



**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**  
FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

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STANDING COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM  
Mr Jeremy Hanson MLA (Chair), Ms Suzanne Orr MLA (Deputy Chair),  
Mr Michael Petterson MLA

## Submission Cover Sheet

**Inquiry into drone delivery systems in the ACT**

**Submission Number: 084**

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Secretary  
Standing Committee on Economic Development and Tourism  
(Drone Delivery Systems in the ACT)  
ACT Legislative Assembly

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**Submission regarding Drone Delivery Systems in the ACT**

Although I live in an area yet to be directly-affected, I am deeply concerned about the prospect of delivery drones in the ACT.

To intrude on a whole community's quiet enjoyment and residential amenity on an ongoing basis requires an evident necessity and public good. This has not been demonstrated in this instance, notwithstanding the specious arguments advanced by and on behalf of those with a direct commercial interest in the venture.

The necessity, willingness and ability of the elderly and disabled to access this "service" has been grossly overstated. Indeed, it is precisely the elderly and disabled who would have most difficulty in accessing the actual drone delivery on arrival somewhere on their property.

It is clear that the proponents of the scheme envisage making commercial profits by promoting more mundane and pervasive use of the facility, in particular fast food

It is one thing to make intermittent use of drones by public authorities for well-defined purposes, whether it be ACTEW maintenance surveys or emergency medications. It is another to take over the air space directly above residential areas for the profit of the few and the arguable convenience of a minority.

The noise issue has been canvassed widely: we are accustomed to relative peace and quiet in our suburbs, broken mainly by the sounds of birds – an essential feature of what makes Canberra the bush capital we love. If the scheme proves sufficiently patronised to be commercially viable, this will be a thing of the past. The noise of street traffic in the suburbs is largely buffered by buildings and vegetation. The same sound 30 or 50 metres in the air carries to a much greater degree. (One hears the call of a bird high in a tree 100 metres away much more clearly than one on the ground a fraction of that distance away).

A central concern is the effect that drones operating at these heights will have upon the abundant urban bird life of Canberra. It has been stated that few collisions with birds have been recorded but this is not the point. It is not just the risk of collision and direct harm: the presence of these drones at the heights that our suburban birds frequent can only serve to disturb the birds and their patterns of feeding, nesting and breeding. Many birds will simply

go elsewhere. We will lose a large and significant part of the quiet enjoyment of our property and its arboreal surrounds.

A range of birds use our property and the airspace directly above it and it is intolerable that they should be disturbed or driven away by unnecessary technological intrusion for narrow commercial advantage.

Until the present law is further clarified it is arguable that drones operating between 30 and 100 metres directly above my property without explicit permission may be committing trespass as well as intruding on my right of quiet enjoyment of my property.

One of the most disturbing features of the present situation is that the Civil Aviation Authority has made clear that it is concerned only with safety issues, not the loss of public and private amenity or the environmental consequences. Yet the ACT Government appears to be reluctant to step up to address these issues.

I would strongly urge that the systematic use of drones should be permitted in residential areas only by and on behalf of public authorities for clearly defined and authorised public purposes (including emergency medical deliveries).. The commercial delivery service presently being trialled should be banned.

In any event, there should be clear and restrictive regulation of drones by the ACT Government.

Yours faithfully

John Blount