



**THE AUSTRALIAN STRATEGIC AIR TRAFFIC  
MANAGEMENT GROUP**

**CHARTER  
Version 2.3**

**Amended at the 8<sup>th</sup> ASTRA Council Meeting**

**11 August 2011**

## **CHARTER**

### **Background**

ASTRA, the Australian Strategic Air Traffic Management Group, was originally established in 1999 by a number of industry and government stakeholders to plan and coordinate the implementation of the future ATM system. It also provided a forum to encourage the implementation of strategies and initiatives derived from the Australian ATM Strategic Plan, which it (ASTRA) also produced in the absence of any other published national plan. While it performed well, and gained significant credibility within industry, it lacked any formally recognised access to government and the decision making process.

In December 2009, the Federal Government released a National Aviation Policy White Paper in “an attempt to bring all aspects of aviation policy together in a single, forward-looking document” ... “to give industry the certainty and incentive to plan and invest for the long term, to maintain and improve our excellent aviation safety record, and to make clear commitments to travellers and airport users, and the communities affected by aviation activity.”

The White Paper committed the Government to look to the Aviation Policy Group (APG) – comprising the heads of the Department of Infrastructure and Transport, CASA, Airservices Australia and the Royal Australian Air Force – to facilitate interaction and mutual understanding between government agencies on safety issues, while in no way interfering or restricting the performance of these agencies respective roles<sup>1</sup>.

The Aviation Implementation Group (AIG) supports the APG in the implementation of cross agency strategies. This officials’ Working Group is chaired by the Department of Infrastructure and Transport, which also provides secretariat services to both APG and AIG.

As such, the APG and AIG receive advice from the Australian Strategic Air Traffic Management Group (ASTRA) as it is a collaboration of aviation organisations well placed to coordinate industry advice to government on ATM planning and decision making.

The Government welcomes the establishment earlier this year of an independent, industry chair and new Charter for ASTRA and encourages senior industry representation in the performance of its activities. Industry through ASTRA is now well placed to work cooperatively with aviation agencies to identify ways to improve systems or take advantage of new technologies and in coordinating planning for their implementation.

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<sup>1</sup> This and the following four paragraphs are direct extracts from the National Aviation Policy White Paper December 2009

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The Government recognises there can be different views on air traffic management issues from major international and domestic airlines as compared with the general aviation sector. However, the benefits of having consistent, coordinated and timely advice through one body, ASTRA, rather than a piecemeal approach, will help the Government deliver its strategic ATM policy directions and objectives.

This Charter aims to define the role, structure and necessary business rules to enable ASTRA to transition to and fulfil Government's and industry's expectations of it as a more formally constituted industry advisory group.

### **Terminology**

For ASTRA purposes, certain terms have been ascribed specific meanings as follows:

#### **Air Traffic Management**

The term "Air Traffic Management" is defined as "the dynamic, integrated management of air traffic, airspace and supporting infrastructure — safely, economically and efficiently — through the provision of facilities and seamless services in collaboration with all parties."

ATM includes all traffic in any airspace, as well as the infrastructure, people, procedures and technology involved in aircraft operations.

#### **Industry**

The term "industry" includes commercial, private and recreational sectors, airports and some Government owned participants such as Airservices Australia, the Australian Defence Force and the Bureau of Meteorology.

#### **General Aviation**

The term "General Aviation" for convenience includes operations in smaller aircraft whether regulated directly by CASA or by a self administering organisation under CASA, and whether recreational, private, or commercial in nature.

### **ASTRA Role**

The role of ASTRA is to:

- (1) develop whole-of-industry position on the development, implementation and periodic review of the Australian Air Traffic Management Strategic Plan and related technologies and procedures,
- (2) assist with coordinating the activities of all stakeholders in the implementation of the Australian Air Traffic Management Strategic Plan, and
- (3) provide Government and industry with well considered strategic industry advice on ATM related matters.

