

**Question on notice no. 110**

**Portfolio question number: 110**

**2020-21 Additional estimates**

**Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Committee, Infrastructure,  
Transport, Regional Development and Communications Portfolio**

**Senator Glenn Sterle:** asked the Airservices Australia on 23 March 2021—

I understand several concerns have been raised regarding firefighting capacity at Brisbane Airport. Are you aware of these concerns? Have there been any occasions where there have not been sufficient personnel or vehicles at Brisbane Airport to meet safety requirements? I understand there is a distance of two kilometres between the runways at Brisbane Airport, how does this impact firefighting capacity? I understand that to be able to meet response times at both runways, vehicles are sometimes instructed to drive one vehicle out to a location between the two. Is this true? How has that location been determined? Is this standard procedure at airports across the country? Internationally, what is considered best practice for Aviation firefighters charged with responding to emergencies on two parallel runways located kilometres apart?

**Answer —**

Answer attached.

**Rural & Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee**  
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE  
Additional Estimates 2020 - 2021  
**Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications**

**Committee Question Number:** 110  
**Departmental Question Number:** SQ21-000007

**Program:** n/a  
**Division/Agency:** Airservices Australia  
**Topic:** Brisbane Airport Firefighting Capacity  
**Proof Hansard Page:** Written 23 March 2021

**Senator Glenn Sterle asked:**

I understand several concerns have been raised regarding firefighting capacity at Brisbane Airport.

1. Are you aware of these concerns?
2. Have there been any occasions where there have not been sufficient personnel or vehicles at Brisbane Airport to meet safety requirements?
3. I understand there is a distance of two kilometres between the runways at Brisbane Airport, how does this impact firefighting capacity?
4. I understand that to be able to meet response times at both runways, vehicles are sometimes instructed to drive one vehicle out to a location between the two. Is this true?
  - i. How has that location been determined?
  - ii. Is this standard procedure at airports across the country?
  - iii. Internationally, what is considered best practice for Aviation firefighters charged with responding to emergencies on two parallel runways located kilometres apart?

**Answer:**

1. Yes. Airservices Australia (Airservices) has addressed concerns raised in relation to fire fighting capacity at Brisbane Airport in previous senate estimates hearings, including the 2018 senate inquiry into Aviation Rescue Fire Fighting Services (ARFFS) and responses to Questions on Notice.
2. No.
3. The ARFFS operating model at Brisbane Airport is designed to take into consideration the specific site requirements to ensure that ARFFS complies with its regulated responsibilities.
4. In an emergency situation, the Officer in Charge (OIC) may direct a vehicle to be deployed to a standby position located between the two runways to provide the most effective response.
  - i. The location was identified as part of a previously completed and regulator-approved Concept Design Safety Case and Vehicle Runway Test Times.
  - ii. Yes.
  - iii. Airservices applies international standards, specifically those of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), which requires ARFFS to identify and mitigate potential risks through appropriate risk assessment and management.