



ASSEMBLY – 35TH SESSION

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Agenda Item 16: Improvement of Safety Oversight

MANAGEMENT OF AIRSPACE POLICY IN AUSTRALIA

(Presented by Australia)

SUMMARY

Informs the Assembly of a recent decision by the Australian Government to remove the airspace management function from the air navigation services provider, Airservices Australia, to bring it under the direct control of the Minister for Transport.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 On 1 April 2004 the Australian Government announced new arrangements for the management of Australian airspace. The airspace regulatory function, performed since 1995 by Australia's air navigation services provider, Airservices Australia, is to be transferred to the Department of Transport and Regional Services which will become the single home for civil airspace policy, regulation and management.

1.2 The Australian Government has taken the view that it is not appropriate for a commercial service provider such as Airservices to also have a regulatory role, particularly when its decisions about the designation of air routes and the classification of airspace can have profound effects on the costs borne by users of airspace. The establishment of the Airspace Authority within the Minister's Department will complete the separation of regulatory functions from operational activity begun with the creation of Airservices and Australia's aviation safety regulator, the Civil Aviation Safety Authority (CASA) in 1995.

1.3 Relocation of the airspace regulatory function has the added benefit of clarifying the role of Airservices and allowing it to focus more clearly on its prime function, that of providing world class air navigation services.

2. THE AIRSPACE AUTHORITY

2.1 The new Airspace Authority will concentrate on safe and efficient use of airspace in the context of a safety regulatory regime established by CASA. That safety regime is in the process of

finalisation and its coming into force will determine the timetable for the actual transfer of the regulatory function from Airservices.

2.2 A principle function of the Authority will be the adoption and management of an Airspace Management Plan, to be drawn up in consultation with airspace users and other stakeholders. A forward looking Air Traffic Management Strategic Plan has been developed by the Australian aviation industry, working through an independent consultative body, and this is likely to form the basis of the Airspace Management Plan.

2.3 It is intended that there will be close cooperation between civil and military airspace managers, with military staff seconded to the Airspace Authority, to promote the development of integrated management of civil and military airspace.

3. **Financial Impact of the Proposed Action**

3.1 None

4. **Action by the Assembly**

4.1 The Assembly is invited to note the reform of Australian airspace management arrangements.

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