1.2**.

1.1.4 History of the Master Plan

The Sunshine Coast Airport Master Plan – September 2007, details the long-term strategic development objectives of the airport and outlines the work required to achieve these by 2020 (refer **Figure 1.1b**).

The preliminary draft of the Master Plan was the subject of extensive stakeholder and public consultation. The stakeholder consultation process included airline industry players, airport tenants and Federal, State and Local Government agencies. This was followed by a Public Participation Program which commenced in April 2006.

The Draft Plan included three runway development options, all focused on development of the existing RWY 18/36. A long-term recommendation for the development of a new runway, RWY 13/31, was also identified.

Figure 1.1a: Sunshine Coast Airport and surrounds. The airport boundary is defined by a red keyline.



A total of 723 submissions were received during the consultation process, with the primary issues identified during this process listed below (note that some submissions contained multiple issues):

- North-south runway (RWY 18/36) extension
- Public Safety Areas (PSAs)
- Construction of an east-west runway (RWY 13/31)
- Noise
- Air traffic movement.

The consultation process resulted in the emergence of a clear preference in support of construction of a new east-west RWY 13/31. Of those consulted, 74.6 per cent of all stakeholders were opposed to any further development of the existing north-south RWY 18/36, citing issues of public safety, noise and air traffic movements.

A new east-west RWY 13/31 was seen by most submitters as the preferred option for development as it addresses the growth needs of the airport and mitigates the conflict between PSAs, Australian Noise Exposure Forecast (ANEF) contours, and surrounding residents.

The subsequent final Master Plan 2007 addressed the feedback received during the public consultation process, council's review of that plan, and sets the direction of development for SCA until 2020.

Figure 1.1b: Sunshine Coast Airport Master Plan



1.2 PROJECT PROPONENT

The proponent of this Airport Expansion Project (the Project) is SCC, with the process being managed by SCA. As stated previously, SCA is a business unit of SCC. SCA management is responsible for the safe and secure operation, maintenance, commercial development and strategic planning functions of the airport. SCA manages the airport terminal building and public car park, all internal access roads, all runways, taxiways and aprons, visual aids and all serviced land at the airport. It also manages the concessions and leasing activities at the airport.

SCA provides the essential requirements of an airport operation in an environmentally responsible and sustainable manner. SCA is conscious of potential noise impacts on the community, particularly for residents immediately surrounding the airport or underneath flight paths.

The airport has a mature engagement with its community through the Community and Aviation Forum, and is the only airport in Australia to be internationally accredited for carbon reduction by the Airports Council International.

Council does not have a single 'Environmental Policy', rather it has in place a range of strategies and plans to implement commonwealth, state and local government objectives on a wide range of issues of environmental significance. In addition to Council's Corporate Plan and Planning Scheme, a long list of strategies/policies on specific matters is available on Council's website.

Environmental management at the airport responds to the following SCA or SCC policies or plans:

- Fly Neighbourly Policy – applies to both helicopter and fixed wing operations, addressing flight plans, compliance with noise abatement procedures and hours for training and engine testing
- Health and Safety Policy, December 2010
- Community Plan (May 2011) – addresses the Sunshine Coast community, the visions and values of the community, aspirations including well managed growth, becoming ecologically sustainable, being connected and developing the economy and examines the way forward
- Biodiversity Strategy Implementation Plan 2010-2015 – The plan includes Biodiversity Partnerships and Community Engagement, Biodiversity Protection and Rehabilitation, Legal Mechanisms, Coordinated Pest Management, Integrated Catchment Management and New and Emerging Tools
- Energy Transition Plan 2010-2020
- Climate Change and Peak Oil Strategy 2010-2020
- Pest Management Plan 2012-2016
- Waste Minimisation Strategy 2009-2014.

Contact details for the proponent (SCC) are as follows:

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1.3 OBJECTIVES OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT (EIS)

1.3.1 EIS purpose

The purpose of the EIS is to:

- Provide public information on the need for the Project, alternatives to it and options for its implementation
- Present the likely effects of the Project on the natural, social and economic environment
- Demonstrate how environmental impacts can be avoided, managed or mitigated and the offsets for significant residual impacts
- Provide information for formulating the Project's Environmental Management Plan (EMP) and Dredge Management Plan (DMP).

