FLINDERS ISLAND AIRPORT
CHANGES TO APPROACH PROCEDURES

Airservices will implement changes for some aircraft arriving to Flinders Island Airport from August 2019.

Background

Since 2007, the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) has encouraged its members to implement approach procedures with vertical (straight up and down) guidance to improve safety for aircraft arriving to and landing at airports.

One way to do this is to make it possible for aircraft to use Baro-VNAV technology.

Baro-VNAV is a technology available on most modern aircraft. It allows aircraft to land more smoothly, without using ground based navigation equipment. It also reduces the workload for pilots and decreases their reliance on visual assessments, making landing safer.

Airservices has worked with the Civil Aviation Safety Authority (CASA) and identified more than 100 locations for the roll out of Baro-VNAV approach procedures across Australia.

Some of these locations require changes to their existing approach procedures in order for Baro-VNAV to be introduced.

What will change at Flinders Island Airport?

The introduction of Baro-VNAV requires some small changes to existing procedures for the secondary runway (Runway 05/23) at Flinders Island Airport.

Runways can be used in two opposite directions, and each direction is named with a two digit number based on the two different directions they face on a compass. The runway at Flinders Island Airport is called Runway 05/23 because it runs between 047° and 227° from North.

The change includes:

1. Realignment and lowering of the flight path for approaching aircraft to Runway 05

The flight path for aircraft approaching Runway 05 will be realigned which will result in a shift in distance of up to 3 kilometres, however this will be over water.

The height for aircraft starting their approach to Runway 05 will be lowered earlier. Currently aircraft remain at 3,800 feet before beginning their final descent to land. The new procedure will keep aircraft at 3,800 feet but then will add a lower step of 3,250 feet (a reduction of 550 feet) before aircraft begin their final descent.

2. Relocation of the "missed approach point"

A "missed approach point" is the latest safe point at which an aircraft can make a missed approach. A missed approach (also called an aborted landing), is a safe manoeuvre where an aircraft stops its approach to the runway when landing. It is most commonly used in poor weather conditions, such as strong winds. It can also be used to avoid debris on the runway, an aircraft (or vehicle) that has not yet left the runway or an aircraft that has been slow to take-off.

Currently the missed approach point is 2 kilometres prior to the runway threshold (an area marked on the runway to show the start of where aircraft can land and take off). The introduction of Baro-VNAV means the missed approach point can be relocated to the runway threshold.

This may cause some aircraft doing missed approaches to fly on a slightly different track, with a maximum shift of 250 metres over land.

3. Lowering of the "circling minima"

A "circling minima" is used by aircraft that are doing a type of instrument approach which requires pilots to visually align the aircraft with the runway. Each procedure includes a straight-in approach (aligned with the runway to land straight ahead) and a circling approach (flying within a set area above the aerodrome).The "minima" is the lowest possible altitude by which the pilot must be able to see the runway. Baro-VNAV approaches will reduce the frequency of an aircraft needing to either circle or complete a missed approach.

The altitude by which the pilot must be able to see the runway will reduce to approximately 1,270 feet (from 1,470 feet) for circling approaches depending on the type, or category, of aircraft.

There will be no change to flight paths for departures, the number of aircraft movements or aircraft types at Flinders Island Airport as a result of these changes.

What will this mean for the community?

Residents near the coastline of Whitemark and Blue Rocks may notice some arriving aircraft flying on slightly different tracks and at lower altitudes of 3,250 feet. This is not expected to result in a noticeable change to noise levels and changes will take place over water.

Residents in these areas will continue to see approximately 6 arriving aircraft on a busy day.

