

Update No. 12 – 13th December, 2018 – What’s the latest!

Dear Members and Volunteers - Here is the latest update to keep you informed about our fight against the building of a Western Sydney Airport.

What’s been done

The **‘Show us the Fight Paths’ Rally** held at Luddenham on 7th October was a huge success. Despite being hurriedly organised, over 200 people turned up to the event. While some attending were the ‘old faithfuls’ it was inspiring to see so many new people there, from the Luddenham and Bringelly areas.

RAWSA’s Janie Burry introduced speakers Mark Greenhill (B.M. Labor Mayor), Senator Mehreen Faruqi (NSW Greens Senator) and Stephen Bali (M.P. for Blacktown). Also attending were Daniel Myles (B.M. Liberal Councillor and Shae Foenander (B.M. Independent Councillor), as well as State Candidates Antony Lewis (Greens) and Mark Tyndall (Independent).

Thanks must go to Janie, Jenny, Roger, Denise, Linda, Deb, Jackie, Dianne and Matthew for their efforts in letterboxing notices for the event and a big thanks to all those people who attended.



Mayor Greenhill urges continuing the fight



Senator Faruqi outlines environmental impacts



MP Bali discusses social inequity issues



Attending crowd filled the Luddenham Hall to overflowing, with many listening outside



Senator Faruqi explains issues to media

RAWSA Canberra Protest - Eight RAWSA members travelled to Canberra and protested outside Parliament House on 3rd & 4th of December. The protest was sponsored by the lack of reply to multiple letters sent to Opposition Leader Bill Shorten, in regard to his address (Hub Springwood 2016) where he gave a commitment to review Labor’s support for WSA, if the job numbers didn’t stack up.

Well, the job numbers ‘don’t stack up’ and have been highly exaggerated as shown in various media releases and in particular, documented within the “Jobs for the West Report’ released in August 2018, which shows that during construction, there is likely to be only 140 jobs for Western Sydney residents and only about 800 jobs for Western Sydney residents if the airport becomes operational.

Unfortunately, there were both negative and positive outcomes from the protest. On the down side and despite a huge effort by Janie Burry to get them along – no Media attended. Mr. Shorten was also a ‘no show’ despite there being a break from Parliament on the second morning of the protest. Bob Katter MP, walked past and smugly commented that he had worked hard to support the WSA project. Good thing he is Queensland based!

On the upside, Greens Senator Mehreen Faruqi visited our protest group and addressed us at some length about; continuing the fight; social inequities of the project; Govt. effort to fast track WSA and the health and environmental degradation that the project would produce. We were also thankful for the visit by Macquarie MP Susan Templeman, who outlined the difficulty she was having in fighting against the WSA project within the Labor Party. Our protest was visited by Eric Kerr, a young man on his way to see Anthony Albanese, about his recent Labor endorsement in a Victorian federal seat. Eric wanted to know why we were protesting and was very supportive of our ‘Trains Not Planes’ banner. He recognises that High Speed Rail is a must for the future prosperity and transport needs of Regional Australia and is trying to do all he can to support the banner’s theme.



Banner – Bill Shorten, keep your word to Blue Mnts community



Banner – promoting HSR instead of another polluting airport



Greens Senator Mehreen Faruqi explains why she supports us



This skywriter started the right way but didn't add 'AIRPORT'.

[FOWSA persists in excluding the public as observers](#)

On October 18th, RAWSA President Jenny Dollin and myself, met with FOWSA representatives, Jo Bromilow (Blue Mnts FOWSA Rep) and Michael Gregory (Dept. Infrastructure, WSA Unit) to again discuss the need for FOWSA to open up their meetings to members of the public to attend as observers.

We put as forcefully as possible the fact that, as FOWSA continues to meet in 'secret' without any public scrutiny, then the FOWSA objectives of engaging with the community will be totally undermined as will the community confidence in FOWSA itself.

This discussion was met with a counter proposal that FOWSA might consider allowing a RAWSA member to attend meetings and take information back to the community. We rejected this concept on the basis that;

- RAWSA won't carry out FOWSA's role of community engagement on FOWSA issues;
- RAWSA is not interested in helping FOWSA bring WSA to fruition; and that
- All FOWSA meetings should be open to any and all members of the interested public.

