



Wildlife Hazard Management Policy

Operational Policy

AFO-AS-POL-08-0001

Version 2

September 2023

MELBOURNE AIRPORT

Foreword

This **Operational Policy** has been prepared by Melbourne Airport to meet the applicable requirements of the *Melbourne Airport Manual*, the *APAC Safety Management Standard* and also the *Part 139 (Aerodromes) Manual of Standards 2019*, made under division 139.C.4 of the *Civil Aviation Safety Regulations (CASR) 1998*.

Any external references made to regulations, standards and documents should be read in conjunction with this document. As these external references are in force from time to time and may be subject to change, the latest issues/amendments should be checked prior to using this document.

APAM will review this document regularly to ensure as far as possible that the information contained within is current, accurate and suitable for the intended purpose. Should any changes be found necessary, or where compliance with this **Operational Policy** becomes impractical or impossible, the Head of Airfield is to be advised immediately.

Head of Airfield
Aviation
Australian Pacific Airports Melbourne

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Definitions

Please refer to the [Aeronautical Information Package](#) and the [CASA Website](#) for commonly used Aviation terms and abbreviations.

For additional definitions specific to Melbourne Airport, please visit www.melbourneairport.com.au/glossary.

Change Summary

Version number	Date	Change Description
1	9 June 2022	Initial issue
2	05 September 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Change to Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA) • WHMC meeting changed to quarterly

1. Introduction

1.1. Background

Melbourne Airport prepares a Wildlife Hazard Management Plan (WHMP) that meets the requirements of subparagraph 139.105 to Civil Aviation Safety Regulation (CASR) 1998 and the CASR Part 139 (Aerodromes) Manual of Standards (MOS) 2019 (herein referred to as Part 139 MOS). The WHMP is a Commercial-in-Confidence document and is not for public release.

The Wildlife Hazard Management Policy (this Operational Policy) has been prepared for Airport Stakeholders to communicate key information on how Melbourne Airport approaches wildlife hazard management as well as the expectation Melbourne Airport has for Airport Stakeholders in supporting the WHMP.

1.2. Rationale

1.2.1. Aim

The Melbourne Airport WHMP and this Wildlife Hazard Management Policy aim to reduce the frequency and severity of strikes by focusing management efforts on species and habitats that constitute significant hazards to aircraft operations at Melbourne Airport.

This policy specifically aims to outline the roles and responsibilities Airport Stakeholders have in supporting the Melbourne Airport Wildlife Hazard Management Plan.

1.2.2. Authority

This **Operational Policy** has been prepared by Australia Pacific Airports (Melbourne) Pty Limited, hereafter referred to as Melbourne Airport.

1.2.3. Scope

The **Operational Policy** titled **Wildlife Hazard Management Policy AFO-AS-POL-08-0001** applies to all airport stakeholders and those working on the Melbourne Airport precinct (airside/landside). This document also provides guidance material to external stakeholders within 13km of the aerodrome. Melbourne Airport has a regulatory requirement to mitigate wildlife risks to aviation operations up to 13kms away.

1.2.4. Alteration

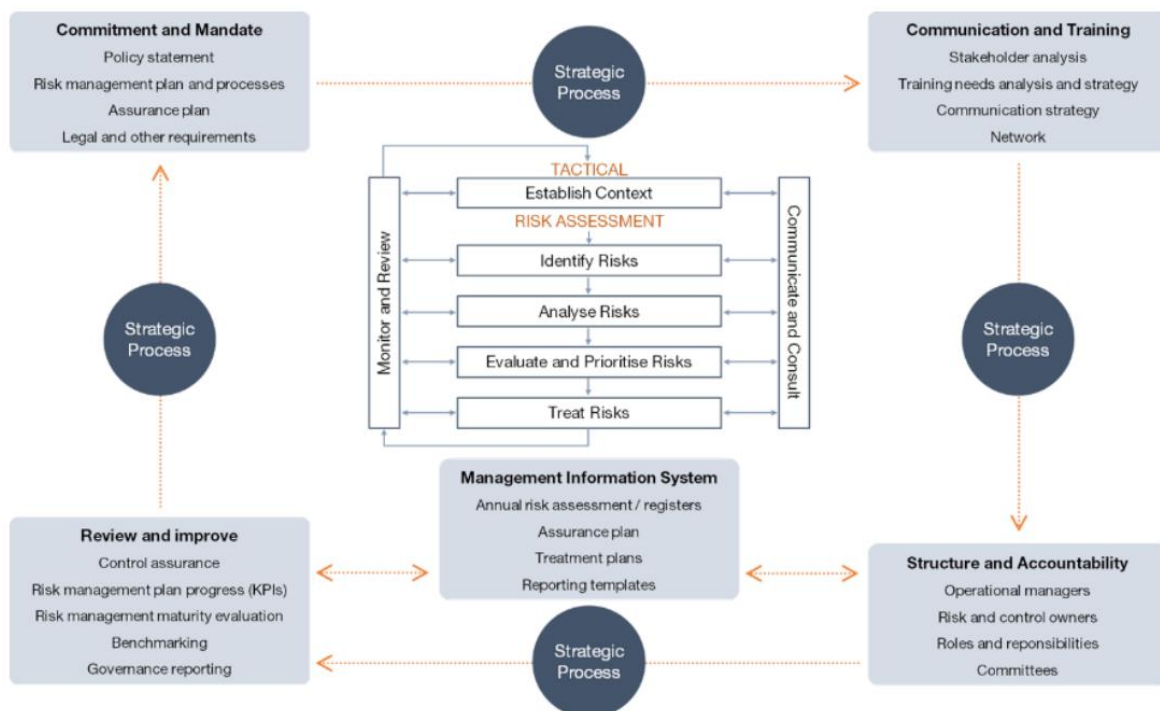
Melbourne Airport may alter or vary this **Wildlife Hazard Management Policy** at any time. A reference to the **Wildlife Hazard Management Policy** shall be a reference to this policy as distributed, published or otherwise declared to be in force by Melbourne Airport from time to time.

