The Hon Jim Lloyd MP

MINISTER FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT, TERRITORIES AND ROADS

Reference: L2004/2489

Mr Bob Baldwin, Chairman
Joint Committee of Public Accounts and Audit
Suite R1.108
Parliament House
CANBERRA   ACT   2600

Bob

Dear Mr Chairman

As Acting Minister for Transport and Regional Services I congratulate you on your appointment to the Chair of the Joint Committee on Public Accounts and Audit (JCPAA) – an appointment I regard as being very important to the system of Government in this country.

On 24 June 2004, the JCPAA tabled in Parliament Report 400 entitled *Review of Aviation Security in Australia*. The Report had five recommendations and the Department of Transport and Regional Services was required to determine if these recommendations were policy or administrative in nature.

In August this year, the Minister notified the Department that he agreed with their assessment that all the recommendations were administrative in nature.

I have enclosed the departmental response to the administrative recommendations from the Report for you to table in Parliament.

Yours sincerely

JIM LLOYD

24/12/2004

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Australian Government

Department of Transport and Regional Services

EXECUTIVE MINUTE

on

**JOINT COMMITTEE OF PUBLIC ACCOUNTS AND AUDIT
REPORT 400**

Review of Aviation Security in Australia

General comments

This Minute provides the Department of Transport and Regional Services' response to the five recommendations of the Joint Committee of Public Accounts and Audit's Report 400: *Review of Aviation Security in Australia,* that was tabled in Parliament on 24 June 2004. The Department noted that the Committee was satisfied with the general standard of security at Australia's airports and on board aircraft, and the review was a positive report card for the aviation industry. All five recommendations in the Report are supported by the Department
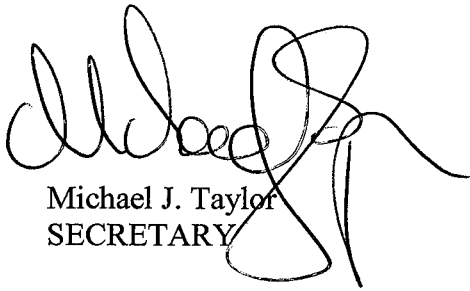
The Department also has noted the Committees' comments in sections 8.21 and 8.31 on auditing performance. Section 8.21 states that "The Committee expects that when DoTarRS assesses the proposed transport security programs of aviation participants, it ensures that internal audit programs reflect potential security threats." Section 8.31 states that "The Committee expects DoTaRS to meet its commitment in regard to training and auditing manuals." Whilst these comments are not formal recommendations by the Committee, they are supported by the Department.

Following the announcement of the inquiry on 5 June 2003 the Department made a number of submissions to the Committee which outlined its overall regulatory responsibilities with regards to aviation security and addressed various questions raised by the Committee during the course of the review. Departmental officers also appeared as witnesses at public hearings held by the Committee and were pleased to assist in inspections of Kingsford Smith Airport in Sydney, Tamworth Airport and Coffs Harbour Airport undertaken by members of the Committee.

The Department also would like to express its appreciation for the opportunity to participate in the review and for the consideration given to departmental officers by the Committee and its Secretariat during the course of the review.

The Department, as part of its audit and compliance program, audits compliance with the above requirements.

The Department, in conjunction with the aviation Industry Consultative Committee, is reviewing the adequacy of the current qualification and training through a specifically convened working group. This review will also take into account amendments to the International Civil Aviation Organization's requirements and overseas experience. The review will also identify other staff in the aviation sector who undertake security functions with the aim of introducing nationally consistent training regimes.

Michael J. Taylor
SECRETARY

14 December 2004

Response to the five recommendations

> **Recommendation No.1, paragraph 5.63**
>
> When an Australian Government security agency committee is established at a particular airport, the Department of Transport and Regional Services should be responsible for establishing a memorandum of understanding between the Government security agency committee and the corresponding airport security committee.

The recommendation is supported.

The Department has established Australian Government Agencies' Airport Security Committees (AGAASC) in major Australian international airports.

Working arrangements between individual AGAASCs and Aviation Security Committees are being developed: this includes memoranda of understanding.

> **Recommendation No.2, paragraph 6.15**
>
> The requirement for airport security committees and other essential requirements for aviation security programs should be defined in the *Aviation Transport Security Regulations 2004*.

The recommendation is supported.

The requirements for airport security committees and for aviation security programs are defined in the *Aviation Transport Security Regulations*, due for consideration by Parliament early in 2005.

> **Recommendation No.3, paragraph 6.33**
>
> The Department of Transport and Regional Services should set a performance standard for the return of expired aviation security identification cards (ASICs) for each card issuing body. If this standard is not met, the department should review the mechanisms for ASIC return in the issuing body's ASIC program and require change if considered necessary.

The recommendation is supported.

The Department of Transport and Regional Services is currently preparing draft regulations under the *Aviation Transport Security Act 2004* and guidance material for industry consistent with recommendation 6.33

Aviation Security Identification Card issuing bodies will be required to clearly identify how they intend to manage the retrieval of ASICs that have expired within the regulated timeframe and the mechanism they will use to do so.

Recommendation No.4, paragraph 7.41

The Department of Transport and Regional Services should require aviation participants to include in their transport security programs compulsory initial and ongoing security awareness training for airport security identification card holders who have not received security training as part of their normal duties.

The recommendation is supported.

The Department of Transport and Regional Services is currently preparing draft regulations under the *Aviation Transport Security Act 2004*. It is proposed that a transport security program for an aviation industry participant set out mechanisms to provide general security awareness training to operational staff, including details of key training requirements.

Recommendation No.5, paragraph 9.51

The Department of Transport and Regional Services should ensure that the security programs of aviation industry participants include educational instruments designed to promote an appropriate attitude to security and, through this, a robust security culture.

The recommendation is supported.

Screening of people, vehicles and goods at security categorised airports in Australia is conducted in a uniform manner to approved standards. These standards have been developed in close consultation with industry and are mandated by law under Commonwealth legislation.

Screening officers must obtain a nationally recognised qualification – a Certificate II in Security (Guarding) with special application to Aviation Training. They must also undergo an initial 40 hours on the job training and recurrent training. The latter requires that they be assessed as competent by a qualified assessor, at least in the preceding 12 months in relation to specified topics. In addition, a trainer must complete regular tests of their competency in x-ray image interpretation.