From the start, it was quite apparent that FOWSA members had been selected for their pro-airport approach, which does not instil confidence that FOWSA deliberations will be carried out from a balanced perspective. Where flight path design clashes with community or environmental impacts, which do you reckon will prevail in the mind of FOWSA members??????

The RAWSA management committee has discussed the issue of FOWSA bias and the lack of public scrutiny caused by the closed forum format of FOWSA meetings. We have concluded that unless FOWSA does allow public attendance at all of its meetings, there seems little point in further liaison.

[Focusing on High Speed Rail](#)

In the lead up to both the State and Federal elections in 2019, RAWSA believes we will all be hearing a lot more discussion about HSR. Premier Berejiklian has already talked about a 'HSR' link from the proposed WSA to the Sydney CBD. However, the term is being used to confuse people and in some way divert attention from the airport issues. What the Premier really means is slightly faster 'snail-rail'.

To ensure we all have a clear idea, RAWSA Vice President, Dr Tony Green has kindly compiled the following information:

The definitions that are normally used for discussing High Speed rail are currently the following (It keeps changing as the highest commercial speeds increase):

Ultra-High Speed Rail (UHSR) - Speeds >350km/hr. Systems coming into operation from next year in Europe and China will operate at 400km/hr. Commercial speeds are currently 350km/hr

High Speed Rail (HSR) - Speeds between 200km/hr and 350km/hr. This includes older high speed rail systems and modern outer suburb rail systems across Europe. The lower speed of 200km/hr is suitable for orbital rail in outer western Sydney.

Conventional Rail (CR) - Speeds <200km/hr. Most systems worldwide operate at 120km/hr and below for passenger and freight. The Metro system in Sydney is being designed to operate at 80km/hr similar to the wider rail network.

Note the speeds on a system are limited by frequency of stops and by not exceeding certain acceleration limits to ensure a comfortable ride. The stops on the Govt. proposed metro would not allow for a much higher speed. The stops on an outer Sydney orbital rail network will allow for 200km/hr in comfort.

[Jobs for the West Working Group](#)

On 14th Nov. Dr Ian Watson and several members of the Working Group, travelled to NSW Parliament House and gave a briefing on the *Jobs for the West Report* to Greens Members of the Parliament. An offer will also be made early in 2019 for briefings to Liberal Parliamentary Members and to the Sustainable Australia Party. Should you have missed the reference in earlier Newsletters, the Final Report is now available on-line at: http://jobsforthewest.co/publications/main_report.pdf.

[Govt stages 'sod turning' media event](#)

You will have seen the Govt's latest announcement about construction of WSA in the media. I think this makes it the fifth time, in the last 2 years where they have announced that airport construction has commenced. The Govt is absolutely desperate to convince everyone that WSA can't be stopped, that they staged the sod turning event.

It is true that they have started levelling the site, but this in itself is a huge and time consuming task. Nothing that has been done or is being done at the site prevents the airport being canned in favour of High Speed Rail or other alternate uses. Although 'conveniently packaged' as an airport benefit, even the work along Northern Road is nothing more than, what should have been done 15 years ago to meet the traffic needs of the urban growth areas, that Govt. itself decided to put there.

Airport proponents have to face State and Federal elections soon, so we will keep pushing on with our efforts to stop the project. By the way, the first sod turning at the site was back in the 1990s – just before the plan was scrapped by the then Govt. and Opposition.

[Don't Mess with the West Rally](#)

RAWSA members have been invited to participate in another of these events where protestors on multiple issues (M4 Tolls, No Airport, Raising the dam. etc) stage a joint protest. It will be held in Penrith on **16th February 2019** with more detail about location and time to be forwarded in January. At previous rallies in 2018, the No Airport groups contributed a good crowd and I would ask you to enter the date in your diary in an effort to again put in a good showing. It was through these rallies that the Eastern Creek Incinerator plan gained public attention and was eventually dumped.

[Best wishes for the Festive Season](#)

Well here we are, quickly approaching the end of another year. Your RAWSA management committee takes this opportunity to express our appreciation of your continued support in our collective fight against a Western Sydney Airport. Without your efforts, without your support, RAWSA is nothing!

We wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. Please stay safe over the festive season and come back refreshed and ready for action in the lead up two very important elections.



Regards, Trevor Neal
For and on behalf of the
RAWSA management committee