### **Guiding Principles**

In developing its positions and providing its advice, ASTRA will:

- (1) take into account the views of all sections of the industry, including the ADF, commercial, private and recreational operators and service providers, while recognising that consensus may not always be possible due to the differing requirements of the different sectors of the industry,
- (2) make recommendations aimed at ensuring that Australia's ATM infrastructure meets the operational needs of all sectors of the aviation community,
- (3) ensure that its advice is consistent with Australia's commitment to the ICAO Global Operating Concept for ATM and, where appropriate, approaches adopted by other leading aviation countries,
- (4) carefully consider the safety, efficiency and environmental benefits offered by each proposal together with industry's capacity to absorb additional costs, in accordance with the Aviation Policy Group's "Common Risk Management Framework for New and Changed Requirements within Aviation", and
- (5) carefully consider industry's capacity to absorb change.

Where ASTRA adopts positions which have the potential for significant change or cost to the industry, or which have the potential for significant detriment to individual sectors, then those decisions are to be referred back to member organisations for their formal concurrence, notwithstanding that the Council is comprised of representatives of each member.

### **Tasks**

To fulfil its role, ASTRA will aim to:

- (1) provide a forum for coordinating integrated ATM planning, development and implementation effort, and for the continuing education of all ATM stakeholders on ATM related developments,
- (2) develop a whole of industry view of what Australia's air traffic communications, navigation and surveillance systems should be capable of achieving in the short, medium and long term, and identify key milestones and objectives,
- (3) identify how best to incorporate and coordinate the adoption, where appropriate, of new and emerging technologies,
- (4) develop a recommended Target Operational Concept to form the basis of the Australian Air Traffic Management Strategic Plan,
- (5) identify the required policy, investment, service, regulatory and procedural changes needed to implement the Target Operational Concept,
- (6) review and make recommendations regarding continuing investment in, maintenance, or disposal of, key air traffic infrastructure, including facilities and both ground-based and airborne equipment,
- (7) identify, and seek funding for, any research and development necessary to support various activities or decision making,
- (8) develop sustainable performance cases to support optimum ATM investment and implementation recommendations, and
- (9) regularly review and make recommendations for the updating of the Australian Air Traffic Management Strategic Plan.

In addition to providing advice to Government on the Australian Air Traffic Management Strategic Plan, it may also offer advice on related matters either as the result of a request from Government or as the result of a request from industry.

### **Structure**

To fulfil its functions, ASTRA must provide:

- (1) an industry-wide representative forum for developing the industry position on ATM matters to provide the basis for the provision of strategic advice to Government, and to coordinate integrated ATM planning, development and implementation effort by all relevant ATM stakeholders, under agreed arrangements, and
- (2) a number of discrete, technically oriented Working Groups to:
  - (a) develop industry knowledge and understanding of developments in technology and operational procedures around the world,
  - (b) consider options and develop recommendations for the adoption of new or refined technologies and/or procedures, and
  - (c) plan and facilitate, where agreed, the implementation of specific approved operational or technical strategies.

Thus the structure comprises a Council (formerly known as the ASTRA Plenary), and a number of individual project-related Working Groups (formerly known as either Working Groups or Implementation Teams).

### **ASTRA Council**

The ASTRA Council is composed of organisational members representing a broad cross section of the aviation industry, and is responsible for the development and reporting of the industry position in relation to ATM matters, and for the running of ASTRA.

### **ASTRA Working Groups**

Working Groups will be established (and dis-established) by the Council, as required to perform specific tasks in accordance with the ASTRA Work Program.

The Working Groups are, in general, responsible to the Council for:

- (1) the development of expertise and policy recommendations within their particular area of responsibility,
- (2) the passage of information between stakeholders,
- (3) identification of the need for specific trials or research and, if appropriate, the conduct of those trials or research projects, as directed by the Council, and
- (4) the undertaking of specific projects as directed by the Council.

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The Working Groups established as at May 2009 are:

- (1) Future ATM Requirements Working Group (FARWG),
- (2) Surveillance Technologies Working Group (STWG),
- (3) Performance Based Navigation Working Group (PBNWG),
- (4) ATM Performance Management Working Group (APMWG), and
- (5) Strategic Plan Development Working Group (SPDWG).

