

Rural Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Supplementary Estimates October 2010

Infrastructure and Transport

Question No.: ATSB 01

Division/Agency: Australian Transport Safety Bureau

Topic: Take-off/Go Around (TO/GA) incidents

Hansard Page/s: 132 (21/10/10)

Senator Macdonald asked:

Senator IAN MACDONALD—Could I ask you, obviously on notice, how many incidents have been reported in the last five years; and is the trend of reporting incidents increasing or decreasing?

Mr Dolan—Yes, I would be happy to take that on notice and we can collate that information. I will perhaps just leave it at that.

Answer:

Take-off/Go Around (TO/GA) is an autopilot and auto-throttle mode. Depending on the aircraft type, the TO/GA mode selection is made routinely on take-off, automatically setting take-off thrust and flight-director commands for the take-off. When airborne, the TO/GA selection may be used, amongst other things, to conduct a go-around or avoidance manoeuvre, as well as windshear escape manoeuvres. A go-around is a normal manoeuvre where an aircraft makes an approach to land but does not continue with the landing.

There have been nine TO/GA related incidents reported to the ATSB in the last five years. There is no discernable trend in the reporting of TO/GA incidents, with two reported in each of 2007 and 2008, five reported in 2009 and none reported to date in 2010. The ATSB only considered one of the nine occurrences warranted investigation. Of the five occurrences reported in 2009, four were related to mechanical/technical issues.

Rural Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Supplementary Estimates October 2010

Infrastructure and Transport

Question No.: ATSB 02

Division/Agency: Australian Transport Safety Bureau

Topic: Stick shaker incidents

Hansard Page/s: 133 (21/10/10)

Senator Macdonald asked:

Senator IAN MACDONALD—That is disturbing. How many stick operator incidents have been reported during the past five years?

Mr Dolan—I would have to take that one on notice, too. Stick shaker I think you are asking?

Senator IAN MACDONALD—Stick—incidents where the plane is about to stall?

Mr Dolan—Stick-shaker incidents. I do not have that available to me but I would be happy to take it on notice.

Answer:

Aircraft involved in passenger operations are required to have a system that protects the aircraft from stalling. Such systems may comprise a number of devices. Where a stick shaker is included, this device is designed to be the first to activate to warn the pilot of an imminent stall. The stick shaker is a mechanical device normally associated with the aircraft's angle of attack system, which rapidly and noisily vibrates the control yoke (the 'stick') of the aircraft when the angle of attack exceeds a certain preset value. Stick shaker activation can be affected by a number of factors, including angle of bank and environmental factors such as turbulence and windshear.

There were 164 stick shaker incidents reported to the ATSB between 1 September 2005 and 30 September 2010.

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ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Supplementary Estimates October 2010

Infrastructure and Transport

Question No.: ATSB 03

Division/Agency: Australian Transport Safety Bureau

Topic: Stick shaker incident trends

Hansard Page/s: 133 (21/10/10)

Senator Macdonald asked:

Senator IAN MACDONALD—That is reassuring. Perhaps it will be better if you take this next question on notice, so that I do not go to bed with this tonight: is the trend of reported incidents increasing or decreasing?

Mr Dolan—We can provide that.

Senator IAN MACDONALD—Unless you tell me it is decreasing, do not tell me; and I will hear about it later.

Mr Dolan—We will provide you with what an analysis of the facts shows.

Answer:

The number of stick shaker events over the past five years has generally remained consistent (at about 27 occurrences per year) with the exception of 2008 when there were double the number of occurrences (49). The ATSB has been unable to identify any particular factor influencing the 2008 figure.

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ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

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Question No.: ATSB 04

Division/Agency: Australian Transport Safety Bureau

Topic: REPCON and mandatory incident reporting

Hansard Page/s: Written Question

Senator Heffernan asked:

Reporting

- 1) How many reports received under RepCon (Confidential Reporting Scheme) over the past two years should have been reported under the mandatory reporting requirements?
- 2) How many reports have been received under RepCon compared to normal reporting procedures in the past two years? Please forward details of each report.

Answer:

- 1) There were eight Air Safety Incident Reports received as REPCONs. In each case, the reporter had inadvertently used the incorrect form and they were directed to resubmit their report through the mandatory scheme.
- 2) Between 1 November 2008 and 31 October 2010, there were 293 REPCON reports and 29,581 reports received under the mandatory scheme. A list of the REPCON reports received in this period is at Attachment A.

Attachment A

List of aviation REPCON reports received between 1 November 2008 and 31 October 2010.