

Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport

QUESTION ON NOTICE

Additional Estimates 2023 - 2024

Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts

Committee Question Number: 97

Departmental Question Number: SQ24-000096

Division/Agency Name: Agency - Civil Aviation Safety Authority

Hansard Reference: Spoken, Page No. 137 (12 February 2024)

Topic: CASA – Air incidents

Senator Malcolm Roberts asked:

Senator ROBERTS: [...] I asked at the previous estimates whether CASA was aware of all the incidents in relation to Qantas on a list that I circulated. Ms Spence told me that these were all ones that CASA was aware of, yet in the answer to question on notice SQ23003791 CASA clarified it actually wasn't aware of five of the provided incidents. Can you clarify whether those events were then self-reported or if CASA had to make inquiries to Qantas to initiate those reports?

Ms Spence: Sorry, I don't think that was at the last hearings. Was it at the hearing before that you raised those issues?

Senator ROBERTS: It was October-November 2023.

Ms Spence: It wasn't at our last hearings, I don't think.

Senator ROBERTS: That's the date I've got written on the Hansard reference.

Ms Spence: Sorry, I'll have to take that on notice. I don't have the information in front of me. Apologies.[WR1]

[...]

Ms Spence: [...] I'll take on notice what it means when we say 'this event has now been reported'.

Senator ROBERTS: You also told me that the frequency of incidents on the list that I gave you, before you'd seen it, was not out of the ordinary. If some of the incidents weren't reported to you then it's hard for you to say that there isn't an increase in frequency, correct?

Ms Spence: That's correct.

Senator ROBERTS: Thank you. If you look at the last one there, the October 2022 Perth-Sydney incident, it remained unreported. What is the status of your investigations on this incident?

Ms Spence: We don't investigate. The ATSB investigates.

Senator ROBERTS: So you didn't chase it up with Qantas?

Ms Spence: As I said, I'll take on notice what it means when we say 'this event has now been reported' and what we did, but at the end of the day we do not do accident or incident investigations.

Answer:

In response to Committee Question Number 193 (SQ23-003791) from the 2023-24 Budget Estimates hearing, the Civil Aviation Safety Authority (CASA) noted that at the time of responding, there were 5 items that it had been unable to verify.

In our subsequent response to Committee Question Number 391 (SQ23-004944) from the 2023-24 Supplementary Budget Estimates hearing, CASA confirmed that 4 of the 5 had since been reported.

All of the 5 have now been reported.

As indicated previously, all aviation incidents must be reported to the Australian Transport Safety Bureau (ATSB).

With respect to the question about the status of CASA's investigation of the October 2022 Perth-Sydney incident, CASA reiterates that it does not routinely investigate individual incidents and accidents. That is a matter for the ATSB. CASA is made aware of incidents through the sharing of safety information by the ATSB. CASA reviews incident and accident data to determine whether there may be systemic issues requiring CASA intervention such as through surveillance, audits or targeted safety education.