

**Question on notice no. 153**

**Portfolio question number: SQ23-005361**

**2023-24 Supplementary Budget estimates**

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

**Senator Bridget McKenzie:** asked the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts on 2 November 2023—

(1. Chapter 7 of the ATSB report titled "Aerodrome design standards and the Bulla Road Precinct development at Essendon Fields Airport" notes that there was no regulatory assurance framework between CASA and Airservices to the Department of Infrastructure prior to 2019.

Will the Department be conducting an audit on all structures constructed prior to 2019, on federal aviation land, to ensure compliance with the current safety standards, as these structures were approved prior to the safety assurance framework being implemented?

2. If this has been undertaken, what evidence does the Department of Infrastructure have on the results?

**Answer —**

Please find answer attached

**Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport**

**QUESTION ON NOTICE**

**Supplementary Budget Estimates 2023 - 2024**

**Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts**

**Committee Question Number: 153**

**Departmental Question Number: SQ23-005361**

**Division/Agency Name: DIV - Domestic Aviation and Reform**

**Hansard Reference: Written (02 November 2023)**

**Topic: Assurance framework - Structures constructed prior to 2019**

**Senator Bridget McKenzie asked:**

1. Chapter 7 of the ATSB report titled "Aerodrome design standards and the Bulla Road Precinct development at Essendon Fields Airport" notes that there was no regulatory assurance framework between CASA and Airservices to the Department of Infrastructure prior to 2019.

Will the Department be conducting an audit on all structures constructed prior to 2019, on federal aviation land, to ensure compliance with the current safety standards, as these structures were approved prior to the safety assurance framework being implemented?

2. If this has been undertaken, what evidence does the Department of Infrastructure have on the results?

**Answer:**

The Australian Transport Safety Bureau (ATSB) acknowledged in its final Transport Safety Investigation Report AI-2018-010 (Page 105) that although, *"in 2004, the Department of Transport and Regional Services did not have an agreed assurance framework with the Civil Aviation Safety Authority for assessing the safety information in draft major development plans"*, the issue *"was raised for a point in time in 2004 and not reflective of contemporary practices"*. The Report noted that the issue (AI-2018-010-SI-04) was closed as *"adequately addressed"* and that *"the ATSB is satisfied that the arrangement established by the Department will ensure that advice on the safety and operational aspects of an airport draft major development plan will be provided by the Civil Aviation Safety Authority and Airservices Australia."*

The Report also notes that the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts and the Civil Aviation Safety Authority (CASA) had advised that an agreed assurance framework was in place in regards to the provision of advice by CASA to inform the Minister's decision on draft Major Development Plans. This long-running assurance process, in line with the requirements under the *Airports Act 1996*, has been in place since privatisation of federally-leased airports and was confirmed in correspondence between the department and CASA in 2019.