



COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

PROOF

Main Committee

ADJOURNMENT

Airservices Australia

SPEECH

Thursday, 29 October 2009

BY AUTHORITY OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

SPEECH

<p>Date Thursday, 29 October 2009 Page 105 Questioner Speaker Moylan, Judi, MP</p>	<p>Source House Proof Yes Responder Question No.</p>
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Mrs MOYLAN (Pearce) (12.30 pm)—In the five minutes allocated to me in this debate, I want to respond to statements made by officers of Airservices Australia, Senator Conroy and Senator Glenn Sterle, Chair of the Senate Standing Committee on Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport, during the committee's estimates hearing of 20 October 2009. The careless, sarcastic nature of their responses to questions asked by Senator Judith Adams and Senator Chris Back belie the serious nature of changes to air flight paths in Western Australia that are under investigation. During the hearing it was implied that I or my staff had not attended meetings, responded to emails or taken any interest in the Western Australian Route Review Program, called WARRP, until after changes to air flight paths were implemented in November 2008.

Since 2000, there have been about 19 Perth Airport Noise Management Consultative Committee, or PANMCC, meetings. My staff or I attended 15 of those meetings and an examination of the minutes of the meetings missed reveal that nothing would have foreshadowed the significant changes subsequently made to air flight paths affecting the Perth Hills area. Emails referred to by Airservices provided maps but virtually no explanatory notes. The information was of a technical nature and no response was sought. As Mr Russell, CEO of ASA, admitted in estimates:

These airspace concepts can be very technical and difficult to understand and I think the lesson from our viewpoint is that we need to ensure that the information is understood, rather than just assuming that no feedback on it is in fact equal to understanding.

I seek leave to table a sample of emails and maps received.

Leave granted.

Mrs MOYLAN—The following observations were made by my staff at the meeting of 4 October 2006, when Airservices gave their first presentation on WARRP:

Stage 1 of the Route Review project is to identify the route structure within 100 miles. This should be completed by June 2007. Stage 1 involves just a few path changes, over the south of Perth near Banjup and north of Perth. Residents in Pearce are unlikely to be affected by the changes. Stage 2 is looking at structure issues to more remote destinations.

The Committee would like to see the environmental assessment report (which includes noise) before Stage 1 is implemented. Airservices doesn't know if this is possible, and the Committee has complained about this in the past. Some 3 years later and after repeated requests the environmental report has not been received and was in fact requested again at the last PANMCC meeting of 30 September 2009.

Access to the Civil Aviation Safety Authority report, which ASA say is the basis for the changes that have been made, has been denied to me and to the rest of the committee and I have had to apply and pay to get access to that report under freedom of information.

Mr John Macpherson, the Principal Environmental Noise Officer from the Western Australian Department of Environment and Conservation, stated in an email to PANMCC members of 30 July:

The consistent impression given by ASA that the changes would only occur at distances well away from the airport was ultimately misleading, and led the Committee to a view that the changes were not likely to significantly impact any particular group.

The quality of information provided by ASA on the WARRP website was clearly inadequate to enable non-aviation experts to identify or evaluate the likely impact.

A statement from Mr Dale of Airservices at the meeting on 22 April 2009 that 'the committee has been informed of changes to flight paths at the meeting of 11 September 2008' seems to conflict with the minutes of that meeting. Mr Dale was recorded as an apology at that meeting and there was no representative from Airservices present.

In general, committee members have been critical of the lack of public consultation. I have asked for public consultations on at least four occasions. ASA is a corporate entity, has primary control over airspace and takes 95 per cent of its funding from the industry, and there is an urgent need to review the way it conducts business and the operation of the act that governs it to ensure that ASA has clearly defined community consultation obligations.