

Mr Shane Carmody
Acting Chief Executive Officer
Civil Aviation Safety Authority

20 March 2017

Dear Mr Carmody: Senate Estimates 27 February 2017

I watched live streaming of the Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee on Monday 27 February where you and Mr Tiede and others gave answers to questions from Senators Xenophon, Rice and Fawcett about Public Safety Zones around our airfields.

I note the response of Mr Tiede, Manager of Air Navigation, Airspace and Aerodromes to one question posed by Senator Xenophon:

Mr Tiede: The public safety zone item is a matter of government policy. It relates to protection of third parties, as Senator Xenophon has said. The only public safety zone legislation in Australia exists in Queensland, and we can look at that in detail—perhaps not this evening—if it is helpful. In the case of this accident, a public safety zone protected area would not have played a part in the role of the accident. The aircraft did not enter what we would understand to be a public safety zone area. Traditionally or historically, public safety zones have been quite a sensitive area for government and the NASAG. It has been in discussion in Australia since about 2010, but little headway has been made. I would suggest it is more of a policy matter than a CASA matter.

P118 Hansard

I would be interested to hear:

1. How Mr Tiede drew the conclusion that “In the case of this accident [Essendon] a public safety zone protected area would not have played a part in the role of the accident”. What policy and what empirical material did he draw on to reach this conclusion? Please provide an explanation of the processes which were used to reach this conclusion.
2. What he meant by the expression “...what we would understand to be a public safety zone”? How does CASA define a public safety zone which allowed him to make that statement? What is the policy and what empirical data were used to define a “public safety zone” on an airfield?
3. Why have public safety zones “Traditionally and historically” been “quite a sensitive area for government and the NASAG”? What is meant by “sensitive” and how has that impaired resolution of this important issue?
4. Why has “little headway” been made in the last 7 years with regard to PSZs?

I look forward to hearing from you about this matter.

Thank you.

Yours sincerely

Dr Richard Gates
President
Evans Head Memorial Aerodrome Committee Inc.