# **Draft Ballina airspace review**

Overview

CASA is seeking your comments on the draft airspace review of Ballina, New South Wales.

The review was conducted to assess current risks and propose solutions. The draft review has identified three areas of concern:

* Frequency congestion
* Heightened risk of separation incidents
* Situational awareness

Nine recommendations to improve safety have been identified through stakeholder engagement and analysis. They are designed to adopt a graduated approach to reducing airspace risk at Ballina intended to build up to a controlled aerodrome service with an associated control zone and control area steps.

We are seeking your feedback on all aspects of the draft review, including the recommendations and timeframes.

Your feedback, together with other evidence and data, will help us continue working with stakeholders to finalise the best way to implement a graduated approach to improve safety and reduce risks.

The final timeframes will be influenced by your feedback and what is realistic for putting the final solutions in place.

[Draft Ballina airspace review recommendations](https://consultation.casa.gov.au/stakeholder-engagement-group/ballina-airspace-review/#fact-bank-1)More Information

The [Office of Airspace Regulation](https://www.casa.gov.au/operations-safety-and-travel/airspace/airspace-regulation/office-airspace-regulation)applies a precautionary approach when conducting airspace reviews. The following recommendations are consistent with the CASA Board’s direction that aviation safety risks must be reduced to the lowest practical and proportionate level.

1. CASA should prepare a Request For Change (RFC) to separate the Lismore and Casino Common Traffic Advisory Frequency (CTAF) from the Ballina CTAF by 16 June 2022.
2. Evans Head Airport should be allocated the common CTAF (126.7 MHz) by 16 June 2022.
3. CASA should direct Airservices Australia to install an Automatic Dependent Surveillance - Broadcast (ADS-B) ground station in the vicinity of Ballina to improve surveillance as soon as practicable but no later than December 2022. The ground station should, as far as is practical, provide ADS-B surveillance capability to the runway surface.
4. CASA should explore a suitable regulatory framework that can safely authorise sport and recreational aircraft and pilot certificate holders to operate in the controlled airspace associated with Ballina where pilot certificate holders meet CASA specified competency standards and the aircraft are appropriately equipped.
5. CASA’s Stakeholder Engagement Division (SED) should conduct additional safety promotion programs in relation to Ballina operations as soon as practicable. The programs should include, but are not limited to the following key elements: reinforce the mandatory radio calls required when operating within the Ballina MBA in the interim, pending the establishment of controlled airspace, and later, provide guidance as to how a Sport Aviation Body might develop a suitable scheme and make application to CASA for approval, under the regulatory framework identified in recommendation 4.
6. Uncertified aerodromes and flight training areas around Ballina should be promulgated in aeronautical publications to increase pilot situational awareness.
7. As an interim action pending the completion of Recommendation 8, CASA should make a determination to establish a control area around Ballina Byron Gateway Airport with a base which is as low as possible, and direct Airservices Australia to provide services within the control area. The services should be provided during all periods of scheduled Air Transport Operations and include an Approach Control Service to aircraft operating under the Instrument Flight Rules (IFR), separation between IFR aircraft, VFR traffic information to all aircraft, and sequencing of all aircraft to and from the runway. CASA and Airservices Australia should jointly explore opportunities to detect non-cooperative aircraft or vehicles in the immediate vicinity of the runway. The services should be established as soon as practicable but no later than 15 June 2023.
8. CASA should make a determination that Ballina Byron Gateway Airport will become a controlled aerodrome with an associated control zone and control area, and direct Airservices Australia to provide an Aerodrome Control Service to the aerodrome. That service should be established as soon as practicable but no later than 30 November 2023.
9. CASA should prepare and finalise an Airspace Change Proposal (ACP) for a control zone and control area steps in preparation for the implementation of Recommendations 7 and 8.

As part of our graduated approach, we have already introduced the first safety improvement measures (recommendations 1 and 2).

From 16 June new radio frequencies are being introduced to ease congestion and improve safety around Ballina, Lismore, Casino and Evans Head aerodromes. This was introduced early in response to industry feedback, including extensive engagement with stakeholders (such as local flying schools, aero clubs, airspace users, industry bodies) and a [public consultation survey](https://consultation.casa.gov.au/stakeholder-engagement-group/freq-ybna-lismore/) in November last year.

