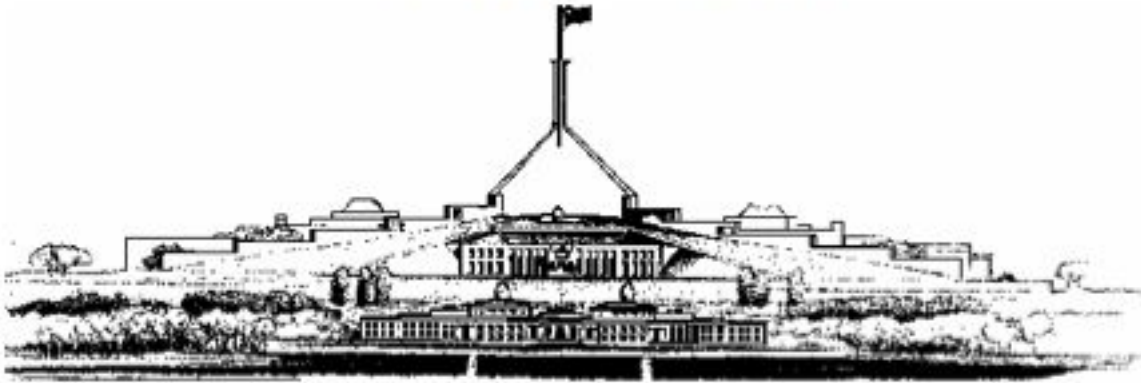




COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

ADJOURNMENT

Aviation: Bankstown Airport

SPEECH

Wednesday, 11 August 2004

BY AUTHORITY OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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Date Wednesday, 11 August 2004
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Questioner
Speaker Melham, Daryl, MP

Source House
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Question No.

Mr MELHAM (Banks) (7.50 pm)—On 8 October last year, I spoke on the Civil Aviation Amendment Bill 2003. I addressed the need for an integrated transport plan for Sydney and, in relation to Bankstown Airport, I said:

The community deserves not only honesty over the future of the airport but also some certainty about its future.

In selling off Bankstown Airport, this government has left the community a legacy which will have an impact for decades to come. It distresses me to inform the House that the community around Bankstown Airport will be further disadvantaged by the proposed development of the airport. The new owners have just released the Bankstown Airport Preliminary Draft Master Plan 2004-05 for community comment. This plan provides a development concept for Bankstown Airport for the next 20 years. The plan paints a bleak future for the community residing in the area.

There are several specific matters I wish to address in the light of community concerns. It is vital that there is an absolute prohibition on regular passenger transport jet airline services at Bankstown Airport. Currently there are no regular airport passenger movements at Bankstown Airport. Table 5 on page 49 of the Preliminary Draft Master Plan forecasts per annum passenger movements of 96,000 in 2006-07, rising to 288,000 in 2009-10. The forecasts, on page 50, are premised on 12 movements per day, six days per week.

The reality is that, despite the forecast, airport airspace can currently handle 12 movements of code 3C aircraft an hour before any changes to airspace will be required. This figure is considerably in excess of the forecast figures and there is no guarantee that passenger aircraft movements will not increase. The preliminary draft master plan makes no specific mention of prohibition of code 4C aircraft, which includes Boeing 737s. If code 4C aircraft are not going to operate then a problem remains, even with code 3C aircraft, because of national security concerns. Our national security situation has changed and stringent new security measures are in place at Kingsford Smith airport. Bankstown Airport is not required to have in place the security measures now operating at Kingsford Smith for regular passenger aircraft. Any increase in passenger movements is an increase from a zero base and may potentially have security ramifications.

Without proper screening of passengers, the threat of terrorist hijackings remains unacceptably high. I have consistently argued that the current level of passenger movement must not change. I will continue to argue that the total exclusion of large jets should be incorporated into the master plan and that they should be excluded by regulation.

A key concern raised by local community members relates to the intention to lengthen and to strengthen the main runway, 11C/29C. While in the normal course of events this should not be cause for concern, the fact remains that no compelling argument is provided underpinning the need for such expansion. The draft plan states that there is a need to increase the current payload of code 3C aircraft to allow them to operate at maximum take-off weight without restrictions on payload or stage length restrictions. The proposal is that the runway be increased by 220 metres from the current 1,415 metres to 1,635 metres. Many code 3C aircraft currently use Bankstown and apparently this would allow them to increase the load limits. It would also allow code 3C aircraft not currently using the airport to do so.

The draft preliminary master plan proposes that runway 11C/29C and a parallel taxiway be strengthened from the current pavement strength rating of 20,000 kilograms up to 50,000 kilograms. Again there is no compelling argument made for the need to strengthen the main runway. It is perplexing that no specific projection for freight aircraft is provided in the draft plan. Appropriate consultation is required to establish projections for types and loads of freight aircraft. Only after appropriate consultation can an argument be developed supporting, or opposing, the need to strengthen the main runway and taxiway.

I also wish to note concerns in the matter of the proposed relocation of the helicopter complex to the south side of the airport. This would increase the noise and movements over the suburb of Milperra. I note that the proposed noise contours will be reduced overall around the airport; however, the relocation of the helicopter complex disadvantages those residents of Milperra. Another site should be found for the helicopter complex.

I will continue to urge those residents to respond to the preliminary draft plan. Public comment has been requested until 18 October. (*Time expired*)