

Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport

QUESTION ON NOTICE

Additional Estimates 2023 - 2024

Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts

Committee Question Number: 135

Departmental Question Number: SQ24-000223

Division/Agency Name: Agency - Airservices Australia

Hansard Reference: Written (22 February 2024)

Topic: AIRSERVICES - SODPROPS extended weekend hours

Senator Janet Rice asked:

From 7 May 2022, Airservices announced the SODPROPS Weekend Extension Trial, which re-introduced SODPROPS from 6-8am Sat/Sun and 8pm-10pm Sat.

- Why has Airservices stopped producing reports on this trial for more than 12 months now?
- How often have ATCs actually been able to put Brisbane Airport into SODPROPS mode during those extended weekend hours over the last 12 months?
- Please provide the missing data in the same format as in the 2022 quarterly reports, including:
 - Total hours of SODPROPS between 6am - 8am on weekends
 - Number of flights directed over the bay between 6am - 8am on weekends
 - Total hours of SODPROPS between 8pm - 10pm on weekends
 - Number of flights directed over the bay between 8pm - 10pm on weekends
 - Total hours SODPROPS was used over a 24 hour period
 - Number of flights directed over the bay during SODPROPS operations.

Answer:

- Reporting on the trial ceased when the trial ended in February 2023. The trial enabled more aircraft to operate over water and therefore away from communities, and as a result, it was determined to adopt the trial on a permanent basis, where weather and safety conditions permitted its use.

As part of the Noise Action Plan for Brisbane, recommendation 1.4, Airservices is developing public reporting to increase transparency of operations which will include SODPROPS use, Noise Abatement Procedures use, aircraft tracking and altitude and noise complainant and complaint reporting.

- The total hours and number of aircraft movements achieved during the ongoing extended SODPROPS hours over the past 12 months (1 February 2023 to 31 January 2024) are provided below.

Saturday and Sunday 6am to 8am	
Total hours weather and safety conditions permitted the use of SODPROPS between 6am - 8am on weekends	12.8 hours
Number of flights directed over the bay during SODPROPS between 6am - 8am on weekends	200
Saturday and Sunday 8pm to 10pm	
Total hours weather and safety conditions permitted the use of SODPROPS between 8pm – 10pm on weekends	38.9 hours
Number of flights directed over the bay during SODPROPS between 8pm - 10pm on weekends	364
Total SODPROPS 24 hours, 7 days a week	
Total hours SODPROPS was used over this period	729.2 hours
Number of flights directed over the bay during SODPROPS operations	4582

To operate SODPROPS, specific weather conditions are required including:

- dry runway;
- less than 5 knots in either direction (tailwind);
- cloud base not lower than 2500ft; and
- visibility of a minimum of 8km.

As a low capacity mode, total traffic of less than 20 arrivals per hour is also required to operate in this mode.