



PARLIAMENT OF AUSTRALIA
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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MEDIA RELEASE

2 December 2003

Independent Aviation Report Shouldn't Be Ignored - Windsor

The Independent Member for New England, Mr Tony Windsor, has called on the Federal Government to stop ignoring the obvious security risks at country airports and put in place the appropriate safeguards to ensure country people are protected from terrorist threat.

Mr Windsor's call follows the Independent review by the Southern Cross Aviation group that suggests that many of the nation's airports are terror traps with glaring security deficiencies currently receiving no attention.

The report raises issues such as commercial passenger aircraft left unguarded overnight, commercial vehicles not being checked, airports without security guards, lack of external identification on aircraft and fuelling facilities in inappropriate locations

Mr Windsor raised similar issues in Parliament on 2 June 2003 after which the Government agreed to commission the Parliamentary Public Accounts and Audit Committee to conduct a Review into Aviation Security in Australia.

Mr Windsor said, "The Minister for Transport, John Anderson, has continually said there is no security risk at regional airports at that same time as stipulating that any future cost of upgrades should be borne by the relevant local government area. Then in the next breath he suggests that there are risks at the major metropolitan airports even though the same aircraft service both country and city airports."

"Why is it that a passenger can board a 50 seat aircraft in Tamworth and Wagga Wagga without any security measures at all when the same aircraft in and out of Canberra and Sydney requires full security measures including random searching of passengers?"

"Even the Government's own Aviation Transport Security Bill 2003 lists acts of unlawful interference relating to aircraft seizure, hostage taking and other acts that jeopardise the safety of an aircraft."

"Why is the Government capable of identifying the problems and potentials for terrorism in regard of city airports yet unable to agree that the same risks are present at regional airports?"

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