



Albury City Submission – Review of Aviation Security

Reference: 50/10/0010
Contact: Mr Dale Blampied

8 August 2003

Mr John Carter
Committee Secretary
Joint Committee of Public Accounts & Audit
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Mr Carter

Subject: Review of Aviation Security in Australia

Please find enclosed a submission by AlburyCity as owner and operator of the Albury Airport, in respect of the Joint Committee of Public Accounts and Audit “Review of Aviation Security in Australia”.

Whilst I am aware the date for submissions has now passed I understand and appreciate that the Committee will accept this late submission.

AlburyCity, in August 2002, made a submission to the House Of Representatives Standing Committee on Transport and Regional Services “Inquiry into Commercial Regional Aviation and Transport Links to Major Populated Islands”.

One of the Terms of Reference of that inquiry related to regional aviation security. Comments made by AlburyCity at that time form the basis of this submission.

Should the Committee wish to discuss this submission please do not hesitate to contact me on (02) 6023 8233.

Yours faithfully

Dale Blampied
Manager Albury Services



Introduction

This submission is made by AlburyCity in response to the establishment of a review into aviation security by federal parliaments Public Accounts and Audit Committee.

AlburyCity, in August 2002, made a submission to the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Transport and Regional Services “Inquiry Into Commercial Regional Aviation Services in Australia and Transport Links to Major Populated Islands”.

A part of that submission referred to security issues associated with the regional aviation industry. It is those comments that form the basis of this submission.

Overview

AlburyCity owns and operates Albury airport.

Albury is a significant element in the Australian regional aviation network. It is among the top five New South Wales regional airports with approximately 110,000 and 20,000 passengers passing through Albury to Sydney (Kingsford Smith) and Melbourne (Tullamarine) airports respectively in the 12 months ended 30 June 2003.

Whilst this represents an overall decrease of 19% when compared to the period prior to Kendell and Hazelton Airlines entering receivership it is less marked than at most other New South Wales regional airports where decreases in passenger numbers of up to 80% were experienced.

Recently Brindabella airlines have commenced a service between Albury and Canberra utilising twin engine Piper Chieftans capable of carrying nine passengers.

Albury Airport is situated within controlled airspace. A control tower is provided and manned by AirServices Australia.

The provision of positive air traffic control for aircraft in the vicinity of Albury is a highly valued safety initiative not only for the aviation community but also for the wider community residing in the Albury/Wodonga Region.

To complement the air traffic control facilities, Albury Airport has a range of visual and navigation aids that permit the safe operation of aircraft in most weather conditions.

Council regards Albury airport as a valuable component in our regional infrastructure and economic development and is resolved to develop the facility to meet the emerging needs of the airlines and travelling public.



Terms of Reference

Reference a)

AlburyCity makes no comment with respect to Reference a).

Reference b)

AlburyCity complies with all Commonwealth security requirements currently in place at regional airports.

Reference c)

AlburyCity has no comment with respect to this issue.

Reference d)

AlburyCity has no comment with respect to this issue

Reference e)

Passenger security has also become a major issue since the events of September 11, the Bali bombing, the war in Iraq and recent security scares within Australia.

AlburyCity has increased its local security arrangements and recognises that the Federal Government may at some time in the future require the installation of additional passenger security systems at regional airports over and above that currently required.

AlburyCity believes that should the Federal Government require additional security at regional airports then all costs associated with the installation of any security systems should be Federally funded. This is on the basis that all airline users and the wider community would be impacted by any increase in security levels not just those who utilise regional airports. Any additional costs on regional air traffic would place an unfair burden on regional communities and negatively impact on regional development.

Reference f)

AlburyCity has no comment with respect to this issue.

Reference g)

With respect to regional airport security, AlburyCity has had preliminary discussions with regional airlines regarding the options of introducing some form of electronic or video surveillance for aircraft parked on external aprons overnight.



Summary

AlburyCity believes that, based on its current knowledge and understanding, security levels are adequate at regional airports.

Recent events have provided a demonstration that current levels of security and training have enabled the airlines to appropriately deal with potential security breaches.

However, should the Federal Government consider it a necessity to increase the level of security associated with RPT traffic emanating from regional airports, then AlburyCity believes that any security upgrade should be federally funded as the broader community receives the benefit and to do otherwise would place an unfair burden on regional air travellers.