1.2.5. No Derogation

Nothing in the **Wildlife Hazard Management Policy** shall derogate from any responsibility otherwise imposed by law, agreement or other policy, procedure or rule imposed by Melbourne Airport with respect to the same or similar subject matter as this policy.

2. Strategy

Melbourne Airport operates in accordance with its Wildlife Hazard Management Plan (WHMP), which forms part of an overall strategic program to reduce wildlife hazard risk.



Melbourne Airport appoints a wildlife consultant to provide specialist expertise in delivering the WHMP.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

Managing the wildlife strike risk requires a cooperative effort amongst stakeholders. The below sections outline the roles and responsibilities of all the key aerodrome and stakeholder personnel.

3.1. Aircraft Operators

Aircraft operators are expected to:

- Promptly inform Air Traffic Control (ATC) or the Senior Airside Safety Officers (SASO) (Car 2) on +61 418 335 985 of all wildlife strikes or hazardous conditions.
- Relay evidence of strikes including damage, carcasses, feathers or other material to Airside Safety Officer (ASO) for collection. It is critical that no DNA evidence is removed until a sample has been collected by an ASO.
- Provide details of strikes to ASOs.
- Maintain awareness of this policy and forward recommendations to the Airfield Operations Manager.
- Where appropriate, consider changing operations to avoid hazardous times and locations that have been promulgated via NOTAM.
- If a member, attend the Local Runway Safety Team (LRST) meetings (refer [Section 4.2 – Local Runway Safety Team](#)).
- Liaise with Melbourne Airport to ensure hangars are assessed for wildlife use, such as Feral Pigeon and Common Starling, and wildlife exclusion devices installed.

3.2. Airport Tenants

Airport tenants are expected to:

- Ensure waste is disposed of appropriately and bins and other waste storage facilities are maintained with closed lids or other suitable covering wherever practicable. Where appropriate, include measures to reduce wildlife attraction in Waste Management Plans.
- Regularly monitor infrastructure for nests or roosts and report observations of bird nesting or roosting in all infrastructure to the Airfield Operations department (airsidesafety@melair.com.au)
- Install and maintain wildlife exclusion devices, such as netting and anti-perching spikes, to prevent wildlife access to building roof spaces, ledges, eaves, or other building structures that can support nesting, perching, or roosting birds.
- Ensure all current landscaping meets the [Melbourne Airport Landscaping Guidelines](#).
- Where tenants have land holdings, ensure grass and weeds are managed by removing seed heads on grass and spray flowering weeds (if present).
- Where appropriate, install signage in various locations across the site to deter the public from feeding wildlife.
- Turn external building lights off when not in use to reduce the insect attraction.
- Attend the Airside Safety Committee.

3.3. Melbourne Airport Staff and Contractors

Melbourne Airport staff and contractors are expected to:

- Ensure waste is disposed of appropriately and bins and other waste storage facilities are maintained with closed lids or other suitable covering wherever practicable.
- Report observations of increased wildlife activity or identified attractants to ASOs.

