

Rural & Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Supplementary Budget Estimates
Infrastructure and Regional Development

Question no.: 222

Program: n/a

Division/Agency: Airservices Australia

Topic: Operations in Melbourne

Proof Hansard Page: 142 (20 October 2014)

Senator Xenophon asked:

Senator XENOPHON: Ms Staib, I have a pilot complaint about land and hold short operations at Melbourne. What risk assessment did Airservices undertake when it decided to seek CASA dispensation from requirements of the Aeronautical Information Package, or AIP—1.1 to 10, paragraph 4.5—in order to nominate arrivals into Melbourne runways that exceeded 20 knots or 5 knots downwind? I am happy for you to take that on notice. **Ms Staib:** Thank you for the question. We will take that on notice.

Answer:

At the request of industry, in 2010 Airservices developed a safety case to support an increase to the Aeronautical Information Publication (AIP) crosswind limitations at Melbourne for the runway not subject to the “hold short” instruction. Please refer to **222 – Attachment A**.

The proposal was supported by industry at the time, because most aircraft operating scheduled services in Australia are certified for higher crosswind capability than 20 knots.

CASA sought additional evidence in its consideration of the proposal and industry subsequently decided not to pursue the change.

The related exemption from the AIP requirement was therefore not sought by Airservices.

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Question no.: 223

Program: n/a

Division/Agency: Airservices Australia

Topic: Risk Assessment

Proof Hansard Page: 142 (20 October 2014)

Senator Xenophon asked:

Senator XENOPHON: ...Can Airservices provide a copy of the risk assessment it undertook using its safety management system to ascertain that not complying with AIP 1.1 to 10, paragraph 4.5, or any other AIP aspects was safe? **Ms Staib:** We can take that on notice.

Answer:

Refer answer to 222.

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Question no.: 224

Program: N/A

Division/Agency: Airservices Australia

Topic: Severity Definition Airways System Issues

Proof Hansard Pages: 142-143 (20 October 2014)

Senator Xenophon asked:

Senator XENOPHON: ... My next question goes to answers to questions on notice that I put at budget estimates on Severity Definition Airways System issues, where you describe severity 1 to severity 5. For the categorisation of the severity of an incident, who determines that? Again, I am happy to take this on notice. To what extent is there any independent assessment of the classification of an incident?

Ms Staib: We have definitions in our processes about that. I will ask the executive general manager of projects and engineering to talk to you about that. Otherwise we can take that on notice.

Senator XENOPHON: What I want to know is whether it has been subject to any independent audit or assessment.

Mr Hood: If it is an incident that is either pilot attributed or air traffic control attributed, the air traffic controllers do not undertake that risk assessment. It goes to the Safety, Environment and Assurance Branch, where they review the incident and assign the risk rating.

Ms Staib: Senator, to clarify: you are referring to the Integrated Tower Automation Suite that we talked about?

Senator XENOPHON: Yes, it is in the context of INTAS. I am happy for the rest to be taken on notice.

Answer:

The severity ratings for Airways System 'Defect' issues (including INTAS) is initially assigned by the Airservices Technical Operations Centre (TOC) who tactically monitor 24 hours a day, seven days a week via airway system facilities and provide the initial response to reported issues.

Responsibility for issues raised through the Airservices System Issues Database (ASID) is automatically assigned to an Issue Manager who reviews and manages the issue including the priority level. The issue is also sent via email workflow to the Maintenance, Technical and Operating Authorities for their awareness and assessment. The Operating Authority, who is an Air Traffic Controller, also reviews the severity levels in relation to how the issue may impact airways operations, providing another layer of independence.

If required, the issue is reported to Airservices National Safety & Environment Panel (NSP) which meets each weekday morning. The NSP is multi-disciplined, comprising representation from each operational group to ensure full consideration of potential impacts to Airservices operations. The objective of the NSP is to identify and oversight management of key safety, environment and security issues, with an emphasis on the resolution of systemic and high consequence matters.

There is no external audit or assessment of severity clarification.

