

**Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee**  
**ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**  
**Supplementary Budget Estimates 2011-12**

Prime Minister and Cabinet portfolio

**Department/Agency:** Office of the Official Secretary to the Governor-General

**Program 1:** Support for the Governor-General and Official Activities

**Outcome 1:** The performance of the Governor-General's role is facilitated through the organisation and management of official duties, management and maintenance of the official household and property and administration of the Australian Honours and Awards system.

**Topic:** Governor-General – Brisbane Airport incident

**Senator:** RONALDSON

**Question reference number:** PM119

**Type of Question:** Written

**Date set by the committee for the return of answer:** 2 December 2011

**Number of Pages:** 2

**Question:**

I refer to an article published in the Courier Mail on 27 July 2011 which refers to an incident involving the Governor General at Brisbane Airport.

1. Did the Governor General actually set off the metal detector at Brisbane airport or did she simply avoid walking through the metal detector all together?
2. Is it usually the case the Governor General is not checked by security at airports?
3. Why wouldn't the Governor General simply just walk through the metal detector again if directed to by the officer in charge of walkthroughs?
4. Are you aware that the officer in charge of walk throughs at Brisbane Airport was moved to temporarily to "other duties" as a result of this incident?
5. Would you agree with the comments of union official Mark Fraser that "it is an absolute disgrace this employee was disciplined for enforcing the law"? Has the Governor General apologised to the employee involved for this incident?
6. Are you concerned that security Brisbane airport had to find the Governor General and give her a special security clearance in the Chairman's lounge?
7. What policies or procedures have been put in place to ensure that the Governor General does not cause a security breach at an airport in the future?

**Answer:**

1. The Governor-General walked through the normal public security screening point and metal detector, as per normal practice.
2. The Governor-General conforms with security checks wherever these are required, including at airports.

3. The Governor-General acted on the advice of the Australian Federal Police. She would have happily gone back through the security check point had this been the advice to her.
4. The Office has received no communications relating to this matter.
5. Mark Fraser is the Deputy Official Secretary to the Governor-General and is not a union official and made no such comments. The Governor-General did nothing to warrant an apology.
6. The Governor-General happily complied with a request for additional security screening and a pat-down in the lounge.
7. The Governor-General continues to comply with all security directives.