

Question on notice no. 302

Portfolio question number: SQ23-005056

2023-24 Supplementary Budget estimates

**Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Committee, Infrastructure,
Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts Portfolio**

Senator Bridget McKenzie: asked the Civil Aviation Safety Authority on 2 November 2023—

- (1. In response to Question on Notice 159 of the 2022-23 Supplementary Budget Estimates you stated that there was no evidence that there are insufficient Licensed Aircraft Maintenance Engineers, and only said that there were anecdotal reports suggesting delays due to limited supply. This is in direct contradiction to the evidence in the Aviation Safety Advisory Panel's ASAP Technical Work Group's second meeting report in 2020 which stated that there is a shortage, especially in rural and regional areas. If there's no evidence now, what has changed in those three years?
2. Has CASA actually taken on board the work of the advisory group and implemented recommendations from the working group to ensure that Australia has sufficient access to LAMEs to support the aviation industry?
3. Why is CASA not acknowledging the evidence from the working group and admitting that we do have a problem with LAME availability in Australia, and working with industry to find a solution before we see more safety incidents as a result?
4. Has CASA engaged with other departments to try and improve training pathways for LAMEs?
5. What is CASA doing to improve the number of LAMEs that are available to service Australia's fleet of planes?

Answer —

Please find answer attached

Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport

QUESTION ON NOTICE

Supplementary Budget Estimates 2023 - 2024

Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts

Committee Question Number: 302

Departmental Question Number: SQ23-005056

Division/Agency Name: Agency - Civil Aviation Safety Authority

Hansard Reference: Written (02 November 2023)

Topic: CASA - Aviation Safety Advisory Panel's ASAP Technical Work Group report into LAME shortage

Senator Bridget McKenzie asked:

1. In response to Question on Notice 159 of the 2022-23 Supplementary Budget Estimates you stated that there was no evidence that there are insufficient Licensed Aircraft Maintenance Engineers, and only said that there were anecdotal reports suggesting delays due to limited supply. This is in direct contradiction to the evidence in the Aviation Safety Advisory Panel's ASAP Technical Work Group's second meeting report in 2020 which stated that there is a shortage, especially in rural and regional areas. If there's no evidence now, what has changed in those three years?
2. Has CASA actually taken on board the work of the advisory group and implemented recommendations from the working group to ensure that Australia has sufficient access to LAMEs to support the aviation industry?
3. Why is CASA not acknowledging the evidence from the working group and admitting that we do have a problem with LAME availability in Australia, and working with industry to find a solution before we see more safety incidents as a result?
4. Has CASA engaged with other departments to try and improve training pathways for LAMEs?
5. What is CASA doing to improve the number of LAMEs that are available to service Australia's fleet of planes?

Answer:

1. CASA's response to Committee Question Number 159 (SQ23-003424) from the 2022-23 Supplementary Budget Estimates hearing was not saying that there was no shortage of Licensed Aircraft Maintenance Engineers (LAMEs), but that all CASA has received was anecdotal evidence. This includes the second meeting report of the Aviation Safety Advisory Panel's (ASAP) Technical Working Group (TWG) for maintenance personnel licensing.

CASA is acting to help address the shortage of LAMEs through the development of the modular licensing initiative. This initiative will make it easier for people to obtain a licence or return to the profession after a long absence. It will also assist foreign licence holders seeking a qualification to work in Australia.

2. Yes.

3. Refer to the answers to questions 1 and 2.
4. Yes.
5. Refer to the answers to questions 1 and 2.