

Rural Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Budget Estimates May 2011

Infrastructure and Transport

Question no.: 125

Program: 2.4

Division/Agency: (AAA) Aviation and Airports

Topic: Leased federal airport Planning Coordination Forums

Proof Hansard Page/s: 38 (26/05/2011)

Senator Nash asked:

Senator NASH: I ask, with some trepidation, if you could take it on notice and give us a detailed list of dates, times and places where those forums had taken place. I know you might be limited by confidentiality in some way, but I would like as much detail as you can give about who has been at those forums, what are the issues that have been discussed across the whole spectrum and all of the things you have run through there between on-airport and areas surrounding issues. Not all of those things will have come up at every forum, so I am keen to see what priority is coming up through the forums, across all those areas. If you could give us a bit of a detailed brief so we can get a sense of what is happening right across the board through the forums and what is coming out of it, through a process that really has not been there before in that much detail, that would be very useful.

Mr Doherty: I am happy to take that on notice.

Answer:

The table at Attachment A summarises details of Planning Coordination Forums (PCFs) held to date (as at 17 June 2011).

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Attachment A

Airport	No. of Meetings	Dates of Meetings	Attendees	Summary of Key Issues Discussed*
Adelaide and Parafield (combined)	2	18 November 2010 17 February 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Airport representatives • Department of Infrastructure and Transport • URS Consulting (Chairperson) • SA Department of Transport, Energy and Infrastructure • City of West Torrens • Holdfast Bay Council • Charles Sturt Council • Adelaide Shores 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Airspace protection • Airport safeguarding • Urban infill / residential developments • Airport master plans / environment strategies / major development plans
Alice Springs and Darwin (combined)	3	12 August 2010 18 November 2010 18 March 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Airport representatives • Department of Infrastructure and Transport • Department of Defence • NT Department of Lands and Planning • NT Department of Business and Employment • Darwin City Council 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aeronautical developments • Non-aeronautical on-airport developments • Ground transport (including public transport and network connectivity)
Bankstown	1	15 March 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Airport representatives • Department of Infrastructure and Transport • Bankstown City Council • Liverpool City Council 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Productivity Commission enquiry
Brisbane	2	7 October 2010 17 March 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Airport representatives • Department of Infrastructure and Transport • QLD Department of Transport and Main Roads • QLD Department of Local Government and Planning • Brisbane City Council 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft significant community impact guidelines • Aircraft noise • Airline pricing and operations • Machinery of Government • Sydney Aviation Capacity Study • High Speed Rail Project • Quality of airport services • Airservices funding structure • Local and regional events
Canberra	1	15 April 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Airport representatives • Department of Infrastructure and Transport • ACT Chief Minister's Department • ACT Planning and Land Authority • ACT Territory and Municipal Services • NSW Department of Planning 	
Hobart	2	1 December 2010 7 March 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Airport representatives • Department of Infrastructure and Transport • Australian Customs Service • TAS Department of Infrastructure, Energy and Resources 	

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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hobart City Council • Clarence City Council • Qantas Airways • Tourism Tasmania • Tourism Industry Council Tasmania • Antarctic Tasmania • Tourism and Transport Forum • Australian Hospitality Association
Melbourne	1	24 March 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Airport representatives • Department of Infrastructure and Transport • Airservices Australia • VIC Department of Transport • VicRoads • Tourism Victoria • Hume City Council • Committee for Melbourne • North Link • Airline Operations Committee • Victorian Employers' Chamber of Commerce and Industry
Perth	1	31 May 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Airport representatives • Department of Infrastructure and Transport • WA Department of Transport • WA Department of Planning • City of Belmont
Sydney	1	2 December 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Airport representatives • Department of Infrastructure and Transport • NSW Department of Premier and Cabinet • NSW Department of Planning • NSW Department of Transport • NSW Department of Infrastructure and Investment • NSW Department of Environment, Climate Change and Water • Tourism NSW • Rockdale City Council • Marrickville City Council • City of Botany Bay Council • City of Sydney Council • Sutherland Shire Council

* Note: not all issues listed are discussed at all PCFs.

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Question no.: 126

Program: 2.4

Division/Agency: (AAA) Aviation and Airports

Topic: Airservices Australia Enroute Charges Payment Scheme

Proof Hansard Page/s: 44 (26/05/2011)

Senator Nash asked:

Senator NASH: Of those existing airlines, how many regional communities do they service collectively?

Mr Wilson: I will have to take that on notice; I do not have that number with me.

Senator NASH: We have a \$5 million budget cut and we cannot determine which regional communities are going to be affected by that.

Mr Wilson: I do not have those details with me.

Senator NASH: What communication have you received from regional airports that may have indicated to you that services will be cut because the subsidy is going to be removed, outside of the aeromedical services?

Mr Wilson: From regional airports? I do not believe that the department has received any correspondence from regional airports with regard to the removal of the subsidy.