This EIS is prepared in accordance with the final Terms of Reference (TOR) for the Project and has involved a comprehensive environmental assessment of the impacts of the Project. A cross-reference between the requirements of the Project TOR and where these requirements can be found in this EIS is provided as Appendix A9:A.

1.3.2 Approval process

The EIS is undertaken pursuant to the *Commonwealth Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act, 1999* (EPBC Act) and the *Queensland State Development and Public Works Organisation Act, 1971* (SDPWO Act).

The Commonwealth Minister for the Environment has determined that the project is likely to have a significant impact upon matters of national environmental significance (MNES), requiring approval under the EPBC Act before it can proceed (EPBC 2011/5823). The relevant MNES are Wetlands of international importance (sections 16 and 17B), Listed threatened species and communities (sections 18 and 18A) and Listed migratory species (sections 20 and 20A).

The EIS process is being led by the State Government pursuant to the bilateral agreement between the State and Commonwealth Governments. The Commonwealth Minister for the Environment will rely on the outcomes of the Queensland Coordinator-General's impact assessment process, including any public submissions, in making a decision.

A separate referral (2011/6104) has been made under section 160 of the EPBC Act by the Civil Aviation Safety Authority and Airservices Australia for the implementation of a plan for aviation airspace management at the Sunshine Coast Airport. The Minister has decided that the section 160 referral would be assessed by EIS. Impacts relevant to section 160 of the EPBC Act will be assessed by the Australian Government in parallel with the process under Part 4 of the SDPWO Act.

The approvals process for the Project is addressed in detail in Chapter A6 – Planning and Legislation. The procedural process in relation to this EIS is as follows:

- Proponent submits EIS to Coordinator-General and Commonwealth Department of Environment for review (against the Project TOR) and approval to release to the community (August 2014)
- EIS released for public comment (for 30 business days)
- A summary of the comments and how they were addressed and any changes to the EIS. Provision of a Supplementary EIS (if required)
- EIS and other information evaluated by the Coordinator-General (taking advice from the Commonwealth Minister for Environment)
- Coordinator-General's evaluation report released which, if approved, may include making recommendations and/or imposing conditions for the undertaking of the Project
- In parallel, the Australian Government provides its determination on the EPBC Act s160 airspace matter (see Chapter A6 for more detail)
- Coordinator-General's report sent to proponent and publicly notified.

This document is a draft Environmental Impact Statement (draft EIS) for the purposes of the aspects relevant to section 160 of the EPBC Act. and an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the purposes of the bilateral process between the Queensland and Commonwealth Governments and is termed EIS throughout this document.

All submissions about this EIS whether relating to the coordinated project or relating to the plan for aviation airspace management (EPBC Act referral 2011/6104 by the Civil Aviation Safety Authority and Airservices Australia) can be made in accordance with the information set out in **Section A1.8**.

1.4 PROJECT SUMMARY

A summary of the Project is included here with more detail provided in Chapter A4 – Project Description. The new runway will be a 45 m wide and 2,450 m long Code 4E runway, capable of servicing Code E aircraft such as the A330, B787 and B777. It will have an orientation of 128°/308° magnetic, giving the runway its 13/31 designation. RWY 13/31 will be serviced by two end taxiway loops, as shown in the preliminary layout in **Figure 1.4a**.

The end taxiway loops allow for increased aircraft movements on the runway, as an aircraft can be waiting on the taxiway while another aircraft is using the runway to land or take-off.

The new runway will be served by the existing terminal precinct which will be expanded. To accommodate larger aircraft, the apron at the existing terminal will be extended to accommodate Code E aircraft.

The existing RWY 12/30 will be closed to enable the construction of the proposed RWY 13/31. The existing RWY 18/36 will be retained as a secondary cross runway for use by GA and charter aircraft. Changes to airspace and aircraft flight paths will be required to accommodate the new runway configuration. The new runway will open up the airport to a range of wide-bodied aircraft servicing more distant national and international destinations.

