

Question on notice no. 129

Portfolio question number: SQ24-001328

2024-25 Supplementary budget estimates

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

Senator Steph Hodgins-May: asked the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts on 14 November 2024—

(1. Is the Department's strategic planning focused on enshrining the World Health Organisation's (WHO) health related noise metrics in a fully reviewed 1996 Airports Act; Australian Standard AS2021:2015; the Airservices Australia ANEF approvals; and, in the National Airports Safeguarding Framework (NASF) applicable to all airports and military airfields in Australia?

a. If not, what are the forward plans for the Department properly considering modern, evidence informed noise metrics to mitigate noise harm?

2. Has the Department considered the long term national benefits of adopting the WHO researched international health related noise metrics?

3. How is the Department responding to recent recommendations on community health from the WHO that the following new health related aircraft noise metrics be introduced to mitigate noise harm:

a. maximum environmental night-time noise level below 40 db.

b. maximum environmental day-time noise level below 45 db, and

c. the inadequacy of all current aircraft noise metrics to properly protect the health and wellbeing of communities

Answer —

Please find answer attached

Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport

QUESTION ON NOTICE

Supplementary Budget Estimates 2024 - 2025

Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts

Committee Question Number: 129

Departmental Question Number: SQ24-001328

Division/Agency Name: DIV - Domestic Aviation and Reform

Hansard Reference: Written (14 November 2024)

Topic: WHO's health related noise metrics

Senator Steph Hodgins-May asked:

1. Is the Department's strategic planning focused on enshrining the World Health Organisation's (WHO) health related noise metrics in a fully reviewed 1996 Airports Act; Australian Standard AS2021:2015; the Airservices Australia ANEF approvals; and, in the National Airports Safeguarding Framework (NASF) applicable to all airports and military airfields in Australia?
 - a. If not, what are the forward plans for the Department properly considering modern, evidence informed noise metrics to mitigate noise harm?
2. Has the Department considered the long term national benefits of adopting the WHO researched international health related noise metrics?
3. How is the Department responding to recent recommendations on community health from the WHO that the following new health related aircraft noise metrics be introduced to mitigate noise harm:
 - a. maximum environmental night-time noise level below 40 db.
 - b. maximum environmental day-time noise level below 45 db, and
 - c. the inadequacy of all current aircraft noise metrics to properly protect the health and wellbeing of communities

Answer:

Initiative 36 of the Aviation White Paper details proposed actions in relation to the National Airports Safeguarding Framework and Australian Standard 2021:2015 *Acoustics – Aircraft noise intrusion – Building siting and construction*.

The Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts has submitted a proposal to amend Australian Standard 2021:2015 and will continue to engage with Standards Australia on possible changes.

The Department of Health and Aged Care has responsibility for environmental health impacts, and this includes health impacts relating to aircraft noise. The Department of Health and Aged Care has an Environmental Health Standing Committee (enHealth) which advises on environmental health policy and environmental factors that impact health, which includes aircraft noise.

Further enquiries should be directed to the Department of Health and Aged Care.