

Rural & Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Supplementary Budget Estimates 2016 - 2017

Infrastructure and Regional Development

Question no.: 140

Program: N/A

Division/Agency: Civil Aviation Safety Authority

Topic: Airservices Australia Accelerate Program - 2

Proof Hansard Page: 85 (17 October 2016)

Senator Xenophon, Nick asked:

Senator XENOPHON: Okay, so these are questions I could properly put towards Airservices, and I will. But my understanding is that Airservices is required to provide a risk assessment to CASA arising out of organisational change. Is that the case?

Mr Tiede: That is correct.

Senator XENOPHON: Have they done this in this case?

Mr Tiede: They have.

Senator XENOPHON: Are you able to provide us with a copy of that risk assessment?

Mr Tiede: I do not have it with me, but yes.

Senator XENOPHON: Can you provide details to this committee of the information that has been requested, including any emails, correspondence, notes or other documentation as to the flow of information between CASA and Airservices Australia about this organisational change.

Mr Tiede: We will be able to do that—not right now.

Senator XENOPHON: I realise that. I am asking you to take it on notice.

Answer:

See response to 141.

Rural & Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Supplementary Budget Estimates 2016 - 2017

Infrastructure and Regional Development

Question no.: 141

Program: N/A

Division/Agency: Civil Aviation Safety Authority

Topic: Airservices Australia Accelerate Program

Proof Hansard Page: 85 (17 October 2016)

Senator Xenophon, Nick asked:

Senator XENOPHON: Can you provide details to this committee of the information that has been requested, including any emails, correspondence, notes or other documentation as to the flow of information between CASA and Airservices Australia about this organisational change.

Mr Tiede: We will be able to do that—not right now.

Answer:

Given the scale and complexity in respect of Airservices 'Accelerate' programme and the fact that it would be rolled out over a period of time, CASA took the position that it would be preferable to have updated briefings provided at the senior level between CASA and Airservices management on a regular basis.

The types of information requested and provided includes copies of Airservices Operating Model, Structure and Safety Case Assessment and Reporting (SCARD), charts on the new Airservices structure, safety management accountabilities in Airservices, Airservices IT access issues, and operational and technical staffing matters including at specific Airservices locations.

The Accelerate programme is an integrated activity within Airservices, rather than a stand-alone or parallel activity. As such, CASA's routine surveillance activities are examining Accelerate components simultaneously with business as usual components. Surveillance includes continuous exchange and review of related documentation. Structural changes were implemented within CASA in early October to align the CASA structure with the new Air Navigation Service structure implemented by Airservices, placing surveillance responsibility for the air traffic control and air traffic engineering regulations under one CASA team.

Since August 2016, Accelerate-related meetings, briefings and informal discussions have regularly taken place between CASA and Airservices. In some instances, these have been at the narrow level of a specific regulation, in other cases more broadly to facilitate 'big picture' understanding. The overview briefings have taken place alongside the standing, quarterly, regulation-specific, CASA/Airservices meetings. CASA was also concerned that during the Accelerate programme full access was able to be maintained by CASA to the relevant sections of Airservices' IT system to facilitate documentation review.

CASA's view is that the safety of the programme would be determined as the capability assessments were completed, positions established and staff members allocated, that is, on a rolling and ongoing basis. CASA continues to monitor the safe operation of Airservices during the transition period.

Copies of the key safety documents shared between CASA and Airservices up to 17 October 2016 are provided in the response to 152.

Rural & Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Supplementary Budget Estimates 2016 - 2017

Infrastructure and Regional Development

Question no.: 142

Program: N/A

Division/Agency: Civil Aviation Safety Authority

Topic: ADS-B and Clouds

Proof Hansard Page: 88 (17 October 2016)

Senator Xenophon, Nick asked:

Senator XENOPHON: I am. I am very close. Can I just say that if aircraft fly below cloud cover, visually—if aircraft do not have ADS-B, they have to fly visually—correct?

Mr Carmody: Yes, they have to fly visually. That is correct.

