

Frequently Asked Questions

Central Coast Airport

Does Council own and operate Central Coast Airport

Yes. Central Coast Airport is a small aircraft landing area owned and operated by Central Coast Council at Warnervale.

Who uses the airport

The aircraft landing area is predominantly used by the Central Coast Aero Club and its members. The Central Coast Aero Club also operates a flight training business, Warnervale Air Pty Ltd and manages the hangar space and refuelling at the airport. The Central Coast Aero Club has non-exclusive use of the airport land and airport by way of a licence deed with Central Coast Council.

A number of itinerants, who are generally private aircraft travelling to and from the Central Coast, and emergency and other government services also use the airport.

What is the role of the Civil Aviation Safety Authority

The Civil Aviation Safety Authority (CASA) is a government body that regulates Australian aviation safety and the operation of Australian aircraft overseas. The authority operates within a legislative framework made up of acts, regulations, associated legislative instruments and guidance material.

Central Coast Airport functions as an aeroplane landing area under the provisions of paragraph 92 (1)(d) of the Civil Aviation Regulations 1988. Unlike registered and certified aerodromes, CASA has limited oversight of the safety of aeroplane landing area facilities and infrastructure. CASA provides guidelines to assist pilots in the suitability of operations at an aeroplane landing area.

I want to land at the airport. What are my responsibilities.

As the risks around landing at any airport vary depending on the aircraft, its weight, the weather and the runway, it is the responsibility of the pilot in command to determine if it is safe to land. If the pilot believes that the conditions are dangerous, they should not land or take off from the airport.

All pilots using the airport need to review the relevant En Route Supplement Australia (ERSA) and Notices to Airmen (NOTAM) which is available on the Air Services Australia website. This is where Central Coast Airport is required to provide the relevant information on the airfield to pilots.

Responsibility for the safety of landing at an aeroplane landing area such as Central Coast Airport lies with the pilot in command of the aircraft.

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What does Council do to maintain the safe operation of the airport

Council has staff on site to monitor and maintain the airport. Daily checks of the runway surface are undertaken as are regular mowing to ensure that vegetation on the airport site is maintained at a safe level.

The airport is fully fenced with the intent to keep wildlife away from the runway. The fence line is regularly monitored and maintained.

If required, temporary changes to the runway ends, displaced thresholds and further updates to pilots can be put in place for the safe operation of the airport.

How are obstacles, including vegetation around the airport, managed to a safe level

The Civil Aviation Authority provides recommendations about obstacle gradients and runway widths for aeroplane landing areas. The Obstacle Limitation Surface describes a recommended gradient from land surrounding the airport above which the space should be clear of all obstacles, including vegetation and built infrastructure.

In a letter to Central Coast Council dated 5 March 2019, CASA stated that it was satisfied that the

obstacle gradient of the Warnervale aeroplane landing area was being managed appropriately and accordingly no immediate action was required.

Central Coast Council has investigated options for the management of any risks to the safe operation of the airport in relation to obstacle gradient. This relates to land that is not part of the airport itself, but is where aircraft will fly over, either on take-off or approach to the runway. This land includes E2 (Environmental Conservation) zoned land and an Ecologically Endangered Community.

On 12 August 2019, Council resolved to engage an external specialist to undertake an up-to-date survey and analysis of the height of trees at both ends of the runway at Central Coast Airport. The assessment will be completed in conjunction with environmental studies in order to guide Council on options available to improve safety for runway users.

It is expected that the assessment will take 5 to 6 months to complete.

Is the Central Coast Airport closing

No. Central Coast Council continues to operate the airport.

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What is the Warnervale Airport Restrictions Act

The Warnervale Airport Restrictions Act is a specific piece of legislation that relates to the operation of Central Coast Airport by Central Coast Council.

Part 2 of this Act requires Council not to cause or permit the number of aircraft movements per day to go above a set limit and to ensure that a curfew is maintained.

To manage the daily movement limitation, prior permission is required to land or take off from the airport, with requests needing 24 hours' notice.

The Warnervale Airport Restrictions Act is administered under the NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment.

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