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Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport

QUESTION ON NOTICE

Supplementary Budget Estimates 2025-2026

Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications, Sport and the Arts

Committee Question Number: 57

Departmental Question Number: SQ25-002064

Division/Agency Name: Agency - Civil Aviation Safety Authority

Hansard Reference: Spoken, Page No. 121 - 122 (07 October 2025)

Topic: CASA – Health assessment and information of Qantas pilot

Senator Malcolm Roberts asked:

Senator ROBERTS: Thank you for appearing. I want to ask about the Qantas plane that made an urgent landing at Sydney airport in March after the captain suffered chest pains. Has a full medical report been done on this pilot for his CASA licence after this event?

Ms Spence: I don't have that information in front of me, but I'm happy to take it on notice and provide you with a response.

Senator ROBERTS: No-one has that information?

Ms Spence: No, sorry.

Senator ROBERTS: Did the pilot have a COVID-19 mRNA jab?

Ms Spence: As I said, I don't have any information on that incident, but I'm happy to provide that on notice.

Senator ROBERTS: Did CASA's medical investigation specifically screen for the conditions associated with adverse events from COVID-19?

Ms Spence: As I said, I don't have any information on that incident. I'm happy to take it on notice.

Answer:

The normal processes for aviation medical assessment after a safety-relevant medical event have been followed for the pilot involved in the reported Qantas incident including a full review of their medical status by the Designated Aviation Medical Examiner, treating medical specialists and Civil Aviation Safety Authority (CASA) aviation medicine specialists.

Due to the sensitive nature of personal medical information, we do not consider it appropriate to comment in further detail.

The medical assessment by the treating medical specialist and CASA's aviation medicine specialists has considered all potential causes for this event. CASA is not aware of a single example, globally, of a pilot being incapacitated on duty as a result of a COVID vaccination.