**Documents for review**

Please read the Draft Airspace Review of Ballina, NSW (May 2022) provided at the bottom of this page to help with your submission.

Why your views matter

We want to hear from as many Ballina area airspace users as possible including local flying schools, aero clubs, operators and industry bodies.

We are seeking feedback on key elements of the graduated approach, including timing.

Your feedback will help us to finalise the Ballina airspace review including recommendations and timings.

**Completing the survey**

You can choose to comment on as many topics as you like. If you do not have enough time to complete the consultation in one go, don’t worry. You can save your input and come back later.

If you would like to provide further feedback, please email [OAR@casa.gov.au](mailto:OAR@casa.gov.au). Feedback submitted by email will be considered but cannot be published publicly.

Further information about [airspace regulation](https://www.casa.gov.au/operations-safety-and-travel/airspace/airspace-regulation) and the [airspace change process](https://www.casa.gov.au/operations-safety-and-travel/airspace/airspace-regulation/airspace-change-process) is available on the CASA website.

**What happens next**

Once the consultation has closed, we will register and review each submission received through the online response form. We will make all submissions publicly available on the Consultation Hub, unless you request your submission remains confidential. We will also publish the final report and recommendations on our website.

Information about how we consult and how to make a confidential submission is available on the [CASA website.](https://www.casa.gov.au/rules/changing-rules/consultation-industry-and-public)

To be notified of any future consultations, subscribe to our [consultation and rulemaking mailing list](https://updates.communication.casa.gov.au/link/id/zzzz5e8be6d10ee5b225/page.html?prompt=1).

Personal information

**1**What is your name?

Name *(Required)*

**2**What is your email address?

email *(Required)*

**3**Do your views officially represent those of an organisation?

*(Required)*

*Please select all that apply*

* Yes, I am authorised to submit feedback on behalf of an organisation
* No, these are my personal views

If yes, please specify the name of your organisation

Consent to publish submission

In order to promote debate and transparency, we intend to publish all responses to this consultation. This may include both detailed responses/submissions in full and aggregated data drawn from the responses received.

Where you consent to publication, we may include:

* **your last name**, if the submission is made by you as an individual
* **your responses and comments**

We **will not** include any other personal or demographic information in a published response.

Information about how we consult and how to make a confidential submission is available on the [**CASA website**.](https://www.casa.gov.au/rules/changing-rules/consultation-industry-and-public)

**4**Do you give permission for your response to be published?

*(Required)*

*Please select only one item*

* Yes - I give permission for my response/submission to be published.
* No - I would like my response/submission to remain confidential but understand that de-identified aggregate data may be published.
* I am a CASA officer.

About you

**5**What best describes your primary role? Select all that apply

*Please select all that apply*

* Air transport pilot
* Chief pilot
* Commercial pilot
* Recreational pilot/private pilot
* Remotely piloted aircraft systems Pilot
* Student pilot
* Safety manager
* Other

**6**Which sector are you primarily in? Select all that apply

*Please select all that apply*

* Aerial work
* Aerodrome services
* Air traffic controller
* Air transport operator – large (Part 121)
* Air transport operator – small (Part 135/charter)
* Business aviation
* Flight training
* Private flying
* Sport aviation
* Remotely piloted aircraft systems
* Government organisation
* Consultant and other professional services/unions
* Other

**7**What flight rules do you operate under?

*(Required)*

*Please select only one item*

* IFR only
* VFR only
* Both IFR and VFR
* Not applicable

**8**Do you conduct operations with a sport aviation body? Select all that apply

*(Required)*

*Please select all that apply*

* No, I do not conduct operations with a sport aviation body
* Australian Balloon Federation
* Australian Parachute Federation
* Australian Skydiving Association
* Australian Sport Rotorcraft Association
* Australian Warbirds Association Limited
* Gliding Federation Australia
* Recreational Aviation Australia
* Sports Aviation Federation of Australia
* Other (please specify)

**9**What type of aircraft do you operate? Select all that apply

*(Required)*

*Please select all that apply*

* Helicopter
* Aeroplane
* Gyroplane
* Hot air balloon
* Air ship
* Powered-lift aircraft
* Not applicable

ADS-B ground station

Automatic Dependent Surveillance - Broadcast (ADS-B) ground stations receive ADS-B (out) signals from aircraft and relay them to the air traffic control system.