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Question no.: 225

Program: n/a

Division/Agency: Airservices Australia

Topic: Rockhampton NDB Approach

Proof Hansard Page: 145 (20 October 2014)

Senator Fawcett asked:

Mr Hood: Following the last estimates hearing we had some ongoing discussions with the Civil Aviation Safety Authority in relation to the Rockhampton NDB approach. As you would be aware, the problem really lies where the approach does not go outside the airspace so much but the tolerances of the approach do. In discussions with CASA in relation to Rockhampton, CASA have agreed to review the rule set—whether the rule set is really applicable in relation to that, particularly the terminal area instrument flight procedures, the TIFPs—and also the CASR 172 MOS. Also, in discussions with CASA, we have agreed to go back once again and have a look at whether we can generate an airspace change proposal, an ACP, which may amend the airspace slightly and therefore encompass those procedures within the Class D airspace. **Senator FAWCETT:** I am heartened to hear that. What is your time frame, Mr Hood? **Mr Hood:** I spoke as recently as this morning to CASA. If I could take the time frame on notice I will advise you of that as soon as I can. An airspace change proposal in itself does not take very long to prepare, but obviously it requires us to consult extensively in the Rocky vicinity in terms of the airspace itself.

Answer:

Since October 2014, Airservices has discussed all the possible options for resolution of this issue with CASA.

Airspace changes to fully contain the procedure would require large increases to controlled airspace which we consider would be unlikely to be acceptable to the majority of airspace users.

Airservices will therefore submit an exemption request that meets the requirements of Part 11 of the Civil Aviation Safety Regulations to CASA by the end of the 2014 calendar year. CASA's normal review period is four working weeks, and subject to a favourable decision, the required change to the chart could then be expected to be implemented through NOTAM with immediate effect.

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Question no.: 226

Program: n/a

Division/Agency: Airservices Australia

Topic: Credit Card Misuse

Proof Hansard Pages: 144-146 (20 October 2014)

Senator Heffernan asked:

Senator STERLE: Ms Staib, you indicated that an employee was dismissed for credit-card misuse in the last few months. Could you tell us the employee's level and how much was involved? **Ms Staib:** There was an employee dismissed in the last couple of months for credit-card abuse. The level of that person was middle management, but I do not have the figure at hand for the amount involved....**Ms Staib:** It is in the order of about 10,000 to 20,000 dollars and it was around travel, if my memory serves me correctly....**CHAIR:** Did the person who defrauded with the credit card make good the fraud amount? Or did you just say, 'You're sacked. See you later'? **Ms Staib:** He has left the organisation. I will have to check whether we have pursued the repayment of the money.

Answer:

I wish to correct the record for the following section that appears in the Hansard:

Ms Staib: It is in the order of about 10,000 to 20,000 dollars and it was around travel, if my memory serves me correctly.

The credit card misuse was identified through internal credit card governance processes and thoroughly investigated. The investigation conclusively identified transactions where personal benefit had been obtained that amounted to less than \$3,000 in total.

This matter was complex as the credit card misuse related primarily to inappropriate expenses incurred during periods of approved business travel. In some cases, travel has been modified or adjusted without approval.

In considering all the circumstances of this matter including some complex matters of a private nature, the decision reached by management was to terminate employment and not refer the matter further. Recovery of the monies was not pursued in the circumstances.

Airservices complied with all relevant guidelines and policies in relation to both the conduct of the investigation and the subsequent management actions. This includes provisions of the Commonwealth Fraud Control Guidelines 2011 and the Australian Government Investigation Standard 2011 which give guidance to agencies on circumstances where referral to external law enforcement or prosecution agencies is appropriate.

Airservices takes a very strong approach to the misuse of corporate credit cards and has robust processes and procedures in place to detect and respond to any instance of misuse. Regular reviews and audits of compliance with credit card and travel procedures are conducted across the organisation.

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Question no.: 227

Program: n/a

Division/Agency: Airservices Australia

Topic: Remuneration for Directors and Executives

Proof Hansard Page: Written

Senator Gallacher asked:

Could you provide the individual remuneration (including Reportable Salary, Contributed Superannuation, Reportable Allowances, Bonus Paid and Total) for each of the current directors (including the CEO) and the current executives of Airservices Australia from your latest financial report?

Answer:

Remuneration information for Directors and Senior Executives is available in the *Airservices Australia 2013-14 Annual Report*, which is available on the Airservices website¹.

