

Rural Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Additional Estimates February 2011

Infrastructure and Transport

Question no.: 72

Program: 2.4

Division/Agency: (AAA) Aviation & Airports

Topic: Melbourne Airport Runway Overlay

Proof Hansard Page/s: Written

Senator Ryan asked:

Runway works at Melbourne Airport – temporary closure of the east-west runway:

- 1) What consultation was undertaken with local community consultative groups about the temporary runway closure and its impact on aircraft noise in the local community?
- 2) Why was there no information conveyed to residents impacted by post or other household delivery means?

Answer:

Consultation with the local community about the Melbourne Airport runway overlay project has been and continues to be undertaken by:

- advertising in local community newspapers including:
 - Sunbury / Macedon Ranges Leader;
 - Melton Moorabool Leader;
 - Hume Leader;
- the provision of information on the Airport's website;
- the provision of information packs to local councils; and
- distribution of a noise information brochure and fact sheet to the community.

Melbourne Airport also undertook an information session about the overlay and associated runway closures in November 2010 at the Watergardens Shopping Centre, Taylors Lakes.

Rural Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Additional Estimates February 2011

Infrastructure and Transport

Question no.: 73

Program: 2.4

Division/Agency: (AAA) Aviation & Airports

Topic: **Airservices Australia Enroute Payment Scheme**

Proof Hansard Page/s: Written

Senator Heffernan asked:

- 1) The Government said in the Aviation White Paper that it was going to replace the en route scheme for regional air services with a new scheme on 1 July 2010. So far no new scheme has been introduced. When is the Government going to introduce a new scheme?
- 2) Has there been any consultation with industry or representative bodies like the RAAA on the type of replacement scheme that would be effective? If not, will there be any?
- 3) Has the Government/department undertaken any research or consultation with industry on what will be the effect of cancelling the existing scheme?
- 4) Does the Government have any evidence that the old scheme has failed to provide an effective subsidy for regional air services? Has there been any research done on this?
- 5) Is the Government/department aware of the vital nature of regional air services to the smaller centres and that they often provide the only access to specialist doctors and medical services?
 - a) Are they aware of the consequences of losing such services for some regional centres? What is the Government going to do as an alternative?
 - b) Will the new scheme as proposed in the White Paper address these issues for regional centres that are not in the Australian Standard Geographical Classification for Remote Areas (as per the map in the White Paper)?
 - c) If not how does the Government justify the possible loss of these routes?
- 6) Is the Government aware of whether the cancellation of the old scheme would lead to any regional routes being cancelled?
 - a) Has industry given any feedback that this could be a likely outcome?
- 7) Will the benefits of the new scheme outweigh the disadvantages of cancelling the old scheme?
- 8) Given that there is an obvious negative impact to regional communities if the old scheme is cancelled, what empirical evidence would the Government be collecting to demonstrate that the new scheme will be more cost effective?
 - a) Has the Government set up any benchmarks and KPIs for measuring the success of the new scheme? In other words, how will the Government/department ensure that any new scheme will be as effective as the existing scheme?
- 9) What will be the cost of the new scheme and how will that compare to the cost of the existing scheme?
- 10) In previous discussions on the future of the en route scheme there has been sentiment expressed by the Dept that it should be stopped because most of it went to Rex. Is that still the sentiment? Is that an appropriate sentiment?

Rural Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Additional Estimates February 2011

Infrastructure and Transport

Answer:

- 1) On 1 December 2009, the Scheme was amended to allow airlines to access the subsidy on eligible routes where a previous recipient has exited the route.
- 2) Extensive public consultation was undertaken as part of the development of the Aviation White Paper. A range of submissions were received from industry, including regional aviation representatives, during the consultation phase and these were taken into account.
- 3) Refer to answer to Q2.
- 4) Refer to answers to Q1 and Q2.
- 5) The Government is aware of the importance of air services to regional and remote centres.
- 6) No.
- 7) The Government is considering the proposed changes to the Scheme outlined in the Aviation White Paper.
- 8) Refer to answer to Q7.
- 9) The Scheme will continue to be managed within the existing Budget and Forward Estimates.
- 10) The Department is unaware any such sentiment has been expressed. The Scheme is administered in accordance with the program guidelines which set out eligibility criteria for assistance. Nineteen airlines currently receive assistance under the Scheme.

Rural Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Additional Estimates February 2011

Infrastructure and Transport

Question no.: 74

Program: 2.4

Division/Agency: (AAA) Aviation & Airports

Topic: Policy since release of the Aviation White Paper

Proof Hansard Page/s: Written

Senator Nash asked:

Given that it has been more than a year since the release of the white paper on National Aviation Policy, what are some of the main policy changes brought about from the white paper?

Answer:

A summary of the Government's policy initiatives can be found on pages 14 -27 of the White Paper.

Rural Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee

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Additional Estimates February 2011

Infrastructure and Transport

Question no.: 75

Program: 2.4

Division/Agency: (AAA) Aviation & Airports

Topic: Planning Coordination Forums (PCFs)

Proof Hansard Page/s: Written

Senator Nash asked:

One of the reforms within the white paper included forums for each primary capital city airport to enable more effective engagement; Have these forums ever taken place?

Answer:

Planning Coordination Forums have been established and are operational in Adelaide, Brisbane, Canberra, Darwin, Hobart, Melbourne, Perth and Sydney in accordance with the December 2009 *National Aviation Policy White Paper*.

Rural Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

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Question no.: 76

Program: 2.4

Division/Agency: (AAA) Aviation & Airports

Topic: Aviation Strategic Plan

Proof Hansard Page/s: Written

Senator Nash asked:

The white paper says that the government will be working with the NSW government to develop a strategic plan for the Sydney region; has this been completed?

Answer:

No. The Government is currently working with the NSW Government on a Joint Study on aviation capacity for the Sydney region.