

Rural & Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Supplementary Budget Estimates 2016 - 2017

Infrastructure and Regional Development

Question no.: 177

Program: 2.4 Air Transport

Division/Agency: Aviation and Airports

Topic: Airstrip at Cape Preston

Proof Hansard Page: 118-119 (17 October 2016)

Senator McCarthy, Malrindirri asked:

Senator McCARTHY: Is the department aware of a proposal to build an airstrip at Cape Preston in Western Australia?

Ms Spence: No, that is not one of the federally leased airports that we have responsibility for.

Senator STERLE: There is no airport there. The question was are you aware of one—

Ms Spence: No.

Mr Mrdak: It is more likely to be subject to a Western Australian planning process at this stage.

Senator McCARTHY: So it has not reached you?

Mr Mrdak: We are not aware of it.

Senator McCARTHY: So you are not aware of any of that discussion at all? Would there be any other federal agency that might be?

Mr Mrdak: We can certainly ask the Civil Aviation Safety Authority or Airservices Australia. We will take that on notice to see whether they have had any contact in relation to that.

Answer:

Following the Estimates hearings, the Department checked with the two aviation agencies and can confirm the Civil Aviation Safety Authority (CASA) advised Airservices Australia and the Department of Infrastructure and Regional Development in June 2016 for information, that they were aware that a contract had been signed to construct an aerodrome at Cape Preston in Western Australia.

Subsequently, CASA received an application for an Aerodrome Certificate for the aerodrome on 4 November 2016.

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Supplementary Budget Estimates 2016 - 2017

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Question no.: 178

Program: 2.4 Air Transport

Division/Agency: Aviation and Airports

Topic: Australia's Percentage of Revenue Tonne Kilometres of ICAO Member States

Proof Hansard Page: 119 (17 October 2016)

Senator Rice, Janet asked:

Senator RICE: What percentage of revenue tonne kilometres of international aviation is Australia currently accountable for?

Mrs Rosengren: I would have to check. I think we are about 18th on the international listing but I do not know what our current percentage is. We can take that on notice.

Answer:

Figures released by the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) on 30 June 2016 show that in 2014 Australia's international aviation activities accounted for 1.66 percent of the total Revenue Tonne Kilometres (RTKs) of ICAO's 191 Member States.

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Supplementary Budget Estimates 2016 - 2017

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Question no.: 179

Program: 2.4 Air Transport

Division/Agency: Aviation and Airports

Topic: Greenhouse Gas Emissions Target – Domestic Aviation

Proof Hansard Page: 120 (17 October 2016)

Senator Rice, Janet asked:

Senator RICE: What approaches have you been discussing with the minister or with the Department for the Environment? What sort of approach?

Mr Mrdak: Well, it is largely around the various means the current government is using to meet Australia's emissions targets.

Senator RICE: But what? There is a range of different ways of trying to offset emissions. What sort of approaches have you been considering or discussing with the minister?

Mr Mrdak: Only really what is currently under the government's policy platform, which is—

Senator RICE: Which is?

Mr Mrdak: Australia's targets.

Senator RICE: You have targets, but what are the mechanisms for reaching those targets?

Mr Mrdak: There is a range of policies and programs the government has put in place. I can get you some details on those. That would probably be the best way.

Answer:

Under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, domestic and international aviation are treated separately. Domestic aviation emissions are counted as part of country targets and inventories. International aviation emissions are dealt with separately by the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO). The Department of Infrastructure and Regional Development is the lead agency responsible for negotiations in ICAO. We work closely with the Departments of the Environment and Energy and Foreign Affairs and Trade on Australia's approach in ICAO.

Australia continues to work through ICAO on practical measures to manage the carbon emissions from international aviation such as operational improvements, aircraft and engine technology uptake, emissions standards, alternative fuels, air traffic management improvements and national action plans. These initiatives are expected to have flow-on effects for domestic aviation emissions.

Measures aimed specifically at reducing domestic aviation emissions, along with emissions in other sectors through the Emissions Reduction Fund and its safeguard mechanism, is the responsibility of the Department of the Environment and Energy. The Department of the Environment and Energy have provided the following information regarding measures to address domestic aviation emissions.

Australia is taking a Direct Action approach to reducing its emissions. At the centre of this approach are the Emission Reduction Fund and its safeguard mechanism.

Under the Emissions Reduction Fund airlines can be credited for reducing the emissions intensity of air transport (i.e. emissions per unit of transportation service). The crediting method supports a broad range of activities to reduce emissions intensity within the aviation sector, including modifying existing planes, changing energy sources or the mix of energy sources, and changing operational practices.