¹ http://www.airservicesaustralia.com/wp-content/uploads/14-1053BKT_Annual_Report_2013-14_WEB.pdf

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Question no.: 228

Program: n/a

Division/Agency: Airservices Australia

Topic: Medium Works Projects

Proof Hansard Page: Written

Senator Gallacher asked:

1. When did Civil Aviation Safety Regulation Part 139 subpart H come into effect?
2. When was it subsequently decided to assess airfields around the country for compliance of CAS Regulations?
3. When was the need brought to the Board's attention?
4. What decisions were made at Board level regarding compliance assessments, builds and refurbishments?
5. When did consultation with CASA begin and what was the nature of that negotiation?
6. When did consultations with the Pricing Consultative Committee begin and what was the nature of that consultation?
7. Who won the successful tender for each of these medium work projects?
8. I note that the Airservices Australia Board meeting approved works for Ballina and Coffs Harbour at the September 2013 meeting. At which meetings were the other projects approved?
9. Did the Board consider the Newman and Gladstone projects given the tenders closed on the same day (14 June 2014) as the Ballina and Coffs Harbour at this meeting?
10. What caused the delay in the execution of the Ballina and Coffs Harbour contracts until March 2014 given the tenders closed on 14 June 2013?
11. Do the costings include cost of fitouts for projects where it is noted that after the completion date "... this will be followed by a fitout of the structure"?
12. Who is the successful tenderer for each project?

Answer:

1. CASR Part 139 was made on 26 June 2002 and commenced on 1 May 2003.
2. CASR Part 139 Subpart H requires an aviation rescue firefighting service to be established at airports which have had in excess of 350,000 passenger movements for the previous financial year. Passenger numbers at all airports are assessed on a continual basis.
3. At its meeting in July 2002, the Board was informed of the Governor General's decision on 26 June 2002 to introduce Civil Aviation Safety Regulation (CASR) Part 139 subpart H.
4. The Board are provided with a five year rolling Capital Works Program. This program is approved on an annual basis with regular updated of the program provided to the Board. The Capital Works Program includes projects associated with compliance to CASR 139H. Each project (over the CEO's financial delegation from the Board) is presented to the Board for approval.
5. Airservices wrote to CASA on 28 August 2001, committing Airservices to voluntary compliance with the proposed new suite of aviation regulations. Subsequently we followed up with a letter on 21 June 2002 seeking clarification regarding compliance

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with CASR 139H. Airservices has continued to communicate with CASA regarding the introduction of each new fire service and associated facilities.

6. The Pricing Consultative Committee (PCC) is informed about individual projects when the passenger numbers are assessed as approaching the threshold limit at their quarterly meetings. In addition the PCC is consulted on the development of the rolling five year capital program.
7. Refer to **228 – Attachment A**.
8. Refer to **228 – Attachment A**.
9. No.
10. Delays were caused in the in execution of the Ballina contract through siting issues and lease negotiations. Delays were caused in the execution of the Coffs Harbour contract because of a siting issue which required a reconfiguration of the fire station. Response time requirements to incident sites as well as the requirement for line of sight to runway thresholds from the fire station dictate particular siting requirements.
11. Yes. The fitout costs are included in the costs.
12. Refer to **228 – Attachment A**.

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228 – Attachment A:

Project	Question 7 Contractor	Question 8 Board Consideration
Port Hedland ARFF Facility	Wildgeese Building Group	October 2012
Port Hedland Interim ARFF Station	Wildgeese Building Group	December 2012
Newman ARFF Station	St Hilliers Property Pty Ltd	June 2013
Gladstone ARFF Station	St Hilliers Property Pty Ltd	June 2013
Refurbishment of DaVinci Centre – Brisbane	Formula Interiors	Not applicable *
Ballina ARFF Station	St Hilliers Property Pty Ltd	Sept 2013
Coffs Harbour ARFF Station	St Hilliers Property Pty Ltd	Sept 2013
Fire Station Upgrade to CAT 10 – Melbourne	1 st Engagement – PRMS Australia (terminated 16 April 13 due to PRMS insolvent) 2 nd Engagement – Badge Constructions (SA)	Not applicable *
Fire Station Upgrade to CAT 10 – Sydney	1 st Engagement – PRMS Australia (terminated 16 April 13 due to PRMS insolvent) 2 nd Engagement – Badge Constructions (SA)	Not applicable *
Fire Station Upgrade to CAT 10 – Brisbane	Not yet awarded	Not applicable *
Fire Station Upgrade to CAT 10 – Perth	Badge Construction (WA) Pty Ltd	Not applicable *

* Airservices financial delegations permit the CEO to sign projects valued up to \$10 million.

