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Senator The Hon Bill Heffernan
Chair, Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee
Suite SG-62
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Senator Heffernan

Inquiry into Performance of Airservices 9 September 2015

At the recent hearing into the Performance of Airservices Australia, I indicated that I would provide the Committee with the final report that the Board of Airservices Australia commissioned into probity and perceived conflict of interest issues in relation to the OneSKY Australia Program.

The Board's probity advisor, Allens, has provided the Board with interim findings following an initial review of documentation and interviews with relevant parties. Allens will finalise their report over the coming weeks and I anticipate that we will be in a position to provide the Committee with a full copy of the report by mid-October.

I would also like to clarify two statements I made at the hearing on 9 September 2015 in relation to the Civil Aviation Safety Authority (CASA).

First, in the context of discussing CASA's review of Ballina airspace, my statement, which appears in the Proof Hansard on page 8, reads:

Sir Angus Houston: *They [CASA] decided to do an aeronautical study of the Ballina airspace ... the two big points are the establishment of ... a certified air-to-ground radio service, with a view to eventually move to a flight information service, and—the second point—to lower the Class E airspace to 6,000 feet.*

Following industry consultation on the draft report into Ballina airspace, CASA amended two of the recommendations to which I referred. The final report, published on 7 September 2015, removed the reference to an "aerodrome flight information service" and also amended the recommendation to lower Class E airspace to 6,000 feet, stating instead that Airservices and industry should "further examine the introduction of Class E airspace".

Secondly, in the context of discussing surveillance services in Tasmania, my statement, which appears in the Proof Hansard on page 17, reads:

Sir Angus Houston: *Again, if I can take you back, you mentioned the role of CASA and Airservices. Essentially, the assessment was made when the system was first brought in that it would not be used for radar-like separation at the lower levels below 7,000 feet because that was the judgement CASA made.*

To avoid any ambiguity, I would like to clarify that CASA did not require radar separation services to be provided at lower levels in Tasmania. Airservices did not design the surveillance system for that purpose nor seek CASA approval to use it for separation services below 7,000 feet.

I apologise for any ambiguity in my statements and trust that this clarifies the situation for the Committee.

Yours sincerely

Air Chief Marshal Sir Angus Houston AK, AFC (Ret'd)
12 October 2015