

TRANSPORT AND REGIONAL SERVICES

Question No. 367 amended

Senator O'Brien asked the Minister representing the Minister for Transport and Regional Services, upon notice, on 10 March 2005:

- (1) Has the Minister, the department or any agency for which the Minister is responsible investigated the disappearance of an overnight bag checked in by Ms Sarah Murfett at Launceston Airport on 12 November 2004 prior to boarding flight DJ613 to Melbourne; if so: (a) who initiated the investigation; (b) who undertook the investigation; (c) who was interviewed as part of the investigation; (d) when did the investigation commence; and (e) when did the investigation conclude.
- (2) How did Ms Murfett's bag disappear.
- (3) What did the disappearance reveal about the integrity of airport baggage security at Launceston Airport.
- (4) What recommendations arose from the investigation.
- (5) What was the Government's response to those recommendations and what action has been taken to address security concerns associated with the disappearance of Ms Murfett's bag.
- (6) (a) When was Ms Murfett advised of the outcome of the investigation; (b) by whom; and (c) in what form was that advice provided.
- (7) If no investigation has been undertaken by the Minister, the department or any agency for which the Minister is responsible, why not.

Senator Campbell - The Minister for Transport and Regional Services has provided the following answer to the honourable senator's question:

- (1) (a) Office of Transport Security in the Department of Transport and Regional Services, Canberra.

b) Office of Transport Security, Victoria/Tasmania Region.

c) Employees of Virgin at both Launceston airport and Virgin Security in Brisbane.

d) 3 March 2005.

e) 3 March 2005.
- (2) As the matter has been handled as a theft by Virgin, there is no ongoing role for the Office of Transport Security in determining the method of the loss.
- (3) The last Office of Transport Security audit of Virgin's operation at Launceston on 10 February 2005 did not report any deficiency in baggage security.

In regard to this matter, it has been determined that it is a police matter as the incident involved an alleged theft of passenger baggage and that there is no

evidence to suggest that aviation security was compromised. It is considered that this theft does not constitute an act of unlawful interference with aviation at Launceston airport. It is understood that Ms Murfett has been compensated by Virgin for her loss.

- (4) Not Applicable (refer 3. above).
- (5) Not Applicable (refer 3. above).
- (6) Not applicable as this a matter between Virgin Blue and Ms Murfett.
- (7) Not applicable (refer 3. above).