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Question no.: 229

Program: n/a

Division/Agency: Airservices Australia

Topic: Port Hedland Project

Proof Hansard Page: Written

Senator Gallacher asked:

1. Why was there an interim and then permanent project?
2. Are there any elements of the interim project included in the permanent facility?
3. What date did the tender for the interim project close?
4. What date was the interim project contract executed?

Answer:

1. There was both an interim and permanent facility in order to introduce an expedient solution to meet the regulatory requirement. It meets the minimum requirements for a short term facility.
2. The interim facility is a temporary facility to conduct operations until the permanent facility was completed. The plan is to transition from the temporary facility to the permanent facility and this transition needs to be seamless to maintain services.
 - Breathing apparatus compressor will be reused in the permanent facility.
 - Unfixed plant and equipment including furnishings will be used in the permanent facility.
 - The equipment in the temporary facility is able to be removed and used elsewhere either with existing interim facility if it is moved elsewhere or the components will be restocked as spares.
 - There are a number of leased items in the interim station as it is temporary in nature these include:
 - i. Diesel fuel tank and associated pumps to fuel the trucks
 - ii. Water tank and fire fighting pump – compliance under the BCA.
- 3-4 To introduce an interim ARFF service in the most expeditious manner, a separate market approach was not undertaken for the interim facility. A sole source procurement was undertaken with the preferred supplier from the open tender for the permanent facility issued on AUS Tender 23 March 2012. The tender was concluded on 23 October 2012 and a contract executed on 28 March 2013. Airservices entered into a deed of agreement (variation of main contract for the permanent facility) for the construction of the interim facility.

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Question no.: 230

Program: n/a

Division/Agency: Airservices Australia

Topic: Corporate Credit Cards

Proof Hansard Page: Written

Senator Gallacher asked:

1. How many corporate credit cards have been issued to directors and employees of Airservices Australia?
2. What are Airservices Australia's credit limits on these issued credit cards?
3. What are Airservices Australia's protocols pertaining to the use of the corporate credit cards?
4. What are Airservices Australia's protocols for inadvertent or deliberate misuse of corporate credit cards?

Answer:

- 1-2 There are 1168 credit cards issued to employees of Airservices. This figure includes 516 travel cards which are only to be used when the employee is travelling for work purposes. The majority of credit cards (97%) have limits under \$15,000 in total monthly transactions. 39 cards have limits over \$15,000.
3. Credit cards are only issued to permanent members of staff and are not issued to contractors or other temporary engagements. Credit cards are only issued to staff where an appropriate business need is identified. Transaction and monthly limits are applied to all cards with increases subject to approval from at least two of the following senior management team members; appropriate Executive General Manager (EGM), Chief Finance Officer (CFO) and Manager Organisational Procurement. Credit card holders are required to acknowledge their responsibilities upon issue of the card. Airservices policy is to issue travel cards if an employee travels six or more times during the year. Expenditure is reviewed and approved by the appropriate manager on a monthly basis. *Airservices Credit Card Management Instruction*, please refer to **230 – Attachment A**, provides direction on the approval issue and use of Airservices issued credit cards in conjunction with the *Procurement within Airservices Management Instruction*.
4. Misuse of a corporate credit card constitutes a breach of Airservices Code of Conduct and Code of Conduct Management Instruction. The Code of Conduct and Code of Conduct Management Instruction applies to all Airservices employees, contractors and consultants. Breaches may result in disciplinary action being taken against an individual in accordance with Airservices Code of Conduct Investigation Procedure, the relevant industrial instrument, legislation, policies and procedures or contract, up to and including termination of employment or engagement with Airservices.

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Question no.: 231

Program: n/a

Division/Agency: Airservices Australia

Topic: Civil Aviation Regulation Part 139

Proof Hansard Page: Written

Senator Gallacher asked:

1. In reference to Civil Aviation Regulation Part 139 Subpart H that came into effect in 2003, what is the date that the 11 projects (discussed in the Senate Estimates Hearings in October 2014) clicked over 350,000 passengers?
2. How many of those projects were not completed within the 12 month statutory timeframe?

Answer:

1 and 2

The trigger applies to the introduction of a service and therefore only applies to the following five of the eleven projects:

Location	Trigger met	Information Received from BITRE	Services Commenced
Port Hedland¹	February 2011	May 2011	June 2013
Gladstone	April 2012	July 2012	August 2014
Newman	October 2012	January 2013	September 2014
Ballina	April 2013	July 2013	December 2014
Coffs Harbour	May 2013	August 2013	January 2015

The regulation does not contain a statutory deadline for completion of a facility and commencement of services however Airservices seeks to implement the service as soon as possible once the threshold has been met in consultation with CASA and subject to the particular requirements of the individual airport sites.