3.4. Construction Sites

Construction works can attract wildlife because exposed earth facilitates foraging for invertebrates and seeds. Earthworks can also cause temporary pools of water to form during site works, and these in turn attract invertebrates and the birds that feed on them. Construction sites generate waste, and an accumulation of waste will attract wildlife. Melbourne Airport ensures that contractors, both on the airside and in areas adjacent to the airport, strictly follow procedures to restrict the attractiveness of a construction site to wildlife and especially birds.

Construction management plan must include management of wildlife hazards including monitoring and mitigation measures.

Construction management plan must include water and waste management to reduce the availability of foraging and loafing opportunities.

Specifically, contractors must ensure that no edible matter is made available to wildlife, e.g.:

- High standards of cleanliness are required, and all edible waste must be disposed of in wildlife-proof bins;
- Feeding of wildlife is prohibited;
- All landscaping should use only clean fill which is free of edible matter, the area of exposed soil should be kept as small as possible and planted out as quickly as possible; and
- All plantings must be limited to approved plant species that do not attract wildlife.

Standing water is not to be made available to wildlife:

- Drainage must be adequate and no exposed, standing water should remain longer than 48 hours after rainfall;
- Unavoidable accumulations of water that will exist for longer than 48 hours after rainfall must be netted over or otherwise made unavailable to wildlife through placement of cobbles and pebbles or some other means. All drainage, building and landscaping plans must be sent to Melbourne Airport for review for attractiveness to wildlife; and
- Liaise with Melbourne Airport for Works Safety Officers (WSO)/ASOs to disperse wildlife.

If aggregations of animals considered to be hazardous by Melbourne Airport do occur as a result of a contractor's operations, the contractor will be expected to take action to remedy the situation.

4. Stakeholder Engagement

Melbourne Airport achieves an effective and integrated approach to wildlife hazard management with input from various stakeholders, both on and off the airport site. Melbourne Airport runs multiple meetings to manage relationships with stakeholders via:

- Wildlife Hazard Management Committee (WHMC);
- Local Runway Safety Team (LRST); and
- Internal stakeholders and local authorities on an 'as needs' basis.

4.1. Wildlife Hazard Management Committee

The WHMC is a **quarterly** internal Melbourne Airport meeting with the appointed wildlife consultant and pest management provider, to discuss current wildlife hazards at the aerodrome with various internal stakeholders. As part of the Aviation Safety Management System (SMS) framework, the WHMC is also used to escalate safety concerns to the Aviation Safety and Risk Compliance Committee (ASRC). The meeting also has the following functions:

- Share information, identify risks and ensure stakeholders are engaged in collaborative management of these risks.
- Discuss relevant wildlife issues and management practices.
- Review and approve the WHMP.
- Review wildlife strike reports, cull reports, bird count reports, and overall strike statistics and discuss strategies for improvement as required.
- Review performance against Key Performance Indicators.
- Discuss on- and off-airport strategies to manage wildlife hazard.

4.2. Local Runway Safety Team

The LRST, held quarterly, is a hazard-specific working group that has been established to promote visibility and continuous improvement in safety performance, specific to runway safety at Melbourne Airport. Attendees include Air Services Australia (ASA), airline representatives, and the Australian and International Pilots Association (AIPA) by invitation. The meetings are managed by Melbourne Airport.

The LRST has wildlife strikes as a standing agenda and discusses past performance and upcoming seasonal trends. The meeting also has the following wildlife functions:

- Promote the establishment or targeted mitigation strategies for wildlife hazard management and runway safety.
- Monitor the effectiveness of mitigation strategies for runway safety.
- Bringing together industry stakeholders which share the common goal of enhancing runway safety in a collaborative forum.

4.3. Liaison with Local Authorities for Wildlife Hazard Mitigation

The Melbourne Airport Government, Public Relations and Environment department assist the Airfield Operations department with liaising with local authorities for the implementation of the WHMP outside of the Melbourne Airport precinct.

The appointed wildlife consultant also monitors land use that pose an attraction to wildlife within a 13km radius of the airport boundary.

Liaison with local authorities in regards to planning applications is the responsibility of the Melbourne Airport Statutory Planning department. Upon receiving a planning application, Melbourne Airport will engage with local authorities to ensure that future land uses, and development proposal scan be carefully considered in relation to Guideline C of the [National Airports Safeguarding Framework](#).

Melbourne Airport Statutory Planning department also regularly checks council planning registers for any applications Council that are not directly referred to Melbourne Airport but may require consideration in relation to Guideline C of the [National Airports Safeguarding Framework](#).

5. Permits

Melbourne Airport holds various permits to manage wildlife hazards on airport land. These include authority to:

- Control Protected Wildlife (*Wildlife Act 1975*) issued by the Department of **Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA)**.
- Destroy Nests and Eggs of Protected Wildlife (*Wildlife Act 1975*) issued by **DEECA**.
- Destroy, Posses, and Disport of Protected Wildlife and to Use a Gun to Gain Possession of Protected Wildlife (*Wildlife Act 1975*) issued **DEECA**.