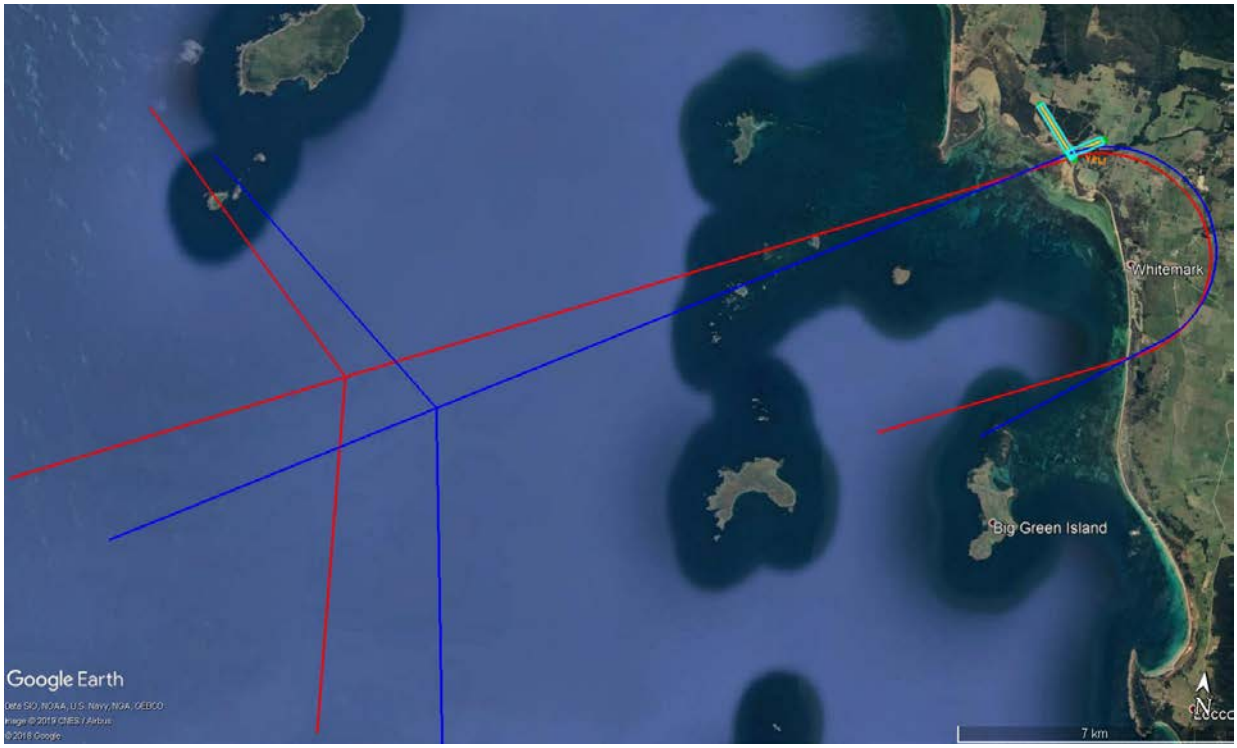

Figure 1: Proposed amended procedure for approaches to Runway 05 at Flinders Island Airport

Key: Existing arrival flight path Proposed arrival flight path Runways

Residents west of Whitemark may notice a slight change in position of up to 250 metres on occasions when the missed approach point is used by arriving aircraft. These aircraft will remain flying at current altitudes. Missed approaches occur infrequently and communities may expect to see approximately 2 to 5 missed approaches for every 1,000 arrivals.