The Strategic Plan Development Working Group, responsible for writing or amending the ASTRA Strategic Plan, remains established but is only activated as and when required.

### **ASTRA Secretariat**

The ASTRA Secretariat, currently provided by Airservices Australia, provides secretariat support to the Council and Working Groups.

### **ASTRA Website**

An ASTRA website is established to provide all interested parties with general information about ASTRA and its activities.

A secure section is included to provide ASTRA members with access to non-public papers, including Meeting Notices, Agendas and Minutes.

The ASTRA website support service is currently provided by Airservices Australia.

## **ASTRA MEMBERSHIP**

### **ASTRA Council**

In the absence of an all-inclusive aviation industry association or council, membership of the ASTRA Council is by formal invitation by the ASTRA Council, and is subject to the formal approval of the ASTRA Council.

The ASTRA Council comprises:

- (1) an appointed Chair,
- (2) an appointed Deputy Chair who is normally the immediate past Chair, and
- (3) a single representative of each of the following organisations (subject to each organisation's acceptance of membership):

#### Industry Associations

Airports Association of Australia (AAA),  
Aerial Agricultural Association of Australia (AAAA),  
Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association (AOPA),  
Australian Business Aircraft Association (ABAA),  
Australian Sport Aviation Confederation (ASAC),  
Regional Aviation Association of Australia (RAAA),  
Recreational Aviation Australia (RAAus),  
Royal Federation of Aero Clubs of Australia (RFACA) and  
Board of Airline Representatives of Australia (BARA).

#### Individual Operators

Qantas Group (including Qantas, Jetstar, QantasLink, Jetconnect and Network Aviation), and  
Virgin Group (including Virgin Australia, Pacific Blue and V Australia).

#### Service Providers

Airservices Australia.

In addition, a number of Permanent Observers have standing invitations to attend Council Meetings in order to provide expertise and to assist with coordination of ATM related matters within the industry. These include:

### Working Group Chairs

All Working Group Chairs are ex-officio Permanent Observers.

### Professional and Industrial Organisations

Guild of Air Pilots and Air Navigators (GAPAN),  
Australian Airline Pilots' Association (AusALPA), and  
Civil Air Traffic Control Australia (CivilAir).

### Government Agencies

Department of Infrastructure and Transport (DoIT),  
Australian Customs and Border Protection Service,  
Australian Defence Force (ADF),  
Australian Maritime Safety Agency (AMSA),  
Australian Transport Safety Bureau (ATSB),  
Civil Aviation Safety Authority (CASA),  
Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO), and  
Bureau of Meteorology (BoM).

### Others

Jeppesen Australia,  
Lockheed Martin Australia,  
New Zealand Airways Corporation.

Other guests may be invited either directly by the Council, or with the Chair's approval, by members of the Council, to participate at individual meetings as warranted by their expertise or when considered appropriate in relation to matters being discussed.

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The test for future membership of the ASTRA Council by organisations other than those listed above is “who does this organisation represent?” Candidate organisations must represent a significant constituency of genuine ATM stakeholders not already represented by an existing member to be considered for membership.

### **ASTRA Working Group Membership**

Each of the Working Groups comprises:

- (1) a Chair, appointed by the ASTRA Council,
- (2) a Deputy Chair, appointed by the ASTRA Council, and
- (3) a number of members invited by the Chair and approved by the Council.

Each Working Group Chair may invite any person to be a member of his/her Working Group or Working Group sub-group provided that:

- (1) that person is either employed within, or represents, or is associated professionally with an industry sector or a government agency likely to be affected in some way by the matters being considered; and
- (2) that person has expertise of value to the Working Group; and
- (3) the size of the Working Group or sub-group does not thereby exceed fifteen members.

### **Withdrawal of Membership or Permanent Observer Rights**

The Council may withdraw membership or observer rights from a member organisation in the event of continuing conduct which, in the opinion of the Council, unreasonably limits the capacity of ASTRA to meet its objectives. Withdrawal of membership is not to be taken lightly, but remains an option where counselling proves ineffective.

A simple majority is required to approve the withdrawal of a member's membership.

