

CANBERRA AIRPORT

CHANGES TO FLIGHT PATH USE

QantasLink Dash 8 Q400 turboprop aircraft will start using the existing RNP-AR flight paths into Canberra Airport from 14 July 2022.

BACKGROUND

Flight paths are designed for the specific on-board navigation aids and ground-based navigation aids located at a particular airport.

Civil Aviation Order 20.18, mandated by the Civil Aviation Safety Authority in 2016, requires aircraft operating under Instrument Flight Rules¹ to transition from ground-based navigation to satellite-based navigation as the primary technology.

Required Navigation Performance - Authorisation Required (RNP-AR) is a satellite-based navigation technology that allows aircraft to operate with greater accuracy and alerts flight crew if the aircraft deviates from the planned route. Greater efficiency can be achieved by reducing track miles, fuel burn and emissions. The procedures allow increased precision for safe and predictable landings, including during inclement weather and low visibility conditions. RNP-AR has previously been referred to as 'Smart Tracking'.

RNP-AR flight paths are available for Canberra Airport's main runway 17/35 (oriented north-south) but can only be flown by aircraft that have been equipped with the required technology and where the flight crew have been authorised by the Civil Aviation Safety Authority to conduct RNP-AR operations. To date, the RNP-AR flight paths into Canberra have only been used by jet aircraft.

WHAT IS CHANGING?

QantasLink has updated its fleet of Dash 8 Q400 propeller-driven (turboprop) aircraft with RNP-AR technology, enabling them to be able to use the existing RNP-AR flight paths into Canberra Airport. Commencing on 14 July 2022, the existing RNP-AR flight paths will be used by a mix of both jet and turboprop aircraft, resulting in an increase to the number of flights using these flight paths. This change will not affect the total number of flights operating at Canberra Airport.

There will be no changes to existing flight paths and no new areas will be overflown.

The existing RNP-AR flight paths and the flight paths currently used by the Dash 8 Q400 aircraft are shown in the image below.

¹ Instrument Flight Rules are rules which allow properly equipped aircraft to be flown in all weather conditions, by reference to aircraft navigation instruments



WHAT WILL I SEE AND HEAR?

Aircraft primarily take-off and land into the wind for safety and performance reasons. The prevailing winds in Canberra favour Runway 35 (southern runway end), which is generally used more than 70 per cent of the time. Runway 17 (northern runway end) tends to be used more frequently in the warmer months than at other times, but this does vary.

In 2019, prior to the impact of COVID-19, 76% of arrival flights used Runway 35 and 12% used Runway 17. Based on the 2019 movements, the following changes may be noticed.

- Residents in Googong may notice an increase in the number of flights overhead as well as different noise characteristics from Q400 turboprop aircraft operating on the existing Runway 35 RNP-AR flight path. On a typical busy day in 2019 there were four (4) jet aircraft using the Runway 35 RNP-AR approach that overflies Googong. The changes from Q400 operations are expected to be:
 - in visual meteorological conditions, which occur approximately 60-70% of the time, on a typical busy day there could be up to two (2) Q400 flights that would now also use the RNP-AR flight path
 - in instrument meteorological conditions (such as cloud, rain and at night-time), which occur approximately 30-40% of the time, on a typical busy day there could be up to seven (7) additional movements from the Q400 flights.
- Residents in Jerrabomberra may notice a noise improvement as the Runway 35 RNP-AR approach is slightly further away than the flight path currently used by the Q400 aircraft.

- Enviroana is expected to experience a 7 decibel (dBA) increase in noise levels (from 54 dBA to 62 dBA) for Q400 turboprop aircraft when they are using the Runway 35 RNP-AR flight paths (60 decibels dBA is considered to be similar to conversation in a busy office).
- Residents near Sutton may notice an increase in the number of flights on the flight path and differences in noise characteristics as a result of the Q400 turboprop aircraft using the Runway 17 RNP-AR flight path. On a typical busy day for Runway 17 in 2019, there was one (1) jet aircraft using the RNP-AR flight path near Sutton. This could increase by three (3) Q400 turboprop flights, depending on the weather and operational conditions.

The Q400 turboprop aircraft typically fly at slower speeds and have different noise characteristics to the jet aircraft that currently use the RNP-AR flight paths.

There will be no changes to existing flight paths and no new areas will be overflown.

WHEN WILL THIS CHANGE START?

QantasLink Q400 turboprop aircraft will commence using the existing RNP-AR flight paths on 14 July 2022.

DO YOU HAVE A QUESTION?

For questions about this change and/or current aircraft operations, contact the Noise Complaints and Information Service (NCIS) by:

w: www.airservicesaustralia.com/aircraftnoise/about-making-a-complaint/

t: 1800 802 584 (free call)

t: 131 450 (interpreter service)

