

Rural & Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Supplementary Budget Estimates October 2012

Infrastructure and Transport

Question no.: 131

Program: 2.1

Division/Agency: (OTS) Office of Transport Security

Topic: Screening Requirements for Charter Operators

Proof Hansard Page/s: 64 (16/10/12)

Senator NASH asked:

Senator NASH: Thank you. I am sure you are aware that it has created some issues. I specifically want to talk about the small and remote destinations, particularly for tourism. Are you aware of some of the concerns by the charter operators that this has put a real burden on them in terms of going into small towns like Bourke? Is that something that you are aware of?

Mr Retter: I am aware that some months ago we had some active discussions with a number of open charter companies and associated airlines, who propose to fly into unscreened airports—category 6 airports in the Aviation Transport Security Regulations—and we went through an exercise with them to determine an appropriate set of measures that could be put in place that would allow them to continue to operate their tourism activities with minimal impact on both the passengers and the airlines, with the airports that are affected. We have done that. To my knowledge those measures are in place and are working effectively. And for the last three months I have heard nothing, from either the airports affected or the airlines.

Senator NASH: Good. What were the measures? I want you to give me a brief answer and then give me a more detailed answer on notice, if you could.

Answer:

Tour company Australian Air Holidays uses some aircraft that require security screening under the Aviation Transport Security Regulations.

Funding measures are in place for up to \$7,000 for the purchase of screening equipment to be used at small airports that do not receive regular services using larger aircraft that require screening.

Australian Air Holidays has been conducting screening of its own services from affected airports since 21 July 2012.

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Infrastructure and Transport

Question no.: 132

Program: 2.1

Division/Agency: (OTS) Office of Transport Security

Topic: Sunshine Coast Airport

Proof Hansard Page/s: Written

Senator NASH asked:

An article from the Sunshine Coast Daily in relation to extended airport queues at the Sunshine Coast Airport. I understand that security at the airport is contracted to Qantas and they are responsible for screening.

1. In general are there any guidelines for domestic security processing in terms of queue time? If so, what role does OTS play in this process?
2. What oversight role does OTS have in ensuring that domestic security is undertaken appropriately?

Answer:

There are no regulatory requirements governing queue times.

The Office of Transport Security conducts a range of audit and compliance activities to ensure that regulatory requirements for aviation security are met.

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Supplementary Budget Estimates October 2012

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Question no.: 133

Program: 2.1

Division/Agency: (OTS) Office of Transport Security

Topic: New Security Regulation for Regional Airports Impact on Regional Express

Proof Hansard Page/s: Written

Senator EDWARDS asked:

I refer to some reports that Regional Express is considering whether or not to cut 29 flights between Port Lincoln and Adelaide due to the increased costs to the airline from screening.

1. Is OTS aware of this?
2. Is OTS aware of the extent to which the new security measures have played a role in this proposed reduction of flight numbers and other airlines?
3. What discussions has OTS had with Rex?

Answer:

The Office of Transport Security has not had discussions with Rex about services to Port Lincoln. The Australian Government does not regulate the amount and structure of fees and charges for aviation security screening operations. These are business decisions negotiated by airports and airlines.