

Rural & Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Additional Budget Estimates February 2014

Infrastructure and Regional Development

Question no.: 176

Program: n/a

Division/Agency: (OTS) Office of Transport Security

Topic: Security Screening Arrangements out of Indonesia

Proof Hansard Pages: 64-65 (24/02/2014)

Chair asked:

CHAIR: A passenger was found to have carried fireworks in his carry-on luggage on a flight from Bali, according to a 13 December ATSB incident report. The incident will not be investigated and an aviation expert has commented that it was unusual, because an incident of this nature should be investigated to uncover how the breach occurred...

...

Mr Dolan: The normal provisions for occurrence notification provide for us to pass on for security assessment as necessary matters that have a security implication.

CHAIR: Perhaps I will go to the second question, which may fill it in. Could more be done to improve the cooperation of Indonesian authorities ensuring passenger safety and security, particularly given the high number of Australians travelling to Indonesia every year as well as their propensity to purchase items that are otherwise not sold in Australia and could pose a risk on flights?

...

Mr Mrdak: It is an incident which I am advised we have taken up. The AFP has been involved in relation to that incident. We are also taking that up with our Indonesian colleagues in terms of security screening arrangements out of Indonesia.

CHAIR: Could you come back with what you find?

Mr Mrdak: We will come back with some details of what the follow-up is.

Answer:

The incident referred to occurred at Brisbane International Airport on 5 December 2013. A passenger carried 36 small fireworks (36 grams in total weight) in his carry-on luggage on a flight from Denpasar, Bali. The fireworks were detected upon arrival in Australia by the Australian Customs and Border Protection Service during the passenger arrivals screening process.

The matter was referred to the Australian Federal Police (AFP) who formally interviewed the passenger. The passenger stated that he brought a quantity of fireworks for use in Bali and did not realise the fireworks were in his bag. The passenger stated that he had no intention of bringing the fireworks into Australia and if they had been detected upon departure from Bali he would have surrendered them. The fireworks were seized by the AFP, the passenger issued with an official caution and no further action was taken.

Fireworks are readily available in Indonesia and explosive trace detection (ETD) as part of the passenger screening process is not required under Indonesian regulations. Manual searches of carry-on baggage are also undertaken prior to departure as part of Australia's liquids, aerosols and gels (LAGs) requirement and fireworks if discovered would be confiscated by airline staff.

This incident was reviewed by the Department of Infrastructure and Regional Development (the Department) and was referred to the Civil Aviation Safety Authority (CASA), as the agency responsible for the investigation of incidents involving the carriage of dangerous goods on aircraft. CASA reviewed this incident and advised that the quality of fireworks present in this circumstance is not an amount that

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would lead to CASA conducting a full investigation and a brief to the Commonwealth Director of Public Prosecutions (CDPP) for prosecution.

Australia airlines (Jetstar and Virgin) departing Indonesia for Australia conduct (ETD) of hold baggage at passenger check-in implemented of their own volition following the conduct of security and safety risk assessments.

Due to a recent rise in occurrences involving fireworks, CASA is planning to contact the relevant civil aviation authorities of countries (in this instance Indonesia) where instances of passengers carrying fireworks have originated. Cooperation between States in relation to compliance is something that CASA does in accordance with the recommendation at 11.2 of International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) Annex 18 – The Safe Transport of Dangerous Goods by Air.