

From: [REDACTED]
To: [Seaplanes](#)
Subject: Comment on seaplanes discussion paper
Date: Monday, 21 June 2021 11:12:50 PM

Dear members of the NCA

I am writing as a member of the YMCA of Canberra Sailing Club to comment on the discussion paper regarding seaplanes on Lake Burley Griffin.

The YMCA Sailing Club, and other local sailing clubs use Lake Burley Griffin's West Lake for a number of activities, including sail training, club racing and the hosting of state and national level competitions. The area is also used for a number of other recreational purposes including swimming, rowing and private recreational boating. These activities add immeasurably to the vibrancy of the Lake. Through the YMCA Sailing Club's training program, and similar programs run by other clubs, we provide opportunities for citizens of Canberra and the local region to learn new skills, gain self-confidence, and compete at various levels in a fantastic sport. The conduct of state and national level regattas provides an opportunity to showcase Canberra to sailors from around the country.

Club racing at the YMCA Sailing Club takes place every Saturday afternoon from September to March. The Canberra Yacht Club's racing takes place every Sunday afternoon through the same period. Races are also conducted several times during the cooler months, and on weekday evenings during daylight saving. State and National level regattas can occur over several days during the summer. These races typically involve courses set between Spinnaker and Springbank Islands, Black Mountain Peninsula, Acton Peninsula and Lotus Bay - the same areas that are marked in the discussion paper as proposed landing zones for seaplane operations. As sailing races require fair competition, courses must be set in open water where possible and must be based on the wind strength and direction on the day. With boats varying in size and speed, fleets will generally spread over the racing area and each boat will manoeuvre as necessary to get around the course in the shortest possible time, not to avoid an aircraft that they may not see approaching until it is too close to avoid. Depending on the competition being run on the day, anything from a few dozen to 150 or more boats may be on the water at a time.

Training activities are also dependent on wind conditions, and will often take place in the same areas of the Lake. By their nature, these activities will usually involve less experienced sailors who are less confident in their boat handling. As a result the clubs try to conduct training activities away from other users of the Lake where possible.

West Lake is the only part of Lake Burley Griffin with sufficient open water that is accessible to the sailing clubs. The area is shown on maps produced by the NCA as the sailing area, and sailing clubs have established their facilities, including clubhouses, boat storage and rigging areas, adjacent to this area at Yarralumla Bay and Lotus Bay.

All of these activities would be threatened by the proposed use of seaplanes at these times on West Lake. Landings and take-offs in the middle of an area being used for racing or training would inevitably disrupt the sailing activities, and present an unacceptable risk of collision with potentially severe consequences. Just as it would be unacceptable to schedule aircraft landings or take-offs on a playing field being used for any other sport, seaplanes should not be operating on West Lake while sailing activities are taking place. If the operation of seaplanes on Lake Burley Griffin is desired, a far preferable location would be the central basin of Lake Burley Griffin.

Yours sincerely
Chris Sant