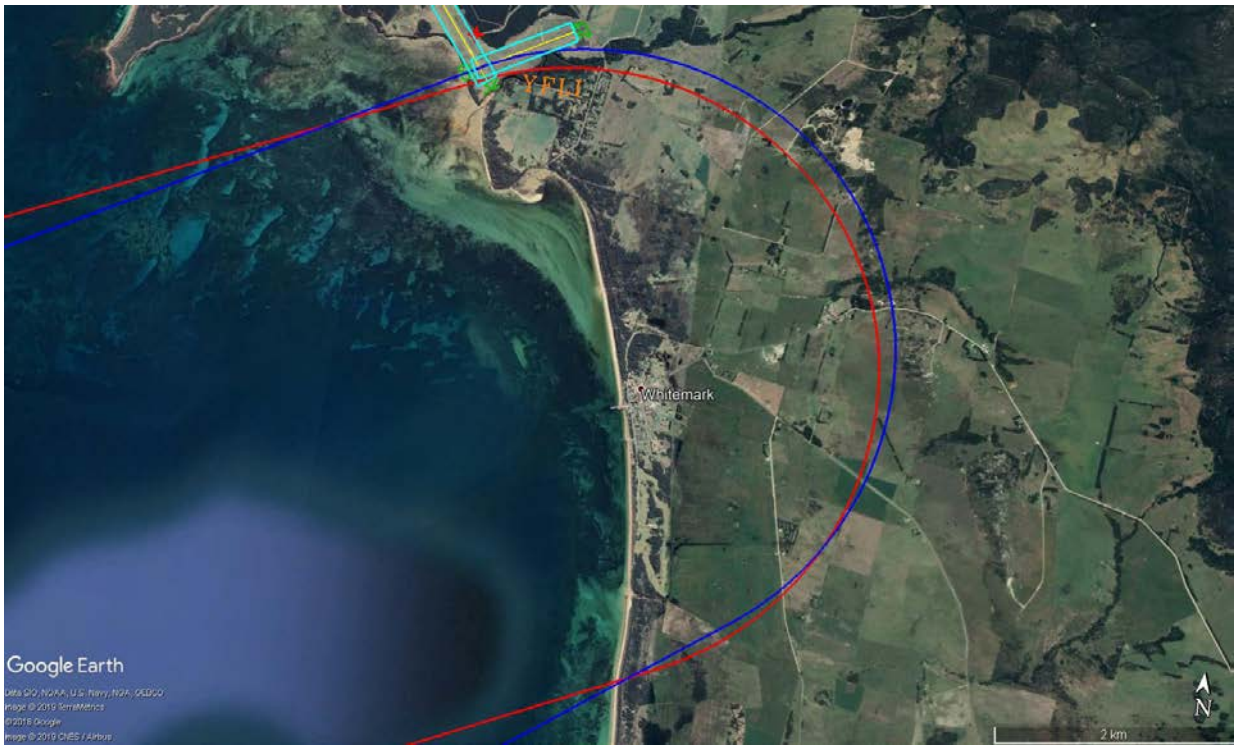

Figure 2: Proposed amended procedure for missed approaches to Runway 05 at Flinders Island Airport

Key: Existing missed approach Proposed missed approach Runways

Residents in rural properties to the south of Whitemark and north of Blue Rocks may notice aircraft that use the circling areas flying at slightly lower altitudes, while remaining above 1,270 feet. Aircraft at these lower altitudes may increase noise levels by approximately 1.3 dB(A), but this is not considered to be noticeable by the human ear.

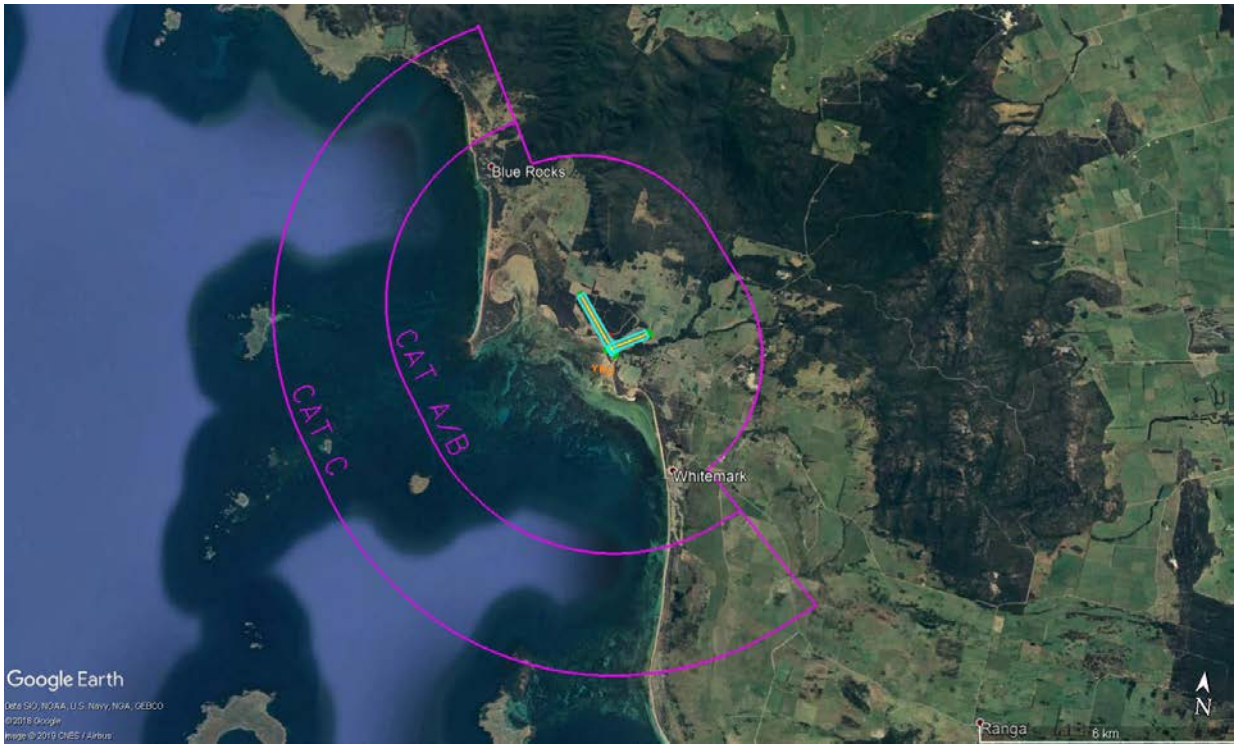

Figure 3: Circling areas for aircraft (Cat C area only to be lowered)

Key: Existing and proposed arrival flight path Runways

When do we want to make these changes?

Airservices plans to implement these changes from August 2019.

How can I get more information?

For general information on flight path changes, contact the Noise Complaints and Information Service (NCIS) on:

- 1800 802 584 (free call)
- 131 450 (interpreter service) 

General feedback can be provided:

- Via online form at: https://feedback.emsbk.com/asa
- Mail to Feedback c/o Noise Complaints and Information Service, PO BOX 211 Mascot NSW 1460