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From: Wa Billboards [mailto:wabill@inet.net.au]

Sent: Thursday, 4 September 2003 9:42 PM

To: Carter, John Gordon (REPS)

Subject: COMMITTEE HEARING

Dear Mr Carter

As a private aircraft owner and pilot I urge you to consider us in the pending committee review.

Excessive security requirements impact greatly on our access to airports.

A recent event will highlight my position.

On Sunday August 24 I arrived early into Karrahta Airport in the Northwest of Western Australia. I had called the refueller the previous day and had arranged for him to meet me at about 7.30 AM to refuel me for the long leg back to Perth.

He arrived as arranged, we re fuelled and then we decided to make a quick trip into Town.

The refuelled was kind enough to lend us his Landcruiser Ute for the 30 or so mins we needed.

The Karratha Airport is fully fenced and we exited the airside via the arrivals gate at the nearby terminal, the refueller met us at the front door and we proceeded into Town.

We arrived back some 30 mins later and left the vehicle in the BP compound as arranged.

We proceeded back thru the terminal to re board planning to pass thru the Departures gate.

The Qantas flight was due in soon and we were asked to pass thru security which we did, however we were then told that we could not get airside as they could not open the doors until the airlink flight arrived.

We explained that we wished to access our plane for departure.

In short we were told that access airside unless for the RPT flight was not possible.

After wandering around for while we spotted a local charter pilot coming in and we hailed from a distance and he showed us the GA gate.

Fortunately he knew the code to access the airside and we were on our way.

This brings up a few salient points.

The security staff whilst polite really didn't care if we could access our aircraft , for which I had just paid a landing fee to use anyway plus the purchase of several hundred litres of fuel.

The airport is reasonably secure and other than scaling a fence access was not possible.

The GA gate was located away from the main terminal, was not clearly marked and if we had found it we did not have the code.

I later discovered that the code and gate location is included in our ERSA book, but that was in the plane.

To take the story a bit further if no body was in attendance that day which happens a lot at regional airports I may have been stuck landside for sometime before getting back to my plane.

These types of delays can affect our safety in matters of beating bad weather into the next destination or arriving before last light at fields that don't have runway lighting.

Im sure that the various parties before the committee will argue for more security and bigger and better budgets for themselves to implement their wish lists

BUT my question is who will pay for this.
Airport operators will have additional costs imposed on them for greater security and this must be recovered somehow.

For the airport owners its a simple matter of increases landing charges to all users including us smaller planes who neither want or need such measures.

In many regards they have a monopoly situation and we do not have the option of going elsewhere, so we will be forced to pay.

I ask that the Committee spare a thought for us little guys simply because for every heavy like Qantas into most airports there are hundreds of us little guys coming and going too.

On a final note, do we really need to fortify everything anyway, I can understand high security levels at the Capital ports but is really necessary to adopt such a siege mentality nationally, for if we do, surely those how wish to deny us our way of life will have done so.

Thank You

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