

Senate Standing Committee on Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Budget Estimates May 2007

Transport and Regional Services

Question: AAA 03

Division/Agency: Aviation and Airports

Topic: General Aviation

Hansard Page: 94 (25/05/07)

Senator O'Brien asked:

Senator O'BRIEN—How many airstrips are known to be regularly used by the Royal Flying Doctor Service?

Mr Mrdak—I do not have that information, I am sorry. I can try and find that out.

Answer:

The Department of Health and Ageing has advised that 410 sites were used by the Royal Flying Doctor Service for emergency aero-medical evacuations in 2006.

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Senator O'Brien asked:

Senator O'BRIEN—What is the Department's assessment of the health of the general aviation industry in Australia and what issues are confronting it at the moment?

Mr Mrdak—The Government last year established the General Aviation Industry Action Agenda, and that action agenda leadership group has now met for the first time and has work underway. It is chaired by Dr Roland Williams, former head of Shell in Australia, and contains leading GA representatives, including the head of AOPA and other GA industry groups. To give you a snapshot of where GA is, I think there has been growth across most sectors of general aviation, which is consistent with the growth in the economy. Flying training has grown. There has been a big increase in general overall charter work in other areas and, in the area of ultra-light and recreational aircraft, there has been a boom. There has been unprecedented growth in recreational aviation activity, particularly in ultra-lights and helicopters. At the same time, we recognise that hours flown by traditional certified aircraft have grown more slowly but there has been growth over the last couple of years, based on the latest statistics from the BTRE. I would be happy to provide that BTRE analysis for the Committee.

Senator O'BRIEN—Thanks for that.

Answer:

The most recent Bureau of Transport and Regional Economics annual survey of general aviation activity reported that the total number of hours flown in general aviation increased by 4.7 per cent in 2005.

Flying training showed the largest increase in hours flown (18.1 per cent), followed by aerial agriculture (9.8 per cent), business (4.3 per cent), aerial work (2.0 per cent) and charter (0.3 per cent). Private flying was the only segment to record a fall in flying hours with a decrease of 3.2 per cent.

In 2005, ultra-light aircraft flew a total of 92,900 hours, representing an increase of 6.7 per cent over 2004. The survey reported 328,300 hours flown in helicopters in 2005, a 5.3 per cent increase over 2004.

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Senator O'Brien asked:

Senator O'BRIEN—I am finding that hard to line up with the evidence you gave about the growth in flight training services. Is that a growth in the services but not participants?

Mr Mrdak—No. I will check the data but my understanding is that hours flown in pilot in-flight training have increased.

Answer:

The most recent Bureau of Transport and Regional Economics annual survey of general aviation activity reported that the total number of hours flown in flying training in 2005 was 415,800 hours, an increase of 18.1 per cent from 2004.