6. Wildlife Hazard Assessment

Melbourne Airport uses two risk assessment methods to assess the risks posed by wildlife to aircraft operations in accordance with the WHMP and the Part 139 MOS:

- The Melbourne Airport Corporate Risk Matrix to identify the wildlife strike risk to airport operations.
- Species specific risk assessment models (based on the wildlife consultant's methodology) to identify risk rankings for wildlife species. The assessment is based on strike history (sourced from Melbourne Airport and ATSB) and airside wildlife surveys, including wildlife numbers, behaviour, and presence in critical areas of the aerodrome.

Hazards are identified using a broad assessment of the aerodrome's hazard profile that affect Melbourne Airport's wildlife strike risk profile including:

- Airside wildlife attracting areas, facilities and activities;
- Landside wildlife attracting areas facilities and activities;

- Off-aerodrome wildlife attracting sites; facilities and activities; and
- Analysis of Wildlife Biologist surveys.

Melbourne Airport has also engaged a specialist wildlife consultant to conduct an annual Wildlife Hazard Assessment (WHA), as required by the WHMP. The WHA evaluates program progress and analyses program data to help inform and improve the WHMP. Trigger events or risk changes (e.g. increased aircraft operations, significant changes in wildlife numbers, off-aerodrome developments) may require more frequent assessments.

7. Wildlife Management

7.1. Detection and Monitoring

Assessing the actual or potential wildlife hazard prior to flight and landing informs aircrew of potential strike risks and informs decision-making to mitigate the risk of a strike. In accordance with Part 139 MOS, routine detection of hazards at Melbourne Airport is achieved via the following:

- Serviceability inspections (runway, taxiway, apron and fence line);
- Wildlife patrols (routine and post-strike); and
- Flora assessments and wildlife counts.

7.2. Wildlife Hazard Communication

In the event of a significant increase in, or concentration of, wildlife hazards on or near the airport which constitute a danger to aircraft that cannot be immediately managed, in accordance with the Part 139 MOS, Melbourne Airport will:

- Notify ATC as soon as practicable;
- Request the immediate issue of a NOTAM;
- Log the hazard into the appropriate management system;
- Issue a Wildlife Hazard Notification;
- Request ASA update information on the ATIS; and/or
- Submit an incident report into the Melbourne Airport Safety Information Management System (SIMS) (if required).

Known or seasonal hazards are reported in writing to the AIS provider for publication in the AIP-ERSA.

7.3. Strike Reporting

Melbourne Airport records all strikes detected or notified of and sends reports to the Australian Transport Safety Bureau (ATSB). The strike data is analysed for trends by the appointed wildlife consultant. Strikes directly reported to the ATSB and not Melbourne Airport may result in Melbourne Airport being unable to take any follow up action.

Aircraft operators and engineers are expected to notify Melbourne Airport of strike as soon as practical.

Efforts are made to identify the species involved in strikes. In cases when the collection of biological remains is required, staff strictly adhere to health and safety requirements. Carcasses from bird strikes, or carcasses found on airport that may be the result of bird strike, are stored in a freezer for identification by the appointed wildlife consultant. Stomach contents may be examined for indicators of food attractants on airport. Where only remnants of strike victims are available, material is collected for DNA analysis or feather identification.

Melbourne Airport will investigate significant strikes and aircraft operators, flight crews, and ATC may be called upon for further information as part of the investigation.

If an aircraft operator cleans the strike remains prior to Melbourne Airport taking a sample, no further investigation/analysis can be completed.

7.4. Hazard Mitigation

The Melbourne Airport WHMP promotes a sustained integrated approach that includes a range of non-lethal and lethal methods. Lethal control of animals is not considered an effective method for large-scale wildlife hazard management as an isolated management tool; however, it is effective as part of a broader integrated program.

Melbourne Airport personnel lethally control wildlife, as required, under the appropriate authority issued by DEECA, and the *Firearms Act 1996*. This licence allows the lethal control of species that pose a threat to aircraft operational safety.

Melbourne Airport performs egg and nest removal where required under the appropriate authority issued by DEECA.

Melbourne Airport uses habitat management measures, including exclusion devices to manage wildlife hazards by preventing access to food or other resources. Grassland areas are attractive to many of the species that pose risks to aircraft at Melbourne Airport, as such, the grass is frequently mowed and to reduce the presence of hazardous species.

8. Further Information

For further information with regards to this **Operational Policy**, please contact:

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