Key elements of the Project include:

- Closure of the existing secondary runway (RWY 12/30)
- Dredging of up to 1.1 million m³ of sand fill from Spitfire Realignment Channel
- Transport and mooring of the dredge adjacent to SCA for sand pumping to the site
- Temporary construction operations including the dredge pipeline
- Construction of the new 2,450m runway (RWY 13/31), including end taxiway loops, apron extension and other associated infrastructure
- Relocating navigational aids
- A co-located Air Traffic Control (ATC) Tower and Aviation Rescue and Fire Fighting Services (ARFFS) Station
- Extension of Airport Drive/Friendship Avenue to provide access for the ATC tower and ARFFS station
- Implementation of revised aircraft management and procedures for the new runway and aerodrome configuration.

The proposed Project is illustrated in **Figure 1.4a**.

The development of the Sunshine Coast Aerospace Precinct, located off David Low Way, is progressing under a separate approvals process and will proceed in advance of the Airport Expansion Project.

1.5 PROJECT RATIONALE

The Project, including the new runway, has been identified by SCA and SCC in historic planning documents, including the 2007 Master Plan, as the future development for the airport. The new east-west runway (RWY 13/31) would offer significant operational benefits over the existing runway, including:

- Unconditional compliance with CASA standards
- Additional passenger capacity
- Access to growing markets and new domestic and international destinations
- Increased freight capacity

- Stimulus to the Sunshine Coast's tourist and commercial base
- Diversification of the Sunshine Coast's economic and jobs base
- Improved safety and capacity of the airport to operate in varying weather conditions, which currently impact on flights into and out of the coast.

Further detail on the rationale for the Project is provided in Chapter A2 – Need for the Project.

1.6 SUMMARY OF OPTIONS AND ALTERNATIVES

Chapter A3 examines in detail the options and alternatives which were considered as part of the development of this Project and an outline is provided here.

Airport and runway options were considered including:

- The 'Do Nothing' option where a new runway would not be developed
- The 'Do Minimum' option where minimum requirements are complied with for MOS 139
- New Runway 13/31 (Original Option)
- New Runway 13/31 (EIS Option)

Options and alternatives around the potential construction methodology of the Project were also considered. Two major types of fill are required for the construction of the runway being select fill and pavement fill. The fill options were examined and once sand was selected as the appropriate fill material, the source of the sand was selected after considering both terrestrial and marine options.

To supply the sand fill required, dredging is necessary so the alternatives associated with dredge options were considered; alternative locations, timing of the dredging, alternative dredge vessels and equipment and alternative dredge pipeline alignments.

1.7 LAYOUT OF THE EIS DOCUMENT

The EIS is separated into five main volumes:

- **Volume A:** Background to the Project (**this volume**)
- **Volume B:** Airport and Surrounds
- **Volume C:** Dredging and Dredge Movements
- **Volume D:** Airspace and Aircraft Noise
- **Volume E:** Impact Summary and Management Frameworks.

Table 1.7a provides details of the content and scope of each of the volumes of the EIS.

Figure 1.7a illustrates the Project scope as it relates to Volume B: Airport and Surrounds and Volume C: Dredge and Dredge Movements.

