



# Essendon Fields Airport Curfew Factsheet

## Purpose of the Curfew

The Essendon Fields Airport curfew was put in place to minimise the impact of aircraft noise on nearby residents. A limited number of aircraft types are allowed to operate during the curfew, including emergency service aircraft, and any aircraft that need to land for safety reasons. On average, there are six aircraft movements per night during the curfew, and the majority of these are emergency services aircraft or aeromedical movements.

## The Legislation

Essendon Fields Airport has a curfew in place under the [Air Navigation \(Essendon Fields Airport\) Regulations 2001](#) (the Regulations), which apply to aircraft operations between 11.00pm and 6.00am (local time) and include restrictions on certain aircraft operations. The Regulations allow the Department of Infrastructure Regional Development and Cities (the Department) to permit operators to take-off or land during the curfew (a curfew dispensation).

## What can operate?

The Regulations do not prevent all aircraft movements during the curfew period. They limit aircraft movements between 11.00pm and 6.00am by restricting the types of aircraft that can operate, the number of flights permitted and the types of operation allowed. This enables a number of vital aviation services to be provided while limiting the effect of aircraft noise during the curfew period.

## Emergency Aircraft and Aircraft Emergencies

The vital, often lifesaving operations carried out by emergency services aircraft, including police, air ambulance and search and rescue aircraft are too important to stop operating during the curfew. Aeromedical aircraft also operate during the curfew delivering plasma supplies, organ donation and patient transfer services unavailable on air ambulance aircraft.

In addition, any aircraft involved in an emergency is allowed to land, and take-off to resume that interrupted flight, during the curfew. This includes flights where the aircraft has insufficient fuel to divert to another airport, or where the aircraft needs to land to ensure the safety of the aircraft, or anyone on board.



Victorian Air Ambulance and Victorian Police Helicopters. Photos courtesy of Essendon Fields Airport Pty Ltd

## Helicopters

A helicopter may land at, or take-off from, Essendon Fields Airport during a curfew period if it meets international noise standards.

## Jet Aircraft

Jet Aircraft with a maximum take-off weight (MTOW) of more than 45,000kgs cannot take-off from or land at Essendon Fields Airport at any time, unless the aircraft is involved in an emergency, or the Department grants permission to operate. Aircraft need to provide detailed information in advance in order to be granted permission to operate at Essendon Fields Airport. This includes an assessment of whether there are alternative airports available, security requirements for passengers or freight, whether there are specialised facilities at Essendon Fields Airport, e.g. maintenance and engineering, and other specialised facilities such as handling and parking.

## Propeller-driven Aircraft

Propeller-driven aircraft are used to deliver essential goods and services, including medical services, to regional and remote locations in Australia. Propeller-driven aircraft with an MTOW under 8,618kgs (small aircraft) are permitted to operate during the curfew.

Larger propeller-driven aircraft must comply with noise levels set in the Regulations in order to operate during the curfew period. Operators of Regular Public Transport aircraft are discouraged from operating during the curfew period.



Photo courtesy of Essendon Fields Airport Pty Ltd

## Use of Essendon Fields Airport as an Alternate Airport

Under the Regulations, Essendon Fields Airport is not to be nominated or used as a planned alternate airport. The [Noise Abatement Procedures](#) in the Aeronautical Information Publication used by pilots do not allow the use of Essendon Fields Airport as an unplanned alternate.

## Curfew Dispensations

In exceptional circumstances, an operator may apply to the Department for approval to take-off or land during the curfew through a curfew dispensation. A number of factors are taken into account in considering requests for permission to take-off or land during the curfew at Essendon Fields Airport including:

- Whether a nearby airport is available or reasonable (Moorabbin and Melbourne airports are nearby and do not have a curfew)
- Whether the cause of the delay is within the control of the operator or could have been foreseen
- By what margin the movement falls into the curfew period (i.e. is it shortly after 11.00pm or shortly before 6.00am)
- The number of passengers involved, and the severity of the likely hardship.

## Fly Neighbourly Program

Under the Fly Neighbourly Program, aircraft operators at Essendon Fields Airport sign a Fly Neighbourly Agreement and agree to adopt procedures and practices to reduce the impact of aircraft noise on the surrounding community.

While aircraft flight paths and responses to noise created by aircraft are primarily the responsibility of Airservices Australia, Essendon Fields Airport takes a proactive approach to noise impacts on the community. Currently, 21 operators have signed the Fly Neighbourly Agreement.

Initiatives undertaken by Essendon Fields Airport in conjunction with the Community Aviation Consultation Group include the implementation of the Fly Neighbourly Agreement, the first of its kind in Australia.

## For More Information

This fact sheet is intended as a guide. For detailed criteria on operations, please review the [Regulations](#) and the [Dispensation Guidelines](#) on the Department website: [Curfew Information for Essendon Fields Airport](#)