

CBC reinforces its strong support for a curfew-free Canberra Airport

Canberra Business Council today reiterated its strong support for a curfew-free Canberra Airport given its critical importance to the economy of the National Capital and southern NSW region.

“The Council has repeatedly expressed its overarching position that the ability of Canberra International Airport to further expand its aviation capability, including direct international flights and, potentially, a freight hub, is critically important to the future economic development of Canberra, Queanbeyan and the wider Capital Region”, Canberra Business Council CEO, Ms Chris Faulks said today. “The Council strongly believes that for this potential to be fully realised the airport must remain curfew-free.”

Ms Faulks was responding to an ACT Greens draft Notice of Motion, introduced today into the Legislative Assembly, in which Mr Rattenbury called for the imposition of a curfew at the airport. This follows Mr Rattenbury’s comments in *The Canberra Times* on 19 November this year that he believed ‘a curfew would have no business impact on Canberra.’

Ms Faulks stated, “For the ACT Greens not to appreciate the potential business, economic and investment impacts of a curfew at the Canberra Airport suggests that they do not understand the ACT economy and have no appreciation of the impact of the long-term leasing arrangements for major airports across Australia”.

“I have written to the Speaker of the ACT Legislative Assembly expressing the Council’s concern over the Greens’ position in relation to a curfew at the airport.”

Ms Faulks continued, “This is not just the view of Canberra Business Council and the ACT business community. The Federal Government has stated, as recently as 30 October 2010, that ‘*Canberra Airport is an important national infrastructure asset. It is an essential transport hub for the local region and contributes significantly to the national economy....The introduction of operational restrictions such as a curfew would impact on the strategic role of the Airport in the aviation network for the eastern seaboard; impede the future planned growth and expansion of the airport and adversely impact the economy of the National Capital and southern NSW region.*’

The Council believes that the imposition of a curfew would almost certainly limit the support for Canberra Airport to become an overflow airport for Sydney and curtail plans for international flights and freight operations. Future development of transport infrastructure and related businesses in the entire area between the Majura and Jerrabomberra Valleys, known as the Eastern Broadacre Area, would also be jeopardised.

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