Senator NASH: If there has been no correspondence, are you aware of any regional airports that have indicated that they may have to cut their services because of the reduction in funding to the en route subsidy?

Mr Mrdak: I am just clarifying, I do not think we have received any correspondence that we are aware of—but we will check—from regional airports. A number of regional airlines have raised their concerns with us in relation to this matter, but not regional airports, that we are aware of.

Answer:

- A total of 78 regional communities are serviced by commercial flights for which the air operator currently receives a subsidy under the Scheme.
- No correspondence can be located from regional airports regarding the cessation of the Scheme in 2012.

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Question no.: 127

Program: 2.4

Division/Agency: (AAA) Aviation and Airports

Topic: **Airservices Australia Enroute Charges Payment Scheme**

Proof Hansard Page/s: 44-45 (26/05/2011)

Senator Nash asked:

Senator NASH: How many regional airports have we across Australia?

Mr Borthwick: I could not tell you off the top of my head. I know there are over 250 aerodromes around Australia of varying standards.

Senator NASH: Operating commercial regional airports.

Mr Borthwick: That is what I would need to check.

Senator NASH: Do we have any information here about regional airports?

Mr Mrdak: You are asking about the total number? There are well over 400 aerodromes or airstrips across the country, from memory, of which I think 240 or so would be ones that are licensed or which are of a sufficient standard to be licensed.

Senator NASH: Thank you for that, that is very helpful. How many commercially operating—not towers, not landing strips—regional airports have we got across the country?

Mr Borthwick: I do not have that information with me. We can provide it to you.

Answer:

A total of 160 regional airports currently receive commercial air services.

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Question no.: 128

Program: 2.4

Division/Agency: (AAA) Aviation and Airports

Topic: **Airservices Australia Enroute Charges Payment Scheme**

Proof Hansard Page/s: 45 (26/05/2011)

Senator Back asked:

Senator BACK: As an extension to that, if I can, would it also be possible in providing that advice to provide as advice on those that offer aeromedical services or do they all offer aeromedical services?

Mr Borthwick: The airports?

Senator BACK: The ones that you are going to provide the list of.

Mr Borthwick: We will look at that.

Senator BACK: Is it all of them?

Mr Borthwick: I am not sure off the top of my head. I will take it on notice.

Answer:

- Aeromedical services are provided by commercial air operators under contractual arrangements.
- The actual airports serviced at any time will vary depending upon the demand for the service, the safety standard of individual airstrips and the safety requirements of the particular aircraft used by the local air operator.

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Question no.: 129

Program: 2.4

Division/Agency: (AAA) Aviation and Airports

Topic: Regional Aviation Sublease at Sydney Airport

Proof Hansard Page/s: 51 (26/05/2011)

Senator Back asked:

Senator BACK: The issue was, as I recall at the last estimates or a recent estimates, that there was concern by the regional aviation company that the security of their lease on the maintenance hangar was at risk, and obviously having that facility at Sydney airport was extremely important to them. If you cannot answer it, could you take on notice for me: has that matter been resolved and has their tenure been confirmed?

Mr Doherty: We will have to take that on notice. I recall a discussion broadly about pricing for regional. I do not remember that specific discussion, but we will check it out.

Answer:

Subleasing arrangements on airports are a commercial matter between the Airport Lessee Company and the sublessee.

Subleases are currently in place between Sydney Airport Corporation Limited and regional aviation operators for hangar space in the North-East Sector of the Airport.

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Question no.: 130

Program: 2.4

Division/Agency: (AAA) Aviation and Airports

Topic: Runway development at Perth Airport

Proof Hansard Page/s: 56 (26/05/2011)

Senator Back asked:

Senator BACK: In general terms, surely the lessee would not be free to sign off, even if they wanted to, on an activity that a sublessee might want to undertake without the regulator, the landlord, having some overarching capacity to disallow?

Mr Doherty: We would only expect to be able to be involved if it contravened some regulatory requirement or was contrary to the master plan.

Senator BACK: If it was contrary to the master plan?

Mr Doherty: Yes.

Senator BACK: Do you know in this case with the master plan where this whole situation sits?

Mr Doherty: Sorry, I cannot express a view on whether it is contrary to the master plan. I do not know what provision was made for the runway extension in this case in the master plan.

Senator BACK: But the master plan is a public document, is it not?

Mr Doherty: Yes.

Mr Wilson: If you would like, we will take it on notice and go to this specific issue, and we will provide you with a written answer.

Answer:

The Perth Airport Master Plan 2009 includes references to a proposal to expand the runway.

The Perth Airport Master Plan 2009 is available from:

<http://www.perthairport.com.au/AboutUs/MasterPlan.aspx>

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Question no.: 131

Program: 2.4

Division/Agency: (AAA) Aviation and Airports

Topic: Airport Building Controllers

Proof Hansard Page/s: Written

Senator Back asked:

Budget measure to increase funding for “building controllers” engaged by the Commonwealth to ensure buildings at airports comply with the Building Code of Australia and other applicable standards.

