MELBOURNE
A I R P O R T

31 January 2006

Dr Glenn Worthington
Inquiry Secretary
Joint Committee on Public Accounts and Audit
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Dr Worthington

Further Review of Aviation Security in Australia

Please find below our response to questions taken on notice during my appearance before the Committee on 24 November 2005.

1. Melbourne Airport currently issues approximately 12,000 Visitor Identification Cards (VICs) per annum (approximately 33 per day).

    The number of VICs issued is gradually reducing following the recent implementation of an airside delivery strategy, requiring regular delivery drivers (in excess of one delivery per month) to have and display an Aviation Security Identification Card (ASIC).

    This will largely confine the number of people being issued VICs on a repetitive basis to construction and short-term maintenance staff, based at the airport for a pre-determined finite period, and new employees awaiting completion of the ASIC issuing process.

    It should be noted that all people issued with VICs are required to be under the constant supervision of an ASIC holder whilst on the airside and all people entering through Gate 35 (our major airside access point) are subject to a search and inspection process prior to entering airside.

2. The feasibility of recording the weight of each individual bag and the check-in point at which the bag was weighed is predominantly an airline, rather than airport, issue. While we can happily make further enquiries concerning the issue, it may be best if the Committee addresses the issue with the airlines directly.

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3.   In regards to the ability to record images of screened bags and connecting them to baggage identifiers, the following points are relevant:

   ▪ Currently, all bar one of our x-ray machines are not capable of recording and storing images. In regards to the machine that can, the storage capacity is limited. Based on bag throughput, it is estimated that images could be stored for an average of one week.

   ▪ There is no x-ray, and therefore no storage, capability for oversized or 'out-of-gauge' items. Screening of these items is undertaken via explosive trace detection and physical search processes.

4.   A copy of the Melbourne Airport Security Audit Program is enclosed for the Committee's review.

5.   Of the 6,500 Aviation Security Identification Cards issued by Melbourne Airport, approximately 150 (2%) have terminal landside access only. The remainder have at least some degree of airside / sterile area access.

6.   A report comprising Passenger Screening TIPs results for 2003, 2004 and 2005 is enclosed.

   The report distinguishes between TIPs results in the International Terminal Building (ITB), South Terminal (ST) and Regional Express (REX).

   The significant dip in mid 2004 is consistent with the introduction of an enhanced library of images. Since that time the results have progressively increased from a percentage in the low 80s to mid to high 80s and, over recent months, 90%. This is considered a very good result.

7.   Melbourne Airport currently has approximately 500 General Aviation movements per annum. This represents less that 1% of total aircraft movements.

In concluding, I should add that this information and all accompanying documents are obviously very sensitive and, in the case of the Security Audit Program proprietary in nature, and therefore need to be kept confidential. I ask that the Committee keep careful control of the information and documents (including any copies) and ensure that they are returned or destroyed at the conclusion of the Committee's work.

Please contact me on 9297 1660 if I can be of further assistance in the review.

Yours sincerely

John Nahyna
General Manager Operations