



PARLIAMENT OF AUSTRALIA
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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MEDIA RELEASE

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Hoax or not, Regional Airport Security needs attention

Independent Member for New England, Tony Windsor has renewed his calls for the upgrading of security at regional airports in light of the discovery of an incendiary device on board an aircraft originating in Maroochydore and travelling to Sydney.

“Whether the discovery of an incendiary device found on board a jet travelling from Maroochydore – a regional airport to Sydney was a hoax or not, it highlights the need for security at regional airports to be greatly improved.

Without wanting to be alarmist, this event shows that regional airports are just as likely to be a staging point for terrorist activity as any major metropolitan airport and as such should be given the necessary security upgrades to counter this.

The recently announced measures of having flying squads and dogs to go quickly to regional airports in the event of possible terrorist activity, would not have been a help at all in this situation as there was obviously no forward knowledge by our intelligence agencies.

We must have better on the spot security measures at regional airports to prevent such devices getting on planes.

Whilst I’m not an expert on terrorism, I don’t believe that terrorists will telegraph their activities.

They won’t go to the heavily secured locations – they’ll go to the weakest link and start there.

Regional airports are currently that weakest link in security and therefore if we do not upgrade their security the next event may be a major catastrophe.

It’s not up to regional Councils to pay for the upgrades – it’s up to the Federal Government to fund them out of the national defence budget,” Mr Windsor said.

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