

Chapter 1

Introduction

Conduct of the inquiry

1.1 On 29 May 2008 the committee resolved to hold an inquiry under Standing Order 25(2)(b) to consider the administration of the Civil Aviation Safety Authority. Standing Order 25(2)(b) in part states:

The committees shall inquire into and report upon ... the performance of departments and agencies allocated to them.

1.2 The committee advertised the inquiry in *The Australian* on 4 June 2008. During the inquiry the committee received 61 submissions, including 16 supplementary submissions. Contributions were made by peak bodies within the aviation industry, former employees of CASA, and a number of private citizens. A list of submissions received by the committee is included in Appendix 1 to this report.

1.3 The committee held hearings on 2 and 3 July 2008 in Canberra. The committee heard evidence from a number of witnesses including a list of the witnesses who appeared before the committee is included as Appendix 2.

1.4 On 9 July 2008 the committee lodged an interim report with the Senate.

Background

1.5 The committee has a longstanding interest in the administration of CASA. Work on an inquiry into the administration of CASA was commenced by a predecessor of this committee during the 39th Parliament. This work continued into the 40th Parliament and the committee concluded its inquiry by reporting its findings in the context of the report of its standing inquiry into annual reports in September 2004.

1.6 During successive Senate estimates hearings, the committee has inquired into CASA's administration, particularly in relation to:

- implementation of CASA's Regulatory Reform Program;
- CASA's audit, compliance and enforcement policy;
- the restructure of CASA and the redeployment of staff;
- the perception of CASA amongst industry participants and CASA's relationship with the aviation industry leadership and management within CASA; and
- CASA's implementation of cost-recovery measures.

1.7 During the 2008-09 Budget Estimates hearings the committee noted the limited availability of CASA's Chief Executive Officer, Mr Bruce Byron to attend those hearings. and indicated that it would explore options for further examining CASA's administration at a time when Mr Byron was available.

Acknowledgements

The committee appreciates the time and work of all those who provided both written and oral submissions to the inquiry – particularly in view of the initially short time frame. Their work has assisted the committee considerably in its inquiry.