Figure 1.4a: Proposed development



Figure 1.7a: Project scope defined in Volumes B and C

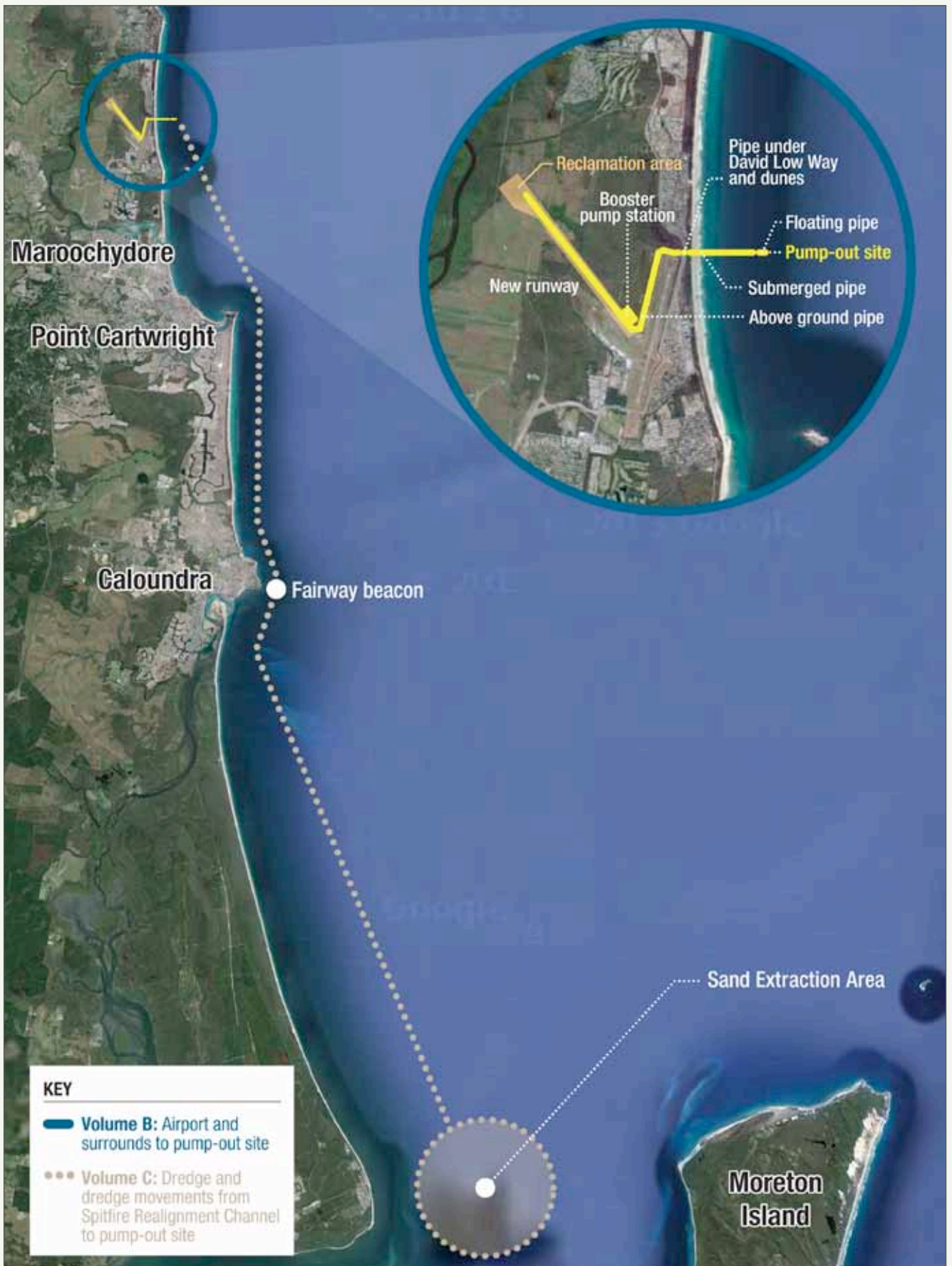


Table 1.7a: Content and scope of EIS volumes

Chapter	Description	Scope
Summary of Major Findings		Summaries that cover all aspects of the EIS and that are able to read as stand-alone documents.
Aircraft Noise Information booklet		
Volume A: Background to the Project		
Chapter A1	Introduction	Volume A describes the background and need for the Project, alternative options that have been considered as well as a description of the Project and how it will be constructed. The planning and legislative context is provided as are details of the stakeholder engagement undertaken to date and the process of environmental assessment outlined in the report.
Chapter A2	Need for the Project	
Chapter A3	Options and Alternatives	
Chapter A4	Project Description	
Chapter A5	Project Construction	
Chapter A6	Planning and Legislation	
Chapter A7	Stakeholder Engagement	
Chapter A8	Sustainability	
Chapter A9	Environmental Impact Assessment Process	
Volume B: Airport and Surrounds		
Chapter B1	Introduction	Volume B describes all of the baseline conditions, impacts and mitigation strategies associated with Project activities that occur in the following locations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Between the dredge mooring point and Marcoola Beach • On the airport site • Around the airport site.
Chapter B2	Land Use and Tenure	
Chapter B3	Geology, Soils and Groundwater	
Chapter B4	Coastal Processes	
Chapter B5	Flooding	
Chapter B6	Surface Water and Hydrology	
Chapter B7	Terrestrial Flora	
Chapter B8	Terrestrial Fauna	
Chapter B9	Aquatic Ecology	
Chapter B10	Marine Ecology	
Chapter B11	Indigenous Cultural Heritage and Native Title	
Chapter B12	Non-Indigenous Cultural Heritage	
Chapter B13	Social Impact	
Chapter B14	Surface Transport	
Chapter B15	Noise and Vibration	
Chapter B16	Air Quality and Green House Gas Emissions	
Chapter B17	Landscape and Visual	
Chapter B18	Climate Change	

Chapter	Description	Scope
Volume C: Dredging and Dredge Movements		
Chapter C1	Introduction	<p>Volume C describes all of the baseline conditions, impacts and mitigation strategies associated with Project activities that occur in the following locations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At Spitfire Realignment Channel where dredging will occur • Transport of the dredge between Spitfire Realignment Channel and the mooring point offshore at Marcoola • At the dredge mooring point.
