



COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Main Committee

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

Sydney Airport Long Term Operating Plan

SPEECH

Monday, 24 May 2010

BY AUTHORITY OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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Questioner
Speaker Georganas, Steve, MP

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Mr GEORGANAS (Hindmarsh) (7.10 pm)—It gives me great pleasure to get up and speak once again about airports and airport issues in Australia, especially because I have an airport in the middle of my electorate of Hindmarsh. In the case of Adelaide Airport and the residents of Hindmarsh, no matter where the flight paths change, how they change or what diversions are made, every single plane that lands at Adelaide Airport is at such a point that there is no diversion from the flight path because Adelaide Airport is situated in the middle of the electorate. Therefore, by the time they reach my electorate, they are actually landing. I have said in this place many times that the residents of Hindmarsh—in suburbs like Mile End, Richmond, Cowandilla, Glenelg North, West Beach and Henley Beach—can stand on their roofs and tickle the tummies of the airplanes as they go over their houses.

It is interesting to hear the members opposite and to hear the member for Cook, who obviously was not here in the last parliament, speak on this issue. On many occasions I raised the issue through questions on notice to the previous government and through letters to the then minister about an airport ombudsman. In fact, I moved two private member's bills during the last parliament and on each occasion they were not raised within the federal parliament. They fell on the deaf ears of the former government. So I was very pleased when last year the aviation white paper was released under the Labor Rudd government and it included the establishment of an aircraft noise ombudsman. As I said, in opposition I moved a private member's motion twice and twice it fell on deaf ears.

The white paper states the aircraft noise ombudsman is to be established in Airservices Australia to:

- independently review noise complaints handling procedures and make recommendations for improvements where necessary; and
- improve Airservices' consultation arrangements and the presentation and distribution of aircraft noise-related information to the general public;

This is real action that has been taken by this government not only for the residents in my electorate but also for residents all over Australia. This is real action that will ensure residents have an independent voice. They will have an independent say through an independent body that is not related or governed by the government or by Airservices Australia. It will look at issues independently and come out with particular findings.

I was also very pleased that in the white paper the curfews that are currently operating around Australia are enshrined and that we have ensured that they will remain to ensure there is some stability in terms of noise around the country where residents live under the flight path and that there will be no change, especially to the Adelaide Airport curfew. We recently heard of the diversion of a Qantas plane that was flying from Canberra to Adelaide. It had to be diverted back to Canberra because approximately 10 to 15 minutes out of Adelaide the pilots asked for dispensation. The following day we had a whole range of people speaking out, including Michael Pengilly from the Liberal Party, who went on radio and said he wanted to get rid of the curfew. The Leader of the Opposition into South Australia, Isobel Redmond, said that we should look at the curfew and perhaps change the laws that exist. Here are people who have no understanding of what it is like to live under a flight path. They have absolutely no understanding of what it is like to hear jets go over your roof on a constant basis. I have lived under the flight path all of my life; I was born under the flight path. For many years we would run out to the front yard to see the planes that would fly over into Adelaide two or three times a week. Now they fly over two to three times every hour.

So I have to say that there have been some achievements under the Rudd Labor government. There was also the issue of banning noisy aircraft in and around Australia, and an announcement was made recently that from 1 July 2010 no new services using old, noisy freight jets will be allowed at Sydney, Brisbane, Melbourne, Perth, Adelaide, Hobart, Darwin, Cairns, Gold Coast, Essendon, Newcastle (Williamstown), Avalon and Canberra airports, and from 1 September 2010 all existing services will cease at the Sydney, Brisbane, Melbourne and Perth airports. This course of action was first foreshadowed in the aviation green paper in December 2008 under the Rudd Labor government and then restated as government policy in the aviation white paper. (*Time expired*)

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Hon. BC Scott)—Order! The time allotted for this debate has expired. The debate is adjourned and the resumption of the debate will be made an order of the day for the next sitting.