Relevant recommendation: 3

CASA should direct Airservices Australia to install an Automatic Dependent Surveillance - Broadcast (ADS-B) ground station in the vicinity of Ballina to improve surveillance as soon as practicable but no later than December 2022. The ground station should, as far as is practical, provide ADS-B surveillance capability to the runway surface.

**10**Do you agree there is a need to install an Automatic Dependent Surveillance - Broadcast (ADS-B) ground station in the vicinity of Ballina to improve surveillance?

*(Required)*

*Please select only one item*

* Strongly agree
* Agree
* Neutral
* Disagree
* Strongly disagree

Please tell us why you think this:

**11**When do you think an ADS-B ground station is required in the vicinity of Ballina?

*(Required)*

*Please select only one item*

* As soon as possible
* December 2022
* June 2023
* December 2023
* June 2024
* December 2024
* 2025 or later
* Not sure
* NA - I don't think it is needed

Approach control service

An Approach Control Service is an air traffic control service for arriving or departing controlled flights. Controlled flights are subject to airways clearances.

Relevant recommendation: 7

As an interim action pending the completion of Recommendation 8, CASA should make a determination to establish a control area around Ballina Byron Gateway Airport with a base which is as low as possible, and direct Airservices Australia to provide services within the control area. The services should be provided during all periods of scheduled Air Transport Operations and include an Approach Control Service to aircraft operating under the Instrument Flight Rules (IFR), separation between IFR aircraft, VFR traffic information to all aircraft, and sequencing of all aircraft to and from the runway. CASA and Airservices Australia should jointly explore opportunities to detect non-cooperative aircraft or vehicles in the immediate vicinity of the runway. The services should be established as soon as practicable but no later than 15 June 2023.

**12**Do you agree there is a need to provide an Approach Control Service to IFR aircraft operating into Ballina Byron Gateway Airport?

*(Required)*

*Please select only one item*

* Strongly agree
* Agree
* Neutral
* Disagree
* Strongly disagree

Please tell us why you think this:

**13**When do you think an Approach Control Service for IFR into Ballina is required?

*(Required)*

*Please select only one item*

* As soon as possible
* December 2022
* June 2023
* December 2023
* June 2024
* December 2024
* 2025 or later
* Not sure
* NA - I don't think it is needed

Separation service

A separation service is where air traffic control applies a separation standard between two or more aircraft for example 1,000 FT or 3NM.

**14**Do you agree there is a need to provide a separation service between IFR aircraft operating into Ballina Byron Gateway Airport?

*(Required)*

*Please select only one item*

* Strongly agree
* Agree
* Neutral
* Disagree
* Strongly disagree

Please tell us why you think this:

**15**When do you think a separation service between IFR aircraft operating into Ballina is required?

*(Required)*

*Please select only one item*

* As soon as possible
* December 2022
* June 2023
* December 2023
* June 2024
* December 2024
* 2025 or later
* Not sure
* NA - I don't think it is needed

Sequencing aircraft

Sequencing is the air traffic control practice of arranging and communicating traffic flows.

**16**Do you agree there is a need to sequence all aircraft to and from the runway and within the circuit area to proactively manage runway usage at Ballina Byron Gateway Airport?

*(Required)*

*Please select only one item*

* Strongly agree
* Agree
* Neutral
* Disagree
* Strongly disagree

Please tell us why you think this:

**17**When do you think a sequencing service is required?

*(Required)*

*Please select only one item*

* As soon as possible
* December 2022
* June 2023
* December 2023
* June 2024
* December 2024
* 2025 or later
* Not sure
* NA - I don't think it is needed

Traffic information

Traffic information is issued by an air traffic services unit to alert a pilot to other known or observed air traffic which may be in proximity to the position or intended route of flight and to help the pilot avoid a collision.

**18**Do you agree there is a need to provide traffic information on known VFR traffic to all aircraft operating into Ballina Byron Gateway Airport?

*(Required)*

*Please select only one item*

* Strongly agree
* Agree
* Neutral
* Disagree
* Strongly disagree

Please tell us why you think this:

**19**When do you think a traffic information service should be available?

*(Required)*

*Please select only one item*

* As soon as possible
* December 2022
* June 2023
* December 2023
* June 2024
* December 2024
* 2025 or later
* Not sure
* NA - I don't think it is needed

Controlled airspace

Aircraft can become known to Air Traffic Control by a variety of means for example, by use of a VHF radio or via electronic surveillance.

