



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

STANDING COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM
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Submission Cover Sheet

Inquiry into drone delivery systems in the ACT

Submission Number: 040

Date Authorised for Publication: 27 February 2019

Submission

Inquiry into drone delivery systems in the ACT

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I would like to make comments in relation to terms of reference 4 and 6

Term of Reference 4 - the extent of any environmental impact as a result of trialling drone delivery technology on:

(I) the residents within the trial area

While recognizing the convenience of drone delivery is attractive, especially for the 'time poor' consumer, my concern is that the long-term costs – often difficult to quantify – will be hard to remediate once the presence of drones has become commonplace in our suburban skyline.

A primary reason for my decision to settle in Canberra has been the combination of an inner-city urban experience and life in a natural environment. As I write this, I look out at a brilliant, clear open sky and listen to the active birdlife. I am a five-minute walk from bushland and a regenerated wetland — highly valued environments for residents and for native fauna.

There would need to be a very powerful reason for diluting the magnificent skyline with visual and noise pollution, or for stressing wildlife. I do not believe the convenience of delivery drones justifies this.

Term of Reference 6 – Any Other Relevant Matter

My professional background is in working with victims of crime, frequently women who have been subjected to ongoing acts of intimate partner and family violence. Perpetrators of interpersonal violence will often go to extreme lengths for extended periods of time — often many years, after a separation — to stalk, spy on and threaten their former partners and family members. Increasingly, spying technology of various forms is being used.

I'm not suggesting that delivery drones would be illegitimately used for this purpose, but that the normalisation of drones in an urban area would make it harder to detect an illegal drone being used to spy. Even if suspected, it would be difficult for the victim to take action and for law enforcement agencies to arrive in time to locate the drone's operator.

Drones overhead are likely to exacerbate feelings of unsafety for people already experiencing the ongoing psychological stress of living with the knowledge that a person is intent on controlling their life, and/or doing them physical harm.

Anna Weatherly