

**DAVID HARRIS MP
LABOR MEMBER FOR WYONG
LABOR SHADOW MINISTER FOR REGIONAL TRANSPORT**

**STATE GOVERNMENT HID RECOMMENDATIONS ON
WARNERVALE AIRPORT WHICH COULD HAVE FIXED THE
ISSUE YEARS AGO**

Member for Wyong and Shadow Minister for the Central Coast, David Harris MP today slammed the NSW Government for their “political engineering” of issues at Warnervale Airport.

“This has been a disgraceful political manipulation which has used Warnervale Airport users in a deplorable political game.” Mr Harris said.

The NSW Government released their Review into the Warnervale Airport Restrictions Act yesterday, which included the previous review undertaken by former Minister for Planning Anthony Roberts.

Mr Harris said “I had applied under GIPA for a copy of that report which was “Cabinet in Confidence” and the Government rejected my request.”

“The previous report recommended that the Act be retained, which was made public, what we didn’t know was that it also recommended that the Act be amended to address the flight issue for small aircraft.”

“The Government could have amended the Act at any time with support from the Opposition to do that, instead through the Member for Terrigal, they ran a campaign which delayed action which would have assisted the Aero Club and other users before the last election.”

“This is disgraceful behaviour on behalf of the NSW Liberal Government.”

“Instead they now seek to repeal the whole Act which leaves local residents at the mercy of Council, which will be both the owner and the regulator.”

“I asked in my submission to retain the Minister as the independent authority whilst amending the Act to remove restrictions on smaller aircraft.”

“Clearly, this is a Government which is more interested in cheap political point scoring instead of doing what is best for the community and airport users.”

“The Member for Terrigal should be ashamed that he made this issue about him rather than seeking to actually fix the issues confronting airport users.” Mr Harris said.

Supporting recommendation: Immediately remove aircraft movement restrictions applying to general aviation activities operating at Warnervale Airport's existing runway. In the reviewer's opinion, the 2015 runway works are considered to trigger clause 4(2) of the WAR Act, making Part 2 restrictions on aircraft movements applicable to the Airport's only existing runway. All stakeholders agreed that these provisions were never intended restrict the general aviation operations that existed at the time the Act came into force. The unrestricted general aviation operations have continued without any major conflicts to surrounding amenity. The application of these restrictions has the potential to immediately affect the ongoing viability of existing aviation businesses operating from the Airport. To do this, the Minister may need to: Amend the WAR Act to provide the Minister powers to vary any aircraft movement restrictions for any runway; and Amend the WAR Act to minimise or remove restrictions for general aviation aircraft operating from the existing runway OR immediately remove penalty notices associated with these restrictions.

ENDS

WEDNESDAY, 29 JULY 2020

MEDIA CONTACT: EO Wyong (02) 4352 2711