**20**If controlled airspace was established, do you agree there is a need for all VFR aircraft operating into Ballina Byron Gateway Airport to be known to ATC?

*(Required)*

*Please select only one item*

* Strongly agree
* Agree
* Neutral
* Disagree
* Strongly disagree

Please tell us why you think this:

**21**When do you think a controlled airspace service should be available?

*(Required)*

*Please select only one item*

* As soon as possible
* December 2022
* June 2023
* December 2023
* June 2024
* December 2024
* 2025 or later
* Not sure
* NA - I don't think it is needed

Detecting non-cooperative aircraft and vehicles

Non-cooperative aircraft or vehicles are those which have either intentionally or unintentionally failed to comply with a requirement to make themselves known or to operate in a certain way.

**22**Do you agree there is a need to establish a capability to detect non-cooperative aircraft and vehicles in the immediate vicinity of the runway at Ballina to enable corrective action?

*(Required)*

*Please select only one item*

* Strongly agree
* Agree
* Neutral
* Disagree
* Strongly disagree

Please tell us why you think this:

**23**When do you think a non-cooperative aircraft and vehicle detection service should be available?

When do you think a non-cooperative aircraft and vehicle detection service should be available? *(Required)*

*Please select only one item*

* As soon as possible
* December 2022
* June 2023
* December 2023
* June 2024
* December 2024
* 2025 or later
* Not sure
* NA - I don't think it is needed

Aerodrome control service

An Aerodrome Control Service provides an air traffic control service for aerodrome traffic.

Aerodrome traffic includes aircraft flying in a designated volume of airspace in the vicinity of the aerodrome inclusive of the circuit area and operating on the manoeuvring area.

The Aerodrome Control Service nominates the runway-in-use, issues taxi, take-off, and landing clearances as well as providing essential local traffic information.

Aerodrome Control Services have historically been provided from air traffic control towers; however, the service could be provided remotely via a Visual Surveillance System and other supporting systems.

Adopting an outcome focused approach, CASA will not require that an Aerodrome Control Service at Ballina to be provided from a traditional air traffic control tower. The decision on how a service will be provided will be decided by the service provider, with CASA providing oversight to ensure that service is compliant with relevant regulations and standards.

Relevant recommendation: 8

CASA should make a determination that Ballina Byron Gateway Airport will become a controlled aerodrome with an associated control zone and control area, and direct Airservices Australia to provide an Aerodrome Control Service to the aerodrome. That service should be established as soon as practicable but no later than 30 November 2023.

**24**Do you agree there is a need to provide an Aerodrome Control Service to aircraft operating into or out of Ballina Byron Gateway Airport?

*(Required)*

*Please select only one item*

* Strongly agree
* Agree
* Neutral
* Disagree
* Strongly disagree

Please tell us why you think this:

**25**When do you think an Aerodrome Control Service is required?

*(Required)*

*Please select only one item*

* As soon as possible
* December 2022
* June 2023
* December 2023
* June 2024
* December 2024
* 2025 or later
* Not sure
* NA - I don't think it is needed

Increasing situational awareness

Changes in the traffic mix, nature and volume of activity in the vicinity of Ballina are creating complexity leading to poorer that desired situational awareness outcomes.  Some operators have reported that itinerant pilots have errantly provided inaccurate or poorly described position broadcasts. Promulgating uncertified aerodromes and flight training areas that are currently not published on aeronautical charts is considered an appropriate measure to improve pilot situational awareness.

Relevant recommendation: 6

Uncertified aerodromes and flight training areas around Ballina should be promulgated in aeronautical publications to increase pilot situational awareness.

**26**Do you agree that uncertified aerodromes and flight training areas around Ballina should be promulgated in aeronautical publications to increase pilot situational awareness?

*(Required)*

*Please select only one item*

* Strongly agree
* Agree
* Neutral
* Disagree
* Strongly disagree

Please tell us why you think this:

Final comments

Your feedback will help us to finalise the Ballina airspace review including implementation of recommendations.

Draft Ballina airspace review recommendations

The OAR applies a precautionary approach when conducting airspace reviews. The following recommendations are consistent with the CASA Board’s direction that aviation safety risks must be reduced to the lowest practical and proportionate level.

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**27**Do you have any other feedback or concerns regarding the Draft Airspace Review of Ballina 2022?