

Rural Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Supplementary Budget Estimates October 2011

Infrastructure and Transport

Question no.: 112

Program: n/a

Division/Agency: (AA) Airservices Australia

Topic: Chidlow Noise Monitors

Proof Hansard Page/s: 93-94 (18/10/11)

Senator BACK asked:

Senator BACK: Mr Russell, can I take you back to the inquiry hearing we had at Perth Airport on 28 April last year regarding noise. In your opening statement then you made the comment that you were not satisfied that Airservices yet had enough data from independent noise monitoring and that you were undertaking more monitoring. You went on to state that the results of the further monitoring would be made public as soon as they could be and that action would be taken.

A couple of recently published results point to excessive noise at the locations at which monitoring was occurring and I was wondering if you could comment on that for me. The first is the Perth Airport NFPMS report. It shows LAeq 24-hour measures of 45 to 52 over the 12-month period when the Chidlow monitors were in place and that this is in excess of the Airservices measure used in the environmental self-assessments below which noise is not considered significant. I wonder if you could comment as to action you may have taken as a result of those analyses coming back to you.

Mr Russell: Thank you for the question. We put some additional noise monitors into the Hills district of Perth around the time, as you rightly point out, of the Senate inquiry in Perth and during that period. We were at that time receiving a lot of complaints from the Hills district. We did implement two noise monitors. I would have to go back and look at the results in detail to be sure that I am giving you an accurate answer but, from memory, I was of the view that the results of those noise monitors did not cause us to believe that there was excessive noise from overflights of aircraft over those suburbs. Those noise monitors also measured ambient noise, noise from traffic and a number of other things. I am happy to take the details of that issue on notice and come back to you if I may.

Senator BACK: Minister, for your edification or information, we should declare that there is one point east and slightly north of Perth Airport where the overflight paths of about three or four different approaches and departures all conjoin. They happen to be directly over Senator Adams's home, but that is completely and utterly incidental to the questions.

Mr Russell, could I draw your attention to the draft document *Remote noise monitoring at Chidlow, WA: a post-implementation review* of April 2011, which was presented to the PANMCC. It uses different measures to evaluate the noise recorded in Chidlow, but makes this conclusion: 'Combining the above criteria with the average measured noise levels of aircraft shown above, practically all aircraft types can cause noise events from 50 to 60 decibels at both Chidlow monitors and therefore potentially could cause annoyance at night-times in accordance with WHO guidelines.' I draw the draft document to your attention. Do you agree that these results do show significant excessive noise at the locations of those two temporary monitors in Chidlow?

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Mr Russell: I do agree that the results are accurate. I want to go back and review the document in detail. I am happy to elaborate, as we mentioned earlier, if I could take that question on notice. There are some details I want to be clear on.

Senator BACK: Sure. In so doing, I ask you to take on notice, in the event that the draft results do confirm this observation, I am keen to know what action either has or will be taken to ameliorate the effects. Please answer now, are there other locations in the Perth Hills which either are the subject of examination or will be examined for excessive noise in the same manner?

Mr Russell: From memory there are not others. Again, I will include that in the answer to the questions.

Answer:

LAeq 24hour Levels

LAeq 24-hour noise levels reported in NFPMS reports include total noise, not just noise from aircraft operations. This definition is included in commentary in the paragraphs preceding the noise parameter results (page 10). Airservices' environmental assessments are based on noise related to aircraft operations only and for the Chidlow monitors the results were found to be between 32 and 36 dB(A).

Chidlow Temporary Noise Monitors – Post Implementation Review

The document provided by Airservices to Perth Airport Aircraft Noise Management Consultative Committee was an early draft of the review. Feedback will be incorporated in the final report.

As the draft report noted, Australia uses a level of 65dB(A) for regional airports and 70dB(A) for major airports as an outdoor noise threshold for the purposes of assessing noise impact. The number of noise events detected by the Chidlow noise monitors at these levels was extremely low.

In consultation with the Perth Airport Aircraft Noise Management Consultative Committee, a program of additional short-term noise monitoring has been developed, this will include monitoring in the Perth Hills.

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Question no.: 113

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Division/Agency: (AA) Airservices Australia

Topic: PANS-OPS Criteria

Proof Hansard Page/s: 95-96 (18/10/11)

Senator FAWCETT asked:

Senator FAWCETT: On a slightly different topic, do you still act on behalf of CASA to develop departure approach plates as part of the AIP publications for aircrew?

Mr Harfield: We are certified under CASA regulation part 173 to actually design and produce instrument approaches.

Senator FAWCETT: If there were a building development in a capital city that pushed the floor of the PANS-OPS criteria higher, you would be then required to modify approach plates?

Mr Harfield: If that was an approved variation and the PANS-OPS was varied then we would have to go back and revalidate the instrument approach. The instrument approach would have to then be authorised by not only our chief designer but also CASA. It has to be flight tested and approved but still has to stay within the approved design criteria.

Senator FAWCETT: I am happy for you to take this on notice if you need to, but could you come back to the committee with any situations where you have had to revise your PANS-OPS criteria as a result of urban development or city development in either the Brisbane or Sydney areas in particular, or anywhere in Australia, but particularly those two?

Mr Russell: We will take that on notice. There have been some issues that I would like to make sure we get right.

Senator FAWCETT: Could you expand on that, please, Mr Russell, and tell the committee what those issues have been.

Mr Russell: It is urban encroachment on major airports. I think you are probably pointing this way. In Sydney, for instance, there are a number of high-rises around the airport that fall into this category. There are a number of infrastructure developments close to the airport, again, that fall into this category. If we could have some time to research this properly, we will come back to you on notice if we may.

Answer:

PANS-OPS criteria are determined by the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) and applied in accordance with CASR Part 173 and the CASA MOS Part 173. Airservices is certified under CASR Part 173 and therefore applies the PANS-OPS criteria to safeguard aircraft flight paths when designing instrument flight procedures.

However, with regard to Sydney and Brisbane, instrument flight procedures have changed once at each location as a result of urban development since 1996 as follows:

- Brisbane – In August 2008 due to a previously unreported development at the Port of Brisbane.
- Sydney - June 2009 to accommodate construction work at St George Hospital, Kogarah.