Withdrawal of membership may be either permanent or temporary at the discretion of the Council.

At least two weeks' notice of a proposal for withdrawal of membership must be given prior to it being considered by the Council.

A proposal for withdrawal of membership must be considered by the Council in session, with the offending member being given the opportunity to be present and to defend his/her organisation's position.

### **ASTRA Council Chair**

The Chair is appointed by the ASTRA Council members, and holds office at the pleasure of the Council.

The Chair should have broad industry experience and knowledge, including a sound understanding of the aims and objectives of ASTRA, and must be free of any conflict of interest during his/her tenure.

The Council may appoint either an existing Council member or a past industry leader or other suitable person to the position of Chair.

In the event that a member of the Council is appointed as Chair, that person's parent organisation is entitled to nominate an additional representative to the Council.

A normal tenure will be two years, but a Chair may be appointed for successive terms.

The Chair may be required to step down by a simple majority of the ASTRA Council meeting in session.

Two weeks' formal notice is required for any such proposal.

### **ASTRA Council Deputy Chair**

The Deputy Chair is appointed by the ASTRA Council members, and holds office at the pleasure of the Council.

The Deputy Chair is normally the immediate past Chair in order to maintain a degree of continuity. As with the Chair, the Deputy Chair may be either an existing Council member, a former industry leader, or other suitable person.

The Deputy Chair's normal tenure will cease when the Chair's tenure ceases, but the Deputy Chair may be appointed for successive terms.

The Deputy Chair may be required to step down by a simple majority of the ASTRA Council meeting in session.

Two weeks' formal notice is required for any such proposal.

## **ASTRA COUNCIL MEETINGS**

### **Frequency**

Meetings of the ASTRA Council will be held as frequently as necessary to fulfil its function. It is envisaged that this will be three to four times a year.

### **Location**

Meetings will normally be held in Canberra at an appropriate venue.

### **Timings**

Meetings will normally be conducted mid-week between 0930 and 1530 to allow for travel to and from Canberra by those members based elsewhere.

### **Funding**

ASTRA has no source of funds, and members' travel and accommodation if required, and other expenses are expected to be met by the member's own organisation.

Meetings, including lunch, will normally be hosted by one of the member organisations.

### **Notice of Meetings**

At least two weeks' formal notice must be given for all ASTRA Council meetings.

Council papers, including the provisional agenda and individual members' papers, should normally be circulated at least two weeks in advance. However, the Chair may elect to accept papers offered with less notice, and may elect to accept agenda inclusions until confirmation of the agenda.

### **Quorum**

A simple majority of Council members constitutes a quorum for an ASTRA Council Meeting.

### **Meeting Procedures**

Normal meeting procedures will apply to ASTRA Council meetings, with the proceedings formally documented for reasons of transparency and accountability.

Minutes of meetings are to be distributed to all members within two weeks from the date of the meeting of which they are a record.

### **Resolution of Contentious Issues**

It is the ASTRA Council's responsibility to develop and report well considered industry policies on ATM related issues. While it is probable that consensus will be achievable on most issues, it is accepted that there may well be some issues on which consensus will not be achievable despite the good offices of all parties, because of differing perceptions of safety standards, costs, timings, equity of access to airspace or other issues.

Where an impasse is reached, the Chair may elect to suspend further debate on the issue in order to continue with the meeting, and convene a subsequent smaller meeting of representatives of the opposed parties to try to resolve the impasse.

Where resolution is still not possible, the Chair may elect to request the opposed parties to produce papers to formally put their views on the issues causing the impasse, and to seek assurances that such papers truly reflect the views of the members' constituents. These papers are to be distributed to all Council members for their consideration.

Regardless of whether or not such papers are requested and received, the Chair is ultimately responsible, in consultation with the Deputy Chair, for determining the formal ASTRA position for reporting to Government. In forming the ASTRA position, the Chair must carefully review all opposing positions, while paying particular attention to both the ASTRA Guiding Principles (detailed in this Charter) and Government's four key Australian Aviation Goals as detailed in the National Aviation Policy White Paper – Flight Path to the Future (December 2009). These Aviation Goals are reproduced for convenience at Annex A.

