

Additional Comments Labor Senators

While supporting the committee's recommendation, Labor Senators offer additional comments in relation to issues raised throughout the inquiry.

Labor Senators express concern that, despite the fact that the operational detail of this legislation will be implemented through regulations, the draft regulations were not provided to the Committee, nor was any background material in relation to the regulations such as drafting instructions.

This has been an ongoing issue in relation to transport security legislation before this Committee, and the Labor Senators on the Committee do not think it is reasonable to expect the Australian Parliament to pass such important legislation with no reference to the regulations. It is difficult for the Committee to make an assessment of the legislation in isolation from the regulations.

Labor Senators commend the Department of Transport and Regional Services for the high level of consultation that they have undertaken with industry, unions and State Governments in relation to this and other transport security bills. However, this consultation cannot be considered to be complete – and given the high level of operational detail to be included in the regulations, industry, unions and state governments must be closely involved in their development.

Labor Senators wish to stress the importance of urgently developing an adequate training regime and qualification level for maritime security guards. Evidence presented to the inquiry suggests that the current mandatory qualification level for maritime security guards is not sufficient. Labor Senators recognise the importance of an appropriate training and qualification regime applying to maritime security guards, which should if possible be standardised across Australia. This qualification standard and training regime should be developed as a matter of priority, in consultation with industry, unions and state governments, and allow for portability of qualifications between jurisdictions.

Another issue of concern to Labor Senators is the removal, storage and disposal of vehicles and vessels from maritime security zones. This issue needs to be carefully considered in the development of the regulations in consultation with industry, unions and state governments.

Senator Anne McEwen
Senator for South Australia

Senator Glen Sterle
Senator for Western Australia

Senator Kerry O'Brien
Senator for Tasmania

