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# PRIME MINISTER

FOR MEDIA

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## JOINT STATEMENT FROM THE PRIME MINISTER AND THE MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATIONS, THE HON RALPH WILLIS

The Government has decided to develop a third runway at Kingsford-Smith Airport (KSA) subject to the satisfactory completion of normal EIS processes, and to begin the development of a second airport at Badgery's Creek.

The proposed mode of operation for the third runway would not allow departures to the north, and would confine use of the east-west runway to circumstances when adverse weather conditions preclude the use of other runways for safety reasons.

Preparation of an EIS for a medium-spaced parallel runway at KSA will start immediately.

Local resident groups, local councils and all other interested parties will be invited to participate fully in the EIS processes. The EIS will consider, among other things, the noise and social effects of the third runway and its environmental impact on Botany Bay and surrounding areas.

The Government will move now to acquire the remainder of the land needed for the development of Badgery's Creek. A General Aviation facility will be constructed immediately, as a first stage. In anticipation that the second stage will provide for both domestic and international services, detailed design work will commence immediately. Consultations will be undertaken as soon as possible with the State Government on such issues as road and rail access, provision of State utilities, land use zoning and the need for relocation of existing infrastructure.

Traffic management measures at KSA will be implemented within the next few months. These will include a reduction in General Aviation traffic at KSA during peak hours and measures to alleviate the problems caused by the common domestic airline practice of cluster scheduling. There will be urgent consultations on these matters with the aviation industry and the State Government.

These decisions have been taken following an exhaustive analysis of the economic and aviation policy aspects of all options for meeting Sydney's airport needs. The complexity of the issues required the most sophisticated analysis yet undertaken of the interaction between demand growth, airport capacity and traffic management at Sydney. This analysis, conducted by Commonwealth officials, reveals that the economically rational option is to build a third runway at KSA subject to an EIS, and proceed with the development of Badgery's Creek but not on a fast-track basis.

The decision to build a third runway will not result in an increase in the number of people severely affected by aircraft noise. Indeed, the Government is advised that the number of such people will decline from 56,200 at present to about 35,500; that is, a decline of 20,700 or 37 per cent. This will be made possible by a combination of new generation quieter aircraft and greatly reduced usage of the present east-west runway. There would be a noise reduction of approximately three-quarters in the local government areas affected by operation of the east-west runway (Hurstville, Kogarah, Rockdale, Botany and Randwick). There would be an increase of one quarter in areas to the north of the airport (Ryde, Hunter's Hill, Lane Cove, Leichhardt, Marrickville, Drummoyne, Sydney).

In present economic circumstances the Government cannot justify the expenditure of more than \$2 billion on an ambitious and early development of a full-scale international airport at Badgery's Creek. The development of Badgery's Creek will proceed at a pace consistent with anticipated growth in traffic demand for the Sydney region.

The decisions the Government has taken were not simple or easy ones. They have been taken in the long range national interest and, in particular, of Sydney as Australia's principal international gateway. They represent the most decisive action by any Government to resolve the Sydney airport issue and to position Sydney to meet our aviation needs into the next century.