- 1) Are these building controllers currently in place? (as there is no current year figure for 2010-11)
- 2) How many building controllers does this funding provide for? At a cost of how much per controller? Where are they based?
- 3) Are they employed by the Department of Infrastructure?
- 4) Who do they engage with and who do they report to?
- 5) If they are engaged by the Commonwealth, would they be familiar with the Master Development Plan and consider future development requirements for commonwealth owned airports?
- 6) I refer to action being taken by BGC against Perth Airport who claimed to have ordered materials believing they had agreement to build an additional building on land leased from the Airport. Would the building controllers have assessed the proposed building application?
- 7) Should advice have been provided from the outset about whether proposed development interfered with future planning needs for the Airport?
- 8) I understand that alternative sites have been proposed for this development – have these applications been considered?

Answer:

- 1) Yes.
- 2) Eleven. The average cost for each Airport Building Controller is \$159,642 per airport. They are based at leased federal airports and offices off-airport.
- 3) They are contracted by the Department of Infrastructure and Transport.
- 4) They engage with those who submit building applications for on-airport developments, airport lessee companies and other groups and individuals who may provide advice and/or information relevant to building application assessments such as specialists in fire protection. They report to the Department of Infrastructure and Transport.
- 5) Yes, they would be familiar with Master Plans and Major Development Plans for their particular airports. They take these documents into account when reviewing building applications.

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- 6) No, the airport building controller has not assessed an application for this proposed construction as there has been no consent issued by Westralia Airports Corporation as required as per subregulation 2.03(2) of the Airports (Building Control) Regulations 1996.
- 7) This is a matter for Westralia Airports Corporation.
- 8) This is a matter for Westralia Airports Corporation.

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Question no.: 132

Program: 2.4

Division/Agency: (AAA) Aviation and Airports

Topic: ANEF Development and NASAG

Proof Hansard Page/s: Written

Senator Back asked:

Government doesn't reject the main point which is that the ANEF system needs 'improvement' rather than revision – that the technical process and independence can be improved.

Given that the Department has noted in a paper dating back to 2000 on its website "Expanding ways to describe and assess aircraft noise" cited that "there had been significant criticism of the system since 1995" and "...there has been considerable confusion in the community and even among some of the experts, as to the role and purpose of the system.

- 1) Why has there such resistance from this government in defending a system that is clearly outdated – what practical action has been taken to "review" seeing as it has been discredited since 2000 by the department?
- 2) If this flawed ANEF system is the basis for determining who is eligible for the aircraft noise insulation scheme – how is it possible to determine whether it is really is an equitable benchmark for noise?
- 3) Will airports continue to be responsible for producing ANEFs? If so, why?
- 4) Will ASA continue to 'approve' ANEFs – have any measures been put in place?
- 5) Once NASAG has developed this national scheme – who will be responsible for ensuring that it is properly regulated? An independent body as proposed by the Majority of the RATS References Committee?
- 6) Has any funding been allocated to NASAG's work? Who does it consist of? Noise experts? Can you provide a list of names and proposed work program with state/territory governments?

Answer:

- 1) The Government is working to improve how noise impacts are measured. As stated in Chapter 14 of the Aviation White Paper, the ANEF system remains a useful technical tool to safeguard the future development capacity of Australia's airports and provide guidance for state, territory and local government planning decision makers.
- 2) Determining eligibility for insulation using the ANEF system is consistent with international practice.
- 3) Airports produce ANEFs for inclusion in Airport Master Plans, as per the requirements of the *Airports Act 1996*.
- 4) Airservices Australia continues to be responsible for technical endorsement of ANEFs.

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- 5) The National Airports Safeguarding Advisory Group (NASAG) will consider ways to complement the ANEF system to improve land use planning outcomes, and Airservices Australia will be involved in this work.
- 6) The Department's participation in NASAG is funded from within Departmental resource. An overview of the membership and work program of NASAG can be found on the Department's website at :
http://www.infrastructure.gov.au/aviation/airport_safeguarding/index.aspx

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Question no.: 133

Program: 2.4

Division/Agency: (AAA) Aviation and Airports

Topic: **Airservices Australia Enroute Charges Payment Scheme**

Proof Hansard Page/s: Written

Senator Nash asked:

- 1) Can the department confirm that from 1 July 2012 the scheme will be limited to aeromedical services?
- 2) What details can you provide about the new scheme as to who will be eligible and what routes will be eligible?
- 3) If no information is available – when will this information be available?
- 4) When will the regional aviation industry be able to have an accurate view of the support the Government will be providing to regional aviation?

Answer:

- 1) Yes.
- 2) The current guidelines for the eligibility of aeromedical services will continue to operate from 1 July 2012.
- 3) Not applicable.
- 4) Refer to answers to 1) and 2).