

Question on notice no. 255

Portfolio question number: SQ24-000266

2023-24 Additional estimates

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

Senator Malcolm Roberts: asked the Civil Aviation Safety Authority on 23 February 2024—

(1. Who was responsible for preparing the administrative release referred to in SQ23-004941? Please prepare to have them available to attend the May Estimates sessions.

2. Please provide a table of the 239 MC/SP/Prox records in the SQ23-004941 administrative release for FY22/23 and separately for comparison, a table of records that constitute the 151 FY 22/23 records contained in the answer. These can be redacted for personally identifying information but must have some information available that allows the record to be confirmed as a duplicate. This could be achieved for example by redacting the name of the holder except for their initials or redacting the certificate/license number except for the final four digits in the table.

Answer —

Please find answer attached

Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport

QUESTION ON NOTICE

Additional Estimates 2023 - 2024

Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts

Committee Question Number: 255

Departmental Question Number: SQ24-000266

Division/Agency Name: Agency - Civil Aviation Safety Authority

Hansard Reference: Written, Page No. (23 February 2024)

Topic: CASA - Freedom of Information figures

Senator Malcolm Roberts asked:

1. Who was responsible for preparing the administrative release referred to in SQ23-004941? Please prepare to have them available to attend the May Estimates sessions.
2. Please provide a table of the 239 MC/SP/Prox records in the SQ23-004941 administrative release for FY22/23 and separately for comparison, a table of records that constitute the 151 FY 22/23 records contained in the answer. These can be redacted for personally identifying information but must have some information available that allows the record to be confirmed as a duplicate. This could be achieved for example by redacting the name of the holder except for their initials or redacting the certificate/license number except for the final four digits in the table.

Answer:

The Civil Aviation Safety Authority (CASA) officer responsible for the administrative release referred to in Committee Question Number 388 (SQ23-004941) from the 2023-24 Supplementary Budget Estimates hearing has left the organisation.

CASA has responded to questions relating to the number of medical certificates with various restrictions on 3 previous occasions. In each case, data has been collated from our Medical Records System to answer the specific question. As these are not routine reports, they require development of database queries and manual collation and review.

In response to spoken questions at Estimates hearings in May 2023, data for the 5 years to 2021/22 was provided ((Committee Question number 191 (SQ23-003788) from the 2023-24 Budget Estimates hearing) relating to restrictions requiring a second pilot.

	FY 17/18	FY 18/19	FY 19/20	FY 20/21	FY 21/22
Certificates issued with multi-crew medical restriction	72	101	143	86	73

The same question was asked, but with slightly different wording, in a written question in June 2023 (Committee Question number 273 (SQ23-003974) from the 2023-24 Budget Estimates hearing). The same response was provided.

In March 2023, CASA received a Freedom of Information request for similar data, but with greater detail. The records did not exist, however information was collated and provided under an administrative release in May 2023.

A written question in November 2023 (Committee Question Number 288 (SQ23-004941) from the 2023-24 Supplementary Budget Estimates hearing) asked why the FOI request provided different information to that provided in response to the Question on Notice in June 2023.

Our detailed response included comprehensive data and explained that different parameters had been requested. It also noted that the data provided through the FOI administrative release “contained errors as there were duplicate records”.

The table provided in the answer to Committee Question Number 288 (SQ23-004941) from the 2023-24 Supplementary Budget Estimates hearing, providing medical certificates issued in each financial year with either a Multi-Crew, Safety Pilot or Proximity condition is below.

	FY 19/20	FY 20/21	FY 21/22	FY 22/23
Total on MC/SP/Prox	151	89	81	151
Class 1	93	52	34	101
ATPL	73	41	21	84
CPL	18	10	13	17
Class 2	50	34	39	42
Class 3	8	5	9	8
Total certs issued (from annual report):				
	FY 19/20	FY 20/21	FY 21/22	FY 22/23
Class 1	17,699	16,638	17,153	18,947
Class 2	23,937	22,675	22,936	25,672
Class 3	669	744	599	729

This question is seeking further detail on the difference between information provided under the FOI administrative release and the QON response in November 2023.

As previously noted, the FOI administrative release contained errors and duplicate records. Medical certificates are often issued as an ‘interim’ or ‘revalidation’ of a previous certificate where a medical assessment has not yet been concluded.

The request for further information would require significant extraction of data, manual review and redaction for privacy reasons. This cannot be provided without a substantial diversion of agency resources and representatives at the Estimates hearings can provide further details if required.