In such a situation, the Chair must report his/her findings back to the Council, along with the reasons for his/her decision, as soon as practicable. This may be done out of session.

In the event that consensus is still not achievable, the ASTRA position (as determined by the Chair in consultation with the Deputy Chair) is to be reported to Government together with the dissenting view(s) as represented in the dissenting paper(s).

Consensus is to be achieved wherever possible, but the lack of consensus should not be allowed to prevent progress in general.

### **Guest Speakers**

The Chair may approve the issuing of an invitation to a non-member to address a Council meeting. Such invitations may be extended to representatives of suppliers or research organisations on ATM-related matters of interest to the members.

## **ASTRA WORKING GROUP MEETINGS**

### **Frequency**

Meetings of the Working Groups will be held as frequently as necessary to fulfil their individual functions. It is envisaged that this will be three to four times a year for each Working Group.

### **Location**

Meetings will normally be held in Canberra at an appropriate venue, but may, at the discretion of the Working Group Chair, be held in other locations from time to time.

### **Timings**

Meetings will normally be conducted mid-week between 0930 and 1530 to allow for travel to and from the meeting by those members based elsewhere.

### **Funding**

ASTRA has no source of funds, and members' travel and accommodation if required, and other expenses are expected to be met by the member's own organisation.

Meetings, including lunch, will normally be hosted by one of the member organisations.

### **Notice of Meetings**

At least two weeks' formal notice must be given for all Working Group meetings.

Working Group papers, including the provisional agenda and individual members' papers, should normally be circulated at least two weeks in advance. However, the Working Group Chair may elect to accept papers offered with less notice, and may elect to accept agenda inclusions until confirmation of the agenda.

### **Quorum**

No specific quorum is required for Working Group meetings.

### **Meeting Procedures**

Normal meeting procedures will apply to Working Group meetings, however, being technical in nature, it is expected that they will be less formal than Council meetings. Nevertheless, significant aspects of the proceedings are to be documented and circulated to members for reasons of transparency and accountability.

### **Resolution of Contentious Issues**

While it is expected that consensus will be achievable on most issues, it is accepted that there may well be some issues on which consensus will not be achievable despite the good offices of all parties, because of differing perceptions of safety standards, costs, timings, equity of access to airspace or other issues.

Consensus should be sought wherever possible, but the lack of consensus should not be allowed to prevent progress in general.

Where consensus is not achievable, the Chair is to report the fact to the ASTRA Council for resolution.

### **ASTRA Work Program**

The ASTRA Council is to maintain an "Issues List", an industry agreed prioritised list of issues requiring or deserving of ASTRA action, which is to be published on the ASTRA website.

The Issues List is to form the basis of the ASTRA Work Program, which is to be developed and maintained by the Council for itself and for the Working Groups. The allocation of tasks to individual Working Groups is to be based on the nature and priority of each individual task.

New tasks may be initiated as a result of growing problems being experienced by one or more industry sectors, the arrival of new technological or procedural solutions to existing problems, or following a request from the Aviation Policy Group (APG) or the Aviation Implementation Group (AIG).

Changes to the Work Program, including the introduction of new tasks and/or changes in relative priority, may be proposed to the Council by any member or by Government via the AIG. On receipt of such a proposal, the Council will consider it in accordance with the ASTRA Guiding Principles.

On confirmation of the inclusion of a new issue in the ASTRA Work Program, tasks will be allocated by the Council to the appropriate Working Group for completion, along with appropriate guidance and milestones. Progress will be monitored at regular intervals by the Council.

## **ASTRA REPORTING**

### **Industry**

The ASTRA Council reports to industry through the members of the Council, who are also individually responsible for reporting and representing their constituents' views to the Council.

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The ASTRA Working Groups report formally to the Council, and, in view of the inter-relationship between the various Working Groups, are to keep all other Working Groups advised of their activities.

In addition, following each meeting, an email report is to be provided to all participants, summarising the outcomes of the meeting and detailing responsibilities for future action.