Senator XENOPHON: The point that Dick Smith has made to me just again today is that that poses a risk to pilots. There has never been a case of a mid-air collision in this country involving aircraft in clouds—is that right?

Mr Carmody: I did see a quote to that effect. I assume it is correct; I have heard that.

Senator XENOPHON: He has expressed a concern previously and again today that requiring pilots who cannot afford to install ADS-B to fly visually below clouds itself is problematic from a safety point of view. Is that something you have assessed?

Mr Carmody: Not to my knowledge. I can take that on notice and see whether we have. I do not know the answer to that, I am sorry.

Answer:

CASA has not conducted an assessment of potential increases in Visual Flight Rules (VFR) traffic resulting from an inability to comply with the February 2017 'all IFR' ADS-B mandate. Australia's VFR rules are long standing and consistent with international standards. CASA does not consider that flying under VFR is inherently problematic from a safety point of view.

Rural & Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Supplementary Budget Estimates 2016 - 2017

Infrastructure and Regional Development

Question no.: 143

Program: N/A

Division/Agency: Civil Aviation Safety Authority

Topic: ADS-B Implementation Date

Proof Hansard Page: 88 (17 October 2016)

Senator Xenophon, Nick asked:

Senator XENOPHON: Could you take it on notice. Is there any possibility—and I emphasise the word 'possibility'—that, given the alarming numbers in respect to general aviation in this country, there may be consideration on CASA's part to consider a stretching out of the date for the implementation of ADS-B?

Mr Carmody: There are no plans at this stage to delay the implementation, but I have only been in place for a week. I would like to look at the possibilities. At this stage there are none, but I will see.

Senator XENOPHON: My final question is a follow-up. The base of your assertion is that it might be more expensive in a few years time, and that did not work for flat screen TVs or other technology.

Mr Carmody: Different technology. But that is just an assertion in the same way as it is an assertion that it will get cheaper, if I may, by AOPA.

Senator XENOPHON: And that generally happens with new technology?

Mr Carmody: It might.

Senator XENOPHON: Could you get back to me on that. Thank you, Chair, for your patience.

Answer:

All Australian regular public transport, charter and aerial work aircraft must be fitted with ADS-B equipment by 2 February 2017.

On 22 November 2016, the Acting Chief Executive Officer and Director of Aviation Safety signed an instrument which provided limited relief from the ADS-B mandate for a small number of private aircraft operators. Safety will not be compromised due to the range of conditions that will apply to the non-ADS-B flights, that is private aircraft operating Instrument Flight Rules (IFR) without ADS-B can only do so below 10,000 feet in uncontrolled Class G airspace and when transitioning from Class C and E controlled airspace to land at or take-off from a Class D aerodrome with prior clearance from Air Traffic Control. The extension also only applies to aircraft manufactured before 6 February 2014 operating under IFR.

Subject to these conditions private aircraft flying under IFR now have longer to fit ADS-B equipment, with the mandate extended to 1 January 2020, which aligns with the ADS-B deadline in the USA.

This extension may not reduce the overall fitment costs, as the cost of acquiring ADS-B technology may not be limited to just the price of the equipment but can also include installation costs. However, it does provide more time for the fitment of the equipment, reducing the cost burden today on owners and operators.

Rural & Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Supplementary Budget Estimates 2016 - 2017

Infrastructure and Regional Development

Question no.: 144

Program: N/A

Topic: ADS-B Prices

Proof Hansard Page: Written (21 October 2016)

Senator Xenophon, Nick asked:

What empirical or other data does CASA have to ground the claim that that ADS-B prices will go up as a function of time? Please table this data.

Answer:

CASA does not have empirical or other data regarding the fluctuations in the price of ADS-B equipment. However, the avionics costs were considered as part of the ADS-B Regulation Impact Statement (RIS) and then reviewed by CASA in 2015. It was found during that review that the RIS costs were generally consistent with the current prices.

In addition, the US-based Aircraft Electronics Association, representing the manufacturers of ADS-B equipment, recently suggested that the ADS-B equipment costs had reached their lowest price point.