¹ Interim and permanent facilities

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Question no.: 232

Program: n/a

Division/Agency: Airservices Australia

Topic: Infrastructure Consolidation and Contingency Planning

Proof Hansard Page: Written

Senator Xenophon asked:

1. In the original decision to consolidate Air Traffic services into two major centres, did the facilities and manpower planning specifically include considerations for the temporary or short term transfer of activities from one centre to the other in the case of a natural or manmade disaster that might render one of the facilities unusable?
2. Are there contingency plans in place to reallocate workload with Air Traffic services in the event of a contingency arising that severely impacts on the capability of Brisbane or Melbourne Centres? If so:
 - a. How often are the plans exercised?
 - b. What is the maximum capability transfer that has successfully implemented?
 - c. Does the plan rely on large scale airspace closures given the limitations of available infrastructure and manpower at each location?
3. Will the consolidation of the Terminal Control Units to Brisbane or Melbourne Centres affect the systemic capability to reallocate workload with Air Traffic services in the event of a contingency arising that severely impacts on the capability of Brisbane or Melbourne Centres?
4. If Perth remains as an independent TCU, does it have any reasonable capability to take on additional workload from the East Coast in the event of a contingency arising that severely impacts on the capability of Brisbane or Melbourne Centres?

Answer:

1. The temporary or short term transfer of activities from one centre to the other in unforeseen circumstances was considered in the decision to consolidate Air Traffic Services into two major centres. Prior to the decision to consolidate Air Traffic Services into Melbourne and Brisbane Centres, Airservices had limited capability to accommodate the short term transfer of activities between locations due to disparate systems and facilities between locations. The consolidation of Air Traffic Services into the two major centres coincided with the commissioning of The Advanced Australian Air Traffic System (TAAATS) at the major centres and at Perth, Adelaide, Sydney and Cairns Terminal Control Units. The use of a common system at all locations and the ability to configure the simulator in Melbourne and Brisbane Centres to accommodate contingencies in other locations provides Airservices with contingency capabilities that we did not have prior to commissioning of TAAATS.
 2. Airservices has contingency plans in place to reallocate workload in the event of a contingency that severely impacts on the capability of Brisbane or Melbourne Centres. The plan involves reconfiguration of the simulator in either centre to accommodate the operations of the other centre. The plan includes:
 - i. Crisis Management Arrangements to address the organisational response to contingencies
 - ii. Contingency and Continuity Plans to address specific airspace and service provision issues
 - iii. Disaster Recovery Plans to address logistics issues and high level systems issues associated with transferring capability between locations
 - iv. System Continuity Plans which address resilience in key systems supporting the provision of Air Traffic Services.
- a. Plans are tested annually through a contingency simulation exercise.

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- b. Enacting the plans to reallocate workload between the major centres involves reconfiguring satellite links and other key supporting systems which would impact on services to industry during testing. For that reason, plans are tested through simulation exercises to minimise impact on day-to-day operations and the travelling public.
3. No.
4. Perth plays a role in our contingency planning as an alternative location for enroute and Terminal Control Unit. The introduction of the future “OneSKY” system will enhance Airservices Australia’s ability to better manage contingency situations as the functional specifications for the system require the ability to configure any workstation nationally to perform any role. The implementation of the “OneSKY” system will enhance the ability of Perth to take on additional workload from the East Coast in the event of a contingency arising.

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Question no.: 233

Program: n/a

Division/Agency: Airservices Australia

Topic: ATC Training

Proof Hansard Page: Written

Senator Xenophon asked:

In the past, I have received a lot of correspondence in relation to the adequacy of ATC training, both in the classroom and on the job. Did the recent benchmarking by NavCanada examine ATC training within Airservices? If so, what did they conclude and what subsequent changes have been implemented?

Answer:

As a Registered Training Organisation (RTO), Airservices provides nationally accredited training to ATC recruits, issuing the Diploma of Aviation (Air Traffic Control) qualification on successful completion. A review of the Diploma training package is in progress through the Transport and Logistics Industry Skills Council, in conjunction with Airservices and the Royal Australian Airforce (RAAF).

Training is delivered and assessed by suitably qualified Air Traffic Services (ATS) instructors at Airservices Learning Academy and again when undergoing on-the-job training in the operational environment.

