

Question on notice no. 395

Portfolio question number: 594

2019-20 Supplementary budget estimates

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

Senator Janet Rice: asked the Civil Aviation Safety Authority on 11 November 2019

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(1. CASA was aware of the proposed flight of a balloon over Parliament House on 15 October 2019 a fortnight ahead of the event. Why did they suddenly issue a no-fly zone, at odds with their advice that there are no restrictions on flights above APH?

2. What role did the Speaker/Senate President have in convincing/forcing CASA to issue the no-fly zone?

a. Has this political/parliamentary intervention ever been used before?

3. Given the prolific use of balloons in Canberra at events like the Balloon Spectacular, will this be an ongoing restriction?

4. Given that this no fly zone is freshly issued, if it isn't made a permanent fixture why was it used in this instance?

b. What genuine safety risk was posed by the balloon

Answer —

See attachment.

Rural & Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Supplementary Budget Estimates 2019 - 2020
Infrastructure, Transport, Cities and Regional Development

Committee Question Number: 395
Departmental Question Number: SQ19-000594

Program: n/a
Division/Agency: Civil Aviation Safety Authority
Topic: Temporary Airspace Restriction over Parliament House
Proof Hansard Page: Written (11 November 2019)

Senator Nick McKim asked:

1. CASA was aware of the proposed flight of a balloon over Parliament House on 15 October 2019 a fortnight ahead of the event. Why did they suddenly issue a no-fly zone, at odds with their advice that there are no restrictions on flights above APH?
2. What role did the Speaker/Senate President have in convincing/forcing CASA to issue the no-fly zone?
 - a. Has this political/parliamentary intervention ever been used before?
3. Given the prolific use of balloons in Canberra at events like the Balloon Spectacular, will this be an ongoing restriction?
4. Given that this no fly zone is freshly issued, if it isn't made a permanent fixture why was it used in this instance?
 - a. What genuine safety risk was posed by the balloon.

Answer:

1. CASA received a general enquiry regarding balloon operations over Parliament House on 2 October 2019, however this was not identified to be in relation to the intended operation on 15 October 2019. On 11 October 2019 CASA received an application for a Temporary Restricted Area (TRA) for security purposes to the airspace over Parliament House by the Department of Parliamentary Services on behalf of the Speaker of the House and the Senate President. CASA assessed the application and issued a TRA in accordance with the *Airspace Act 2007* and associated regulations.
2. None.
 - a. No.
3. The TRA was only issued for a temporary period and is no longer in force.
4. CASA received an application from an appropriately authorised person or agency for a TRA over Parliament House and considered the application in accordance with the *Airspace Act 2007*.
 - a. The application met the criteria for a TRA as set out in regulation 6(3) of the Airspace Regulations 2007. Safety is only one of the criteria considered in a TRA.