



# Tabling statement

**MR TONY SMITH MP**  
**MEMBER FOR CASEY**  
**COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN**

Mr Speaker, on behalf of the Joint Committee of Public Accounts and Audit, I present the Committee's *Report 409: Developments in Aviation Security since the Committee's June 2004 Report 400: Review of Aviation Security in Australia*.

This report presents the results of the Committee's re-opened inquiry into aviation security in Australia. The Committee re-opened its inquiry as a result of some significant developments in aviation security since its *Report 400 Review of Aviation Security in Australia* tabled in June 2004.

On determining to revisit aviation security, the Committee was cognisant of major initiatives by the Australian Government to extend and deepen the security standards required of aviation industry participants, particularly the introduction of the new Aviation Security Transport Regulations in March 2005.

The inquiry received 81 submissions and undertook a programme of inspections and evidence gathering at major and regional centres across Australia, including Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane, Adelaide, Perth, Canberra, Darwin, Cairns, Geraldton, Kalbarri, Carnarvon, Newman, Derby and Broome.

The Committee has examined:

- the principles underlying aviation security in Australia and their implementation by Commonwealth agencies with responsibility for intelligence gathering, regulation and law enforcement;
- the frontline preventative security measures of background checking of aviation industry personnel and physical security of sensitive areas of airports;
- developments in law enforcement arrangements at major and regional airports; and
- the cost imposts of and funding arrangements to support enhanced security arrangements.

The Committee has unanimously supported the initiatives of the Australian Government in aviation security and, through its recommendations, suggested further measures that will ensure Australia continues to have one of the leading aviation security regimes in the world.

The Committee has made nineteen recommendations that identify measures to further improve aviation security in Australia. These include:

- reporting to the Committee the number of unannounced security audits of major airports in 2006 and ensuring regular unannounced audits of Australia's busiest airport, Sydney Airport, in the future;
- increasing the on-ground experience of selected Office of Transport Security personnel particularly in relation to regional aviation industry participants;
- establishing standards for aviation industry participants against which to measure proposed security measures;
- improved processes for issuing an Aviation Security Identification Card and tighter conditions and format for issuing a Visitor Identification Card;
- revised reporting arrangements for the prohibited items list for items allowed into the cabins of security classified flights;
- support and flexibility in the delivery of security training;
- expanding the functions of Regional Rapid Deployment Teams at regional airports;
- the development of an industry code for the monitoring of Closed Circuit Television at security classified airports;
- improving communication services to security classified regional airports; and
- negotiating funding arrangements to upgrade security at security classified regional airports.

Following the introduction of the new regulations in 2005, full screening of checked baggage will be required of all flights departing Counter Terrorism First Response airports from 1 August 2007.

Whilst some argue that full screening should occur at every regional airport, the Committee states that it is simply not feasible to demand screening of all checked baggage at every regional airport. As Sir John Wheeler stated in his independent report:

...it is clear that 'one size does not fit all' in imposing security, regulations and standards across disparate airports... Security measures at regional airports should be balanced and proportionate and must be based on enhanced threat and risk assessments. It is always difficult to draw firm lines, and these could vary as a result of changed circumstances.

While the Committee believes that it is inevitable that additional airports will, in time, warrant screening of all checked baggage, it did not want to claim to have the expertise to identify which individual airports should be included in this category or when they should be included. In light of the Committee's view, it has recommended that the Department of Transport and Regional Services report to the Parliament within three months as to whether any additional airports should be required to screen all checked baggage from August 2007, beyond those already designated by the Aviation Transport Security Regulations, and further update its advice to the Parliament twice yearly.

The Committee has also recommended that the Department of Transport and Regional Services report on the timetable for implementing screening of all air cargo on passenger aircraft where passengers' checked baggage is screened. The Department's report should include consideration of the feasibility of implementing the screening of all air cargo on passenger aircraft where

passengers' checked baggage is screened by 1 August 2007, that being the date when 100 percent check baggage screening from Counter Terrorism First Response airports is required.

The expansion and intensification of aviation security measures in Australia has attempted and largely achieved a balance between, on the one hand, the implementation of adequate preventative security measures and readiness to respond to a breach if this occurs and, on the other, consideration of convenience and cost to the travelling public and Australian taxpayer.

**To arrange media comment:**

Please contact the Committee Chairman, Mr Tony Smith MP, on (02) 6277 4284 (Parliament House) and Deputy Chair Sharon Grierson MP (02) 6277 4221 (Parliament House).

**For further information:** please contact the Committee Secretariat on (02) 6277 4615 or email at [jcpa.reps@aph.gov.au](mailto:jcpa.reps@aph.gov.au)