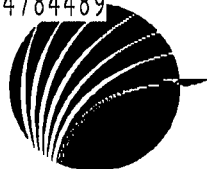
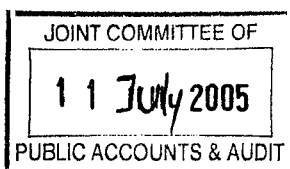


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**PERTH
AIRPORT**

Submission No:43.....

Australian Major Airport of the Year 2003

11 July 2005

The Secretary
Joint Committee of Public Accounts and Audit
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Sir

**SUBMISSION TO THE FEDERAL PARLIAMENT PUBLIC ACCOUNTS AND
AUDIT COMMITTEE**

**INQUIRY INTO DEVELOPMENTS IN AVIATION SECURITY SINCE THE
COMMITTEE'S JUNE 2004 REPORT**

The following submission is provided by Westralia Airports Corporation as the operator of Perth Airport, Western Australia.

The submission addresses the Committee's terms of reference for the enquiry.

- a) **Regulation of aviation security by the Department of Transport and Regional Services, and the Department's response to security incidents since June 2004.**

It is considered appropriate for the Department of Transport and Regional Services (DOT&RS) to continue as the agency responsible for the regulatory role of aviation security in Australia. It is noted that our concerns expressed in our submission of 2004 on the resources available within the Department to perform this function have been addressed.

WAC does not have any issues with the Department in the manner in which they have handled security incidents since 2004.

Concerns expressed in our previous submission relating the understanding of jurisdictional responsibilities between responding agencies are still appropriate. These matters may be addressed by the Government's recent decision to appoint Airport Security Controllers within the Australian Federal Police.

Aviation security measures should be developed to counter risks identified through a robust risk assessment process or in response to credible threat information obtained through intelligence gathering. Measures hastily conceived and based on a perception of risk engendered by a media beat up of isolated incidents or a misunderstanding of airport/airline operations by the public have the potential to be costly to implement with questionable security outcomes.

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Recent security upgrades to perform mandated checked baggage screening and the recent announcement to implement enhanced perimeter security will have significant cost and operational implications for Perth Airport. The recent announcements to further increase security would appear to pre-empt the findings of the forthcoming review of aviation security to be conducted by Sir John Wheeler.

Security measures at airports provide a measure of protection for the assets of the airport operator and the airlines. In addition these security measures provide general protection for the public and assets of the states and the Commonwealth. Accordingly the cost of providing aviation security measures should not be the sole burden of the aviation industry and the travelling public. The Commonwealth should provide a financial contribution that is commensurate with the level of protection that aviation security provides to the wider community of Australia.

Given that the Commonwealth receives revenues due to over recovery of border control costs through the Passenger Movement Charge levied on departing international passengers, it would be appropriate to apply these funds to aviation security.

With regards to costs recovered from the aviation industry, it would be appropriate to determine the rate of recovery (by passenger etc) on a national basis. Location specific cost recovery would result in unsustainable unit charges at smaller airports, to the extent that air services may not be economically viable and thus inhibit regional development. Aviation security is for the benefit of the nation as a whole, rather than site specific.

f) Privacy implications of greater security measures.

While there is a layered approach in the application of security measures on airports, there is considerable focus on the screening of passengers. Increased security measures and advanced technology to detect prohibited items may have the potential to be more intrusive with the possibility of claims against security personnel of inappropriate personal contact or behaviour.

Airport workers are also subjected to detailed security checks to enable the issuing of Aviation Security Identification Cards (ASICs). ASIC issuing authorities must conduct the security clearance process, in accordance with the Privacy Act. Personal information provided by applicants is now shared with other agencies as part of the clearance process limiting the ability of the ASIC issuing authority to ensure Privacy Act compliance. Opportunities for ASIC issuing authorities to conduct security checks for ASIC applicants quickly with online access to appropriate information should be fully explored.

Recent consultation with DOT&RS and the possibility of establishing an independent body to conduct assessment of persons as being acceptable to hold an ASIC should be further pursued.