Airservices, as a RTO, is audited against the Vocational Education and Training (VET) Quality Framework by the VET regulator, Australian Skills Quality Authority. The most recent audit was completed in November 2013. There were no findings in relation to ATC training.

Airservices aligns its operational training practices with the VET Quality Framework and is audited by the Civil Aviation Safety Authority (CASA) against CASR Part 143 (Air Traffic Services Training Providers), Part 172 (Air Traffic Services Providers), and Part 65 (ATC Licensing). There are no current CASA Non Compliance Notices (NCNs) with respect to ATC training. A CASA scheduled audit of ATC training in 2013 resulted in no Non Compliance Notices. The recent benchmarking undertaken with NavCanada did not extend to include ATC training.

Airservices is currently reviewing and benchmarking ATC training to the ICAO PANS-TRNG proposed ATC competency training framework. Airservices' response will contribute to the CASA submitted State response to ICAO. The review demonstrates where Airservices meets, and exceeds the proposed framework.

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Question no.: 234

Program: n/a

Division/Agency: Airservices Australia

Topic: INTAS

Proof Hansard Page: Written

Senator Xenophon asked:

1. Of the senior controllers who attended the workshop described in the answer to QoN 245 (Budget Estimates May 2014), how many were non-supervisory or non-management controllers? What percentage of workshop attendees did they comprise?
2. Have any of the workarounds or recovery methods Airservices is using to manage its 'key' INTAS issues as stated in the answer to QoN 245 failed to prevent any incidents within the meaning of the Transport Safety Investigation Regulations 2003 or the Airservices safety management system internal reporting requirements? If so, on how many occasions? What were the consequences & under what circumstances?
3. Is it accurate to describe a Loss of Separation Assurance incident as one where the required separation standards between aircraft have not been infringed but that the positive Air Traffic Control actions needed to assure that was the case had mistakenly not occurred?
4. Was the controller/s involved in the Loss of Separation Assurance (LOSA) noted in the answer to QoN 247 subjected to any form of adverse performance report and/or counselling about their performance regarding the LOSA?
5. Was any other person in the accountability chain that generated the contributory INTAS fault noted in the answer to QoN 247 subjected to any form of adverse performance report and/or counselling about their performance regarding the defective INTAS output provided to the Controller? (Note: other persons include, but are not limited to, system designers, system programmer/s, system testers and/or personnel who approved INTAS to be commissioned.)

Answer:

1. There were five senior controllers involved in both CEO Forums. All of these were either management (ATC Line Manager or Unit Tower Supervisor) or supervisory (Check and Standardisation Supervisor) staff. These controllers comprised approximately 30% of the attendees at the forum. Additionally, both line controllers and management have been involved in the identification of required changes to the system by the vendor.
2. There have been a number of CIRRIIS events recorded against the Integrated Tower Automation Suite (INTAS) which have resulted from workarounds not preventing an incident. None of these have been considered serious with the majority being a data "mismatch" between Eurocat and INTAS which are corrected by voice coordination. Although data on the total number of incidents can be obtained, in the time available, it is not possible to identify those that resulted from the failure of a work around or recovery method.
3. A LOSA is a traffic scenario where separation existed but:
 - a. The conflict was not identified; and/or
 - b. Separation was not planned or was inappropriately planned; and/or
 - c. The separation plan was not executed or was inappropriately executed; and/or
 - d. Separation was not monitored or was inappropriately monitored.
4. No.
5. We are not aware of any 'action' taken against 'other persons'.

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Question no.: 235

Program: n/a

Division/Agency: Airservices Australia

Topic: Airservices Melbourne Surface Movement Control Report

Proof Hansard Page: Written

Senator Xenophon asked:

What were the results of Airservices Melbourne Surface Movement Control Review as recommended by CASA in its response to REPCON AR201300089? Can you provide a copy of the Review?

Answer:

Prior to the operational transition to the new Melbourne Tower, equipped with an Integrated Tower Automation Suite (INTAS), on 23 November 2013, the workload and complexity of the Surface Movement Control (SMC) position when using the INTAS solution was identified as a potential area of concern.

As a result, Airservices management initiated a series of SMC workshops on 21, 22 and 30 October 2013 with Melbourne Tower management and air traffic control representatives. A number of measures were identified and implemented to alleviate a portion of the workload and related complexity in the SMC role in the new tower when using INTAS.

