



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Standing Committee on Transport and Regional Services

MEDIA ALERT

Issued: 8 September 2003

Chair: Paul Neville MP

Inquiry into regional aviation in Australia

CASA and WA Government to give evidence at final hearing of inquiry into regional aviation

The House of Representatives Transport and Regional Services Committee is examining the adequacy of regional aviation services in Australia and transport links to Australia's major populated islands.

The committee will hold the 14th and final public hearing of its inquiry in Canberra this Wednesday, 10 September, to gather evidence from the Civil Aviation Safety Authority (CASA) and the Western Australian State Government.

Domestic aviation safety has been reviewed 15 times in the past 20 years. In November 2002, the Minister for Transport and Regional Services announced the latest tranche of reforms to CASA.

House Transport Committee Chair, Mr Paul Neville MP, says: "The regional aviation inquiry has revealed that regulation and the manner in which it is administered can impose significant costs on the industry, particularly small operators.

"The Committee is considering whether the CASA reforms announced by the Government will address the industry's concerns."

Western Australia encompasses one-third of Australia's land area, and regional air services are vital to its outlying communities. However, many routes struggle to be economically viable. The Western Australian Government is calling for a cooperative approach to providing assistance to air services and airport infrastructure from the three levels of government. The Committee will question the State government on its position.

"These are the final hearings planned for the inquiry," Mr Neville said. "There has been strong interest in the inquiry with nearly 190 submissions received and a number of public hearings conducted around regional Australia. The Committee expects to table its report by the end of the year."

Media and the public are most welcome to attend the public hearing, details of which appear below.

HEARING DETAILS

PUBLIC HEARING:	Wednesday, 10 September 2003, 9.05am - 10.45am
WHERE:	Committee Room 1R4, Parliament House, Canberra
SCHEDULED WITNESSES:	Western Australian Government and Civil Aviation Safety Authority

For **media comment**, please contact:

Paul Neville, House Transport and Regional Services Committee Chair, on (02) 6277 4940

For **background information**, including the full terms of reference and copies of submissions, please contact the Committee secretariat on (02) 6277 2352 or visit the Inquiry website at www.aph.gov.au/house/committee/trs/aviation/index.htm