



PARLIAMENT OF AUSTRALIA
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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MEDIA RELEASE

23 August 2004

Windsor- Regional Airport Security Is A National Defence Issue

The Independent Member for New England, Tony Windsor, has repeated his call for regional airport security upgrades to be brought into line with metropolitan and city airports via the national defence budget.

Mr Windsor said, "Today's announcement by the Federal Government of limited Federal funding for security measures at regional airlines is a further grudgingly taken step towards appropriate security measures. Unfortunately the government is now caught halfway between a responsible security position and its own refusal to pay for those measures".

"Today's announcement builds on the Southern Cross Aviation Group airport security report by adding hand wand metal detectors and associated staff training measures to previously announced measures such as hardened cockpit doors and security audits".

"The real issue here is who pays, not any doubt over the risk. Clearly the government acknowledges the risks are there. However the mindless 'market place rules mentality' of our government dictates that the airport owners, in this case predominately regional councils, have to pay, and they can't, hence the Federal Government's dilemma".

"We all accept that the risks of terrorism have increased and regional airport security is these days a national defence issue. I urge the Federal Government to drop its market place induced hang-ups and quickly pay for screening of major regional airports thereby removing them from potential terrorists places of interest".

"While the government considers this, I pose the following question to them - if due to a heightened threat airport staff are using a hand wand and detect a fire arm or explosive device on a male passenger what will these unarmed and untrained men and women do?"

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