Subsequent to the completed transition to Melbourne Tower being completed a Post Implementation Review (PIR) was conducted by Airservices Project Safety Services in consultation with all relevant operational representatives.

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Question no.: 236

Program: n/a

Division/Agency: Airservices Australia

Topic: Gold Coast Incident – 12 October 2014

Proof Hansard Page: Written

Senator Xenophon asked:

With regards to the Gold Coast Airport incident on Sunday 12 October 2014, the article in the Courier Mail notes that the Virgin spokesman ‘...was directed to complete a “go around procedure”. However, the Airservices spokeswoman quoted in the article used the term ‘Loss of Separation Assurance’. Was the incident a simple go round or did it involve a Loss of Separation Assurance?

Answer:

Airservices informed the Australian Transport Safety Bureau (ATSB) of a loss of separation assurance involving an approaching Virgin Australia aircraft and a departing private jet at Gold Coast Airport on 12 October 2014.

Whilst still on approach, the Virgin Australia aircraft was provided with potential missed approach instructions in the event that the preceding jet did not depart in time.

Subsequently, the Virgin aircraft was given a direction by air traffic control to ‘go-around’. A go-around is a safe, standard procedure used to ensure safe operations.

A loss of separation assurance (LOSA) occurs when there has not been a clear application of a separation standard. This can happen for a range of reasons, and does not mean there has been any infringement of separation standards.

Both aircraft were being actively managed by air traffic control at all times.

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Question no.: 237

Program: n/a

Division/Agency: Airservices Australia

Topic: Breakdown of Communication Incident

Proof Hansard Page: Written

Senator Xenophon asked:

I refer to the breakdown of communication incident described in REPCON AR201300090.

1. How much time elapsed between the time the breakdown of communication occurred and the time the breakdown was detected and corrected?
2. Can Airservices provide a copy of the Airservices Corporate Integrated Reporting and Risk Information System report mentioned in the REPCON?
3. Can Airservices provide a copy of the preliminary investigation it conducted into the Incident?
4. Can Airservices provide a copy of the radar recording of the Essendon Tower, Melbourne Approach & Melbourne Tower areas of responsibility between the time the breakdown of communication occurred and the time it was detected and corrected?
5. Can Airservices provide a copy of the radar recording of the Essendon Tower, Melbourne Approach & Melbourne Tower areas of responsibility between the time the breakdown of communication occurred and the time it was detected and corrected?
6. Can Airservices provide a copy of the Essendon Tower, Melbourne Approach & Melbourne Tower Airways Operations Journals for the day of the Incident?
7. Can Airservices provide a copy of the Essendon Tower, Melbourne Approach & Melbourne Tower Local Instructions & any associated Letters of Agreement laying out coordination and control responsibilities between those parties?

Answer:

REPCON is a confidential reporting scheme operated by the Australian Transport Safety Bureau (ATSB) that allows any person to voluntarily report an aviation safety concern. The scheme operates in accordance with the *Transport Safety Investigation (Voluntary and Confidential Reporting Scheme) Regulation 2012* which outlines the specific purposes and provision of the scheme including provisions surrounding disclosure of information.

The specific incident that this REPCON refers to was a breakdown of coordination between two air traffic control units where a documented procedure was not correctly followed. Approximately three hours elapsed before the error was corrected. Prior to the REPCON report, the incident was reported and reviewed in accordance with Airservices normal safety management processes which also include routine notification to both the ATSB and the Civil Aviation Safety Authority (CASA).

Airservices has cooperated with the ATSB in relation to the REPCON which raised concerns about whether a loss of separation or separation assurance occurred. While Airservices review established that this was not the case, the incident highlighted an opportunity for making the system safer which was acted upon.

As outlined in Airservices REPCON response, an interim system enhancement was implemented while coordination procedures were reviewed to look for further opportunities for improvement. An enhancement to local documentation to reinforce coordination requirements was subsequently identified and implemented.

The actions taken by both Airservices and the Civil Aviation Safety Authority are included in the REPCON report which is available from the ATSB website (www.atsb.gov.au). Neither the ATSB nor CASA considered any further action was required.

Copies of the incident are provided in **237 – Attachment A** and relevant air traffic control instructions, including the updated procedures are detailed in **237 – Attachment B**. As the causal factors of the occurrence were identified by management and improvements implemented, no formal investigation report was prepared as it was considered little further value would have been achieved. The provision of the other information requested is complex and would require a significant diversion of resources.