Chapter C2	Marine Geology	
Chapter C3	Coastal Processes and Water Quality	
Chapter C4	Marine Ecology	
Chapter C5	Shipping Traffic	
Chapter C6	Other Considerations	
Volume D: Airspace and Aircraft Noise		
Chapter D1	Introduction	<p>Volume D describes all of the baseline conditions, impacts and mitigation strategies associated with Project activities that occur as a result of the operation of aircraft in airspace defined for the Project.</p>
Chapter D2	Airspace Architecture and Modes of Operation	
Chapter D3	Aircraft Noise	
Chapter D4	Air Quality and Green House Gas Emissions	
Chapter D5	Social and Visual Impacts	
Volume E: Impact Summary and Management Framework		
Chapter E1	Introduction	<p>Volume E summarises all of the baseline conditions, impacts and mitigation strategies associated with Matters of NES. It also provides details of the management strategies proposed for the Project. The Environmental Management Plan covers all management activities on airport and surrounds. The Dredge Management Plan covers all management activities associated with the dredging process. The Airspace Management Plan covers all proposed management activities associated with the operation of aircraft in the airspace defined for the Project. Project risks are outlined in a separate management plan, as is a summary of Project commitments.</p>
Chapter E2	Matters Of National Environmental Significance	
Chapter E3	Environmental Management Plan	
Chapter E4	Dredge Management Plan	
Chapter E5	Airspace Management Plan	
Chapter E6	Risk Management Plan	
Chapter E7	Summary of Benefits, Impacts, Commitments and Conclusion	

1.8 MAKING A SUBMISSION ON THE EIS

1.8.1 The Public Notification process

The EIS for the Project will be on public display for 30 business days, during which time the Office of the Coordinator-General for the Queensland State Government invites submissions from any interested person or organisation. Your written submission can be received, up to and including the last day of the Public Notification Period, being 5pm Thursday 13 November 2014.

1.8.2 Obtaining a copy of the EIS

Electronic formats

- Visit www.haveyoursay.dsdip.qld.gov.au/coordinatorgeneral/SCAexpansion to download the EIS and to make a submission
- Free copies of the EIS, appendices and supporting information are available on DVD upon request via email to info@SCAexpansion.com.au or call the SCA EIS information line on 1800 210 755
- The EIS is also available for viewing on the Commonwealth Department of the Environment website.

