

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY

WRITTEN QUESTION

Mr Maley to the Minister for Infrastructure, Planning and Logistics:

Batchelor Airport

The Batchelor Airport Master Plan (Concept) was released in mid-2019 and appears in the 10 Year Infrastructure Plan as a \$10 million 3-5 year project.

Questions:

- 1. When will a full feasibility study including financial costings be undertaken on the Batchelor Airport Master Plan?**

Feasibility consideration were undertaken for Stage 1 works. Refer response to Question 3.

- 2. When will a staging schedule be released?**

The staging schedule was released as part of the Batchelor Airport Master Plan in 2019. The Master Plan has broken up the works into 3 stages:

- **Stage 1** – 0-10 year horizon for upgrades to the airport and provision of commercial hanger facilities.
- **Stage 2** – 10-20 year horizon for incremental expansion of facilities to accommodate aircraft parking, movements and increased hanger sites.
- **Stage 3** – 20+ years horizon, further incremental expansions as required.

More information can be obtained by visiting the following link:
<https://dipl.nt.gov.au/projects/batchelor-airport-master-plan>

- 3. Without any real costings you have estimated a total of \$10 million for all stages in the master plan. How was this amount estimated? Won't these costs blow out to far more in five years' time?**

The \$10 million identified is an indicative cost developed by the specialist aviation consultant to implement the initial stage of development for the Batchelor Airport Master Plan and allow works to be undertaken to provide serviced commercial allotments and private hanger allotments.

The estimated costs for the works were escalated to take into account increases in costs over the 10 years from the release of the Master Plan.

Further engineering studies are required to confirm the total costing requirements for Stages 2 and 3 of the development.

4. What regulations and/or restrictions are currently in place at the Batchelor Airport?

The Batchelor Airport is an unregulated Aeroplane Landing Area and is subject to the Civil Aviation Advisory Publication 92-1 (1) Guidelines for Aeroplane Landing Areas.

Air operators using the airport need to meet Civil Aviation Safety Authority regulatory requirements for operations, ensuring it is safe to land or take off.

Unlike some privately owned aerodromes, where air operators may need to obtain permission to land, these aerodromes are open access. The NT Government does not restrict use.

Any general aviation night activities conducted under the hours of darkness are for emergency use only (Police Air Wing and CareFlight).

a. How do these compare to other airports like Wadeye and the West Daly?

The Batchelor Airport is an unregulated airport that does not have any Regular Public Transport operations. As an unregulated facility, the responsibility to determine suitability of the facility for landing is the pilots responsibility or in accordance with the Aircraft Operators Certificate.

The airstrip is subject to Civil Aviation Advisory Publication (CAAP) 92-1 (1) - Guidelines for aeroplane landing areas. This advisory publication provides guidance for complying with related Civil Aviation Regulations.

Other airports in the West Daly region such as Palumpa and Peppimenarti are also unregulated but conduct Regular Public Transport (RPT) operations. These airports are classified as Certain Other Aerodromes and subject to increased regulatory requirements. They are maintained as per the Civil Aviation Advisory Publication (CAAP) 92A-1 (0) - Guidelines on aerodromes intended for small aeroplanes conducting RPT operations.

In comparison, the Wadeye (Port Keats) airport is a previously registered aerodrome that was deemed certified on 13 August 2020. This airport conducts Regular Public Transport operations and is subject to the *Civil Aviation Safety Authority (CASA) Regulations 1998* and must comply with the Manual of Standards Part 139 for Aerodromes.

5. What are you doing to attract the aviation industry to remain and expand at the Batchelor Airport?

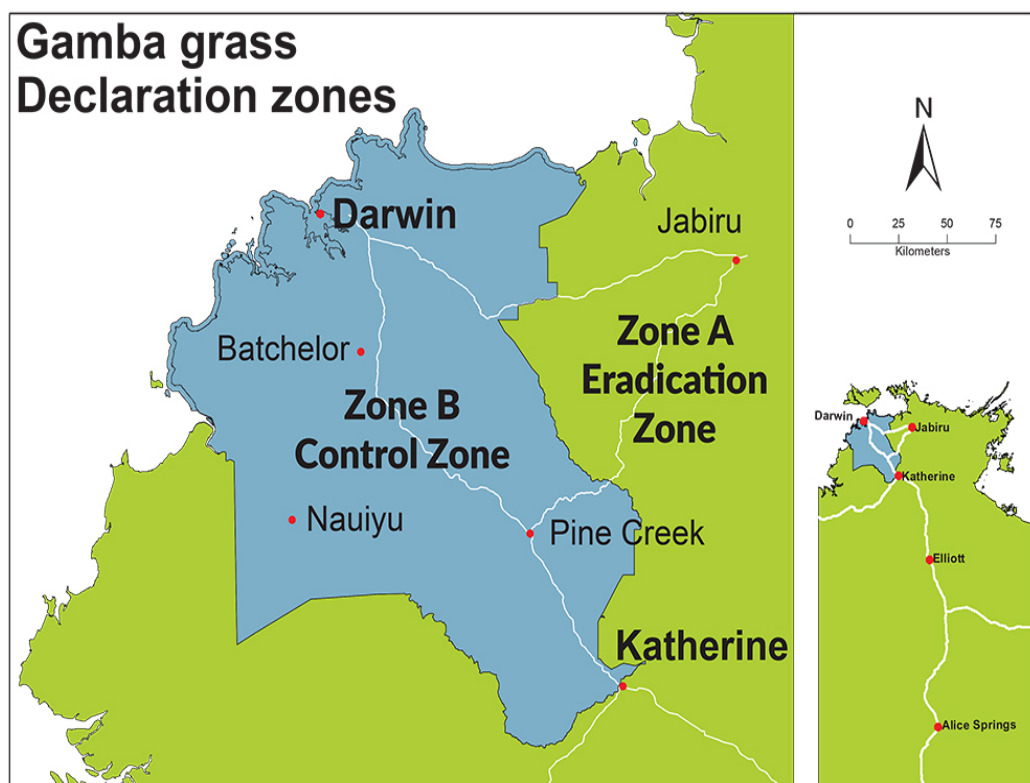
The NT Government is working closely with proponents from multiple industries who have communicated an interest in establishing aviation enterprises in the Northern Territory and particular Batchelor Airport. The airport is seen as a strategic asset due to its close proximity to Darwin and Asia. The NT Government is working closely with these proponents to see if commercial opportunities can be created that would unlock both social and economic benefits for the community of Batchelor and the Northern Territory.

6. Are there any incentives for aviation businesses to locate to Batchelor Airport?

Aviation businesses can contact DIPL for further information about locating their operations to Batchelor airport and establish operations in locations as identified in the Master Plan.

7. Is there a plan for gamba grass removal and eradication at the Batchelor Airport?

Gamba Grass is declared a weed under section 7 of the *Weeds Management Act 2001*. It has a split declaration based on its known distribution and density. Batchelor Airport is located in Declaration Zone B where the growth and spread of the weed are to be controlled.



DIPL is working closely with the weeds management branch in the Department of the Environment, Parks and Water Security to develop a

solution for the ongoing control management of gamba grass within the airport boundaries moving forward.

8. Is there a plan to put full-time management in place at Batchelor Airport?

The maintenance of the Batchelor Airport is currently managed by the DIPL. It has been identified that as the deliverables of the Master Plan are achieved, a full time management structure may be required to manage the airport once Regular Public Transport operations commence from the airport or activities require the airport to become regulated.