Individual members of the various Working Groups are responsible for reporting and representing their constituents' views to their Working Group(s), and also for keeping their constituents advised of developments within their Working Group(s).

### **ASTRA Relationship with Government**

ASTRA provides formal advice to Government via the ASTRA Council through the Aviation Implementation Group (AIG), which is chaired by the Executive Director of Aviation and Airports, Department of Infrastructure and Transport. Such advice will be provided in writing and, where appropriate, by formal briefings of AIG meetings or of individual members of the AIG, APG or its constituent agencies.

Each recommendation by the ASTRA Council arising out of the agreed Work Program which requires action by, or has implications for, AIG agencies, will receive a formal written response from AIG. For ASTRA recommendations supported by AIG, an AIG representative will provide an implementation progress report at each ASTRA Council meeting.

### **Amendment**

This Charter may be amended by the Council, meeting in session, and following not less than two calendar months' formal notice of the proposed change(s).

Notwithstanding the approval of the Council, any such changes will also require the formal endorsement of the member organisations.

### **Supporting Document**

The work of ASTRA is supported by the ASTRA Work Program as the key document developed and endorsed by the members.

### **Agreement**

Each Member agrees to the provisions of this Charter as a condition of membership.

**Annex:**

**A. Australian Aviation Goals**

### **Australian Aviation Goals<sup>2</sup>**

The Government proposes a range of initiatives for short, medium and long-term policy and regulatory reform and direction. The initiatives follow the four Australian Aviation Goals as depicted below:

#### Safety and security underpin industry growth and remain the highest priorities for the Australian aviation industry and the Australian Government

- Australians should have a well-founded confidence in the safety of aviation and a strong culture of safety needs to be maintained across government and industry supported by a sound safety governance framework.
- Enhanced aviation safety should be delivered by an effective, efficient and responsive air traffic management system.
- Modern air traffic management technologies and service provision should be used to assist in the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions from aviation operations.
- An effective, focused and proportionate aviation security system should be in place to mitigate the risk to Australia's air travellers and the general public from terrorism and criminal interference.

#### Aviation is a key driver of broader economic prosperity

- Australia should have an open and competitive international aviation market that benefits tourism, trade and consumers, allows Australian and overseas airlines to expand, and maintains a vibrant Australian-based aviation industry.
- Australia should maintain an open interstate domestic aviation market that maximises benefits to the Australian economy within the general framework of national competition policy.
- Aviation businesses should be able to innovate and develop new and improved products and services for the market.
- Employment in the aviation industry should grow with more Australians training for and taking up jobs in the industry.
- Australians in regional and remote communities should have reasonable access to air services to major cities and other key centres.

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<sup>2</sup> National Aviation Policy White Paper, December 2009, p 2 – 3.

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- A safe, efficient and innovative general aviation sector should be maintained to continue to provide essential air transport services and remain a key part of Australia's broader aviation industry.
- Australia should continue to grow as a leading provider of aviation training.
- A well-trained workforce, developed through partnerships between government and industry, should meet the continuing needs of Australia's aviation sector.
- There should be protection and fairness for aviation consumers and the broader community without imposing unnecessary cost or impeding innovation in the aviation industry.

### **A coordinated approach to airport planning and investment is required**

- Planning at Australia's airports should facilitate effective integration and coordination with off-airport planning and continued investment in Australia's airport infrastructure and land transport links.
- Incentives to invest in Australia's airport infrastructure need to be balanced with fair pricing and transparency.
- A network of regional and local aerodromes should be maintained to support access to air services for remote and regional communities.
- The future aviation needs of the Sydney region need to be met through the provision of additional aviation capacity, effectively integrated with future land transport and other infrastructure developments and state land use planning.

### **A responsible approach is required to managing the environmental impacts of aviation**

- The Australian aviation industry needs to play an effective role in the reduction of aviation's contribution to climate change.
- Recognition of the economic importance of airports needs to be balanced with better management of the impact of aircraft noise in the vicinity of airports and near flight paths.

These objectives will form the basis of the Australian Government's policy directions and the administration of regulation of aviation in Australia.