The safeguard mechanism puts emissions limits on Australia's largest emitters to prevent significant increases above business-as-usual levels. Australia's major domestic airlines are covered by the safeguard mechanism.

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In addition, Australia's major airlines provide 'opt in' carbon neutral passenger flight and freight for both domestic and international flights. When booking flights, customers have the option of purchasing offsets for their flight. These services are certified carbon neutral under the Government's voluntary Carbon Neutral Program, which ensures carbon neutral claims are backed up by rigorous calculation methodologies, high quality offsets and transparent annual reporting. Certified carbon neutral services are also required to have emissions reduction strategies in place to reduce emissions intensity over time.

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Question no.: 180

Program: 2.4 Air Transport

Division/Agency: Aviation and Airports

Topic: Land swaps – Perth Airport

Proof Hansard Page: Written (13 October 2016)

Senator Sterle, Glenn asked:

It is understood that the Federal Government and State of Western Australia entered into an agreement for a 'land swap' (many years ago) for certain lands in the vicinity of Perth Airport. This includes Lot 15370 on DP43802 which is proposed to be transferred to the Federal Government and then leased to Perth Airport. Lot 15370 on DP43802 was identified for the extension of Adelaide Street to Abernethy Road in the Western Australian Planning Commission's Hazelmere Enterprise Area Structure Plan. The extension of Adelaide Street to Abernethy Road is critical to the development of industrial lands within Hazelmere.

Apparently, the Department of Lands (WA), the Federal Department of Infrastructure and Regional Development and Perth Airport have been discussing the exclusion of the land from the "land swap" so that the land could become available for the Adelaide Street extension to Abernethy Road.

- a) Can the Federal Department of Infrastructure and Regional Development confirm its position on the exclusion of Lot 15370 on DP43802 from the proposed "land swap" arrangement between the Federal Government and State of Western Australia to allow for the connection of Adelaide Street to Abernethy Road as set out within the Hazelmere Enterprise Area Structure Plan?
- b) If the Federal Department of Infrastructure and Regional Development is favourable to the setting aside of Lot 15370 on DP43802 for the extension of Adelaide Street what has occurred, or is proposed to occur to facilitate this outcome, and what is the proposed timing?
- c) If the Federal Department of Infrastructure and Regional Development will not support the setting aside of Lot 15370 on DP43802 for the extension of Adelaide Street can it be advised why?

Answer:

- a) The proposal to exclude this parcel of land represents a change to an agreement signed in 2007 by the Western Australian Government, the Australian Government, and the Westralia Airports Corporation Pty Ltd (the airport lessee at Perth Airport – now Perth Airport Pty Ltd) involving a number of parcels of land. The Department is currently liaising with the other parties to the agreement to ensure the proposed changes do not prejudice airport operations.
- b) The outcome and timing is subject to progress with negotiations.
- c) The outcome and timing is subject to progress with negotiations.

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Supplementary Budget Estimates 2016 - 2017

Infrastructure and Regional Development

Question no.: 181

Program: 2.4 Air Transport

Division/Agency: Aviation and Airports

Topic: Lead contaminants on federal leased airports

Proof Hansard Page: Written (27 October 2016)

Senator Sterle, Glenn asked:

Is the Department aware of any concerns about lead impacts on communities near airports arising from aviation activity?

- a) If there are lead discharges, what research has been done into the impacts on human health?
- b) What was the outcome of that research?
- c) What is known generally about the impact on human health from lead discharges around airports?

Answer:

Under the Airports (Environment Protection) Regulations 1997 (Regulations) federally leased airports are required to prepare and implement an airport environment strategy which includes regular monitoring for scheduled substances, including lead. Where an exceedance is detected on airport land, further monitoring, investigation and subsequent measures may be required to reduce the substance to an acceptable level as outlined in the Regulations. Non-federally leased airports would be subject to State and Territory legislation as well as certain national environment legislation and standards.

- a) The Department is aware of a 2003 South Australian Environment Protection Authority (SA EPA) air quality study which examined long term monitoring data from the Adelaide airshed, including aviation. Parafield Airport undertook follow up lead monitoring to validate the results from the air quality study.
- b) The results of the SA EPA study showed that since the reduction and ultimate removal of lead in car fuels between 1989 and 2002, lead concentrations in air (including near Parafield Airport) reduced to levels below 1% of the National Environment Protection Measure for Ambient Air Quality. It also found lead levels in most urban areas were falling below the threshold level at which precise measurements could be obtained using standard techniques; with the exception of those populations in proximity to lead smelter facilities. As a result, the SA EPA ceased airborne lead monitoring from the end of June 2003.
- c) The Department is not aware of any specific human health issues associated with lead discharges around airports. Any specific requests for information regarding the impact of lead on human health should be referred to the Department of Health.