Hard copy formats

- View a printed copy between Wednesday 1 October and Thursday 13 November 2014 at:
 - Sunshine Coast Council Customer Service Areas at:
 - Caloundra: 1 Omrah Avenue, Caloundra
 - Maroochydore: 10 First Avenue, Maroochydore
 - Nambour: Cnr Currie and Bury Streets, Nambour
 - Sunshine Coast Airport Management Office, 10 Electra Lane, Marcoola
 - Sunshine Coast Council Libraries
 - Noosa Shire Council, 9 Pelican Street, Tewantin
 - Noosa Shire Council Libraries
 - Bribie Island Library
 - State Library of Queensland, Cultural Centre, Stanley Place, South Bank, Brisbane
 - National Library of Australia, Parkes Place West, Canberra
 - Department of the Environment, John Gorton Building, Parkes, Canberra.
- A hard copy of the EIS is available for purchase for \$250 (including GST). To purchase a copy of the EIS, email your request to info@SCAexpansion.com.au or call the SCA EIS information line on 1800 210 755.

Supporting information

The Summary of Major Findings can be viewed on the website of the Office of the Coordinator-General at www.haveyoursay.dsdip.qld.gov.au/coordinatorgeneral/SCAexpansion.

This document, as well as the Aircraft Noise Information booklet, fact sheets and an online aircraft noise information tool can be downloaded at www.sunshinecoastairport.com.au or www.sunshinecoast.qld.gov.au

1.8.3 How to make a submission

- Visit www.haveyoursay.dsdip.qld.gov.au/coordinatorgeneral/SCAexpansion to download the EIS and to make a submission online
- Alternatively, you may send submissions via:
 1. Email: SCAexpansion@coordinatorgeneral.qld.gov.au
 2. Post: EIS Project Manager
Sunshine Coast Airport Expansion Project
Coordinated Project Delivery
Office of the Coordinator-General
PO Box 15517
CITY EAST QLD 4002 Australia
 - 3 Fax: +61 7 3452 7486

Please mark submissions made by email, post or fax:

Submission to Sunshine Coast Airport Expansion Project EIS

If you have special communication needs and wish to make a submission, email the EIS Project Manager at SCAexpansion@coordinatorgeneral.qld.gov.au to make alternative arrangements.

Submission checklist

When making a submission:

- Clearly state the matter(s) of concern or interest and list points to help with clarity
- Reference the relevant chapter(s) of the EIS
- Provide factual information relied upon and its source
- Describe the measure you consider would be appropriate to improve the proposal
- Provide sketches or diagrams if they assist to clarify your submission
- Ensure your submission is legible.

Note 1: under section 157O of the State Development and Public Works Organisation Act (SDPWO Act), it is an offence to give the Coordinator-General a document that contains information known to be false or misleading.

For a submission to be 'properly made' under the Act, it must:

- Be made to the Coordinator-General in writing
- Be received on or before the last day of the submission period
- Be signed by each person who makes the submission
- State the name and address of each person who makes the submission
- State the grounds of the submission and facts and circumstances relied on.

Note 2: under the SDPWO Act, the Coordinator-General may accept a submission that is not a 'properly made' submission. However, to ensure you have appeal rights under the *Sustainable Planning Act 2009*, your submission must be 'properly made'.

Privacy

The Coordinator-General is authorised to collect personal information under sections 24 and 29 of the SDPWO Act.

Your personal information will be collected for the purpose of considering your comments, assessing the EIS, completing the EIS process and the performance of functions under the SDPWO Act and other legislation relevant to the proposed Project.

Your personal information will be disclosed to the Project proponent and other government agencies involved in the proposed Project and is also subject to disclosure under the *Right to Information Act 2009*.

Your personal information will not otherwise be disclosed, unless disclosure is authorised or required by law, or is permitted under the *Information Privacy Act 2009*.

Deadline

The deadline for submissions is **5pm on Thursday 13 November 2014**.

1.9 THE NEXT STEPS

Following the formal Public Notification Period, the EIS will be reviewed by SCA and Commonwealth, where appropriate, amended to take into account feedback received. The EIS will then be lodged with the Office of the Coordinator-General for assessment, including a Supplementary Report that will outline where the EIS has been amended as a result of comments received during the Public Notification Period.