



2 March 2007

Ms Jackie Morris
Committee Secretary
The Senate
Standing Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Ms Morris

Inquiry into the AusCheck Bill 2006

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments to the Committee in relation to the *AusCheck Bill 2006*.

In general, Sydney Airport Corporation Limited (SACL) does not have any objection to the proposed centralisation of ASIC background criminal and security checks as provided for by the AusCheck Bill. However, SACL is concerned with the provision at Clause 18 that allows for charges to be made on a cost recovery basis for the AusCheck Scheme that is likely to result in additional security costs being imposed on the aviation industry.

In recent years the aviation industry has faced substantial increases in costs to comply with Government-mandated security requirements (e.g. checked-baggage screening, increased airside access inspection requirements and the new liquids aerosols and gels measures).

Given that the benefits of centralised ASIC background criminal and security checks will accrue to the entire community including Government agencies, rather than solely aviation industry participants, SACL submits that any increases to existing fees for background checks which result from the implementation of the AusCheck Scheme should be funded by the Commonwealth rather than through further imposts on the aviation industry. This is consistent with the Government's current approach in relation to Counter Terrorism First Response charges.

As an alternative, SACL submits that the Bill should be amended to provide that the Commonwealth should only be entitled to increase its charges for its ASIC background criminal and security checking service after consulting with the industry and providing detailed and transparent reports which demonstrate the justification for any proposed increases.

As a final matter, SACL notes that the Regional Aviation Association of Australia ("RAAA") has submitted that, following the recommendation of the Joint Committee of Public Accounts and Audit, the Bill should provide for AusCheck to be charged with the responsibility for issuing ASICs. SACL does not support the RAAA's submission that the Bill should provide for AusCheck to be the sole ASIC issuing body. There has not been any substantive consultation with industry on this issue and SACL therefore believes that it is

**Sydney Airport
Corporation Limited**
ABN 62 082 578 809

Locked Bag 5000
Sydney International
Airport NSW 2020
The Ulm Building
1 Link Road
Sydney International
Airport NSW 2020
Australia

Telephone:
61 2 9667 9111
www.sydneyairport.com

not appropriate for such a fundamental change to form part of the current Bill. SACL also notes that it is not at all apparent that the issuing of ASICs would be conducted most efficiently by a single body.

Once again, SACL wishes to thank the Committee for the opportunity to provide its comments in relation to the AusCheck Bill.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Grant Woods', written over a horizontal line.

Grant Woods
General Manager Airport Operations