



Australian Government

Department of Infrastructure, Transport,
Cities and Regional Development



Passenger security screening enhancements – case studies on financial impacts at six regional airports

November December 2019

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Director - Publishing and Communications
Communications Branch
Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Cities and Regional Development
GPO Box 594
Canberra ACT 2601
Australia

Email: publishing@infrastructure.gov.au

Website: www.infrastructure.gov.au

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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Regional Aviation

Regional aviation plays a key role in economic and social connectivity for regional Australia. Aviation supports regional communities by providing essential access to health care, education, legal and financial services.

It is vital in supporting economic growth in these communities by connecting regionally-based businesses to domestic and international markets, and has been a key enabler of growth in mining, agriculture and tourism in many of Australia's regions.

The House of Representatives Standing Committee on Infrastructure, Transport and Cities noted in its inquiry into the role of transport connectivity on stimulating development and economic activity (2016) that transport connectivity is integral to the liveability, economic opportunities and competitiveness of a region.¹ It underpins the role of regional cities and towns as service access hubs and nodes in the national transport network; raising competition in markets to both stimulate and shift economic activity.

The Senate Standing Committee on Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport examined the challenges faced by regional airports and aviation service providers in its report on the operation, regulation and funding of air route service delivery to rural, regional and remote communities.² The key issues considered included: the remoteness of rural and regional communities, and the importance of access to key infrastructure and support services; a deregulated and privatised aviation sector, and the effect on participation of airlines in regional markets; the challenges of funding regional airports; and the challenges to economic viability for airlines operating in remote areas, due to economies of scale and market forces.


1.2 Aviation Security

The Australian Government is committed to strengthening Australia's comprehensive and strong aviation security system to ensure safe and secure air travel. The evolving nature of terrorism continues to test and shape Australia's aviation security standards and regulatory settings. The disrupted terrorist plot at Sydney Airport in July 2017 highlighted the innovation and determination of individuals seeking to inflict harm on the travelling public. It also reinforced that aviation remains a high profile and ongoing target for terrorists.

Through the Department of Home Affairs (Home Affairs), the Government continues to review security settings in the context of evolving threats and, if required, adjusts security settings accordingly. In 2018, to keep ahead of the evolving threat environment, the Government announced that major and regional airports will upgrade their security screening technology.

Once implemented, Home Affairs estimates that 99 per cent, or 80.5 million departing passengers, will depart from an airport which undertakes security screening with X-ray advanced technology and body scanners.

Home Affairs applies security settings in the aviation sector based on its assessment of the level of security risk at each airport, and the aircraft it hosts. Home Affairs works to ensure that security requirements are commensurate with risk, particularly in regional areas, where security costs are generally higher. Based on the evolving threat, Home Affairs is amending the security screening threshold from aircraft over 20,000 kg maximum take-off weight (MTOW) to aircraft with seating



capacity of 40 or more and which operate from an airport with more than 30,000 annual departing passengers.

One result of a screening threshold based on aircraft size (weight or seating capacity), is that airports may have some flights which require screening and some flights which do not require screening.

[Home Affairs, in consultation with aviation industry stakeholders, is continuing to consider the issues associated with managing the segregation of screened and unscreened passengers. This is a contentious issue for industry stakeholders, with conflicting views on the best regulatory approach, noting different approaches can cause significant variation in the cost implications for different stakeholders. Some stakeholders suggest spreading fixed costs across a broader passenger base would minimise passenger impacts, while other stakeholders argue additional costs for operators of smaller aircraft impact the viability of their operations. Costs associated with managing potential co-mingling of screened and unscreened passengers are also relevant considerations.](#)

Airports must implement security screening in accordance with regulatory requirements. An airport may choose to implement security arrangements beyond the regulatory requirement, such as screening all passengers, even when not required by the regulator. Business decisions like this are a matter for the airport, [although stakeholders presented strong and divergent views on the merits of this approach.](#)

The challenge is to maintain the integrity of the entire aviation security network while recognising the differences in risk across international and major domestic aviation operations in comparison to regional and remote aviation. Maintaining a risk based, proportionate security framework is critical to ensuring public confidence in aviation and to support a viable and sustainable regional aviation industry.

It has been a longstanding policy of successive governments that industry is responsible for the cost of security, including operating costs, [although some stakeholders have queried the long term sustainability of this approach.](#) The majority of regional airports required to upgrade screening equipment already conduct security screening and are responsible for managing the associated costs.

The Australian Government has committed \$50.1m through the Regional Airport Security Screening Fund to support the purchase of new screening equipment at eligible regional airports.

1.3 Case Studies

The case studies presented in this paper examine the costs of security screening in a representative range of regional airports. This examination has been brought about by the Aviation, Air Cargo and International Mail Security Package announced as part of the 2018-19 Budget which includes changes to strengthen passenger screening requirements at a number of regional airports. The focus is on providing an estimate of the cost of passenger screening at regional airports that is as transparent as possible, noting the need to restrict the release of sensitive information regarding aviation security arrangements.

This paper summarises potential costs and provides further context for the operation of case study airports, but does not presuppose the decisions airport owners may make about managing or recovering costs of security screening. The costings presented are based on providing the mandated level of passenger and baggage screening.

The effect of changing passenger screening costs on airfares, [service frequency or routes](#) depends on commercial decisions made by aviation businesses. Regional airport operators, usually local government, make decisions about whether and how their operating costs are passed on to airport customers. Direct customers can include airlines, retailers, passengers and other air operators. Airlines determine ticket prices on the basis of a broad range of factors, including passenger screening costs passed on by airports. Some screening cost estimates in the paper are represented on a per passenger basis, but this does not equate to a change in airfare prices.

Airports were selected to cover a range of regional airport locations, community compositions, flight departure profiles and passenger volumes and existing screening requirements. The selected airports are Rockhampton QLD, Wagga Wagga NSW, Geraldton WA, Whyalla SA, Kingscote SA and Longreach QLD.

1.4 Stakeholders

In preparing the case studies, the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Cities and Regional Development (Infrastructure) engaged with key stakeholders, including the case study airports and relevant airlines, to ensure the projected changes to the ongoing costs of security screening are robust.

While stakeholders have been closely involved in preparing the report, they do not necessarily endorse its contents.

Information and estimates to inform the security screening costings were gathered from both the Department of Home Affairs and the six case study airport operators. Data on regional aviation and communities was gathered from the Bureau of Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Economics (BITRE), the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), the Australian Trade and Investment Commission (Austrade) and local government reports.

s. 47C(1)



s. 47C(1)



2.4 Whyalla

2.4.1 Regional profile

Whyalla is located 385 kilometres northwest of Adelaide on the Upper Spencer Gulf. The local economy is focused around the Whyalla steelworks, production of oil, LPG and salt, as well as shipping of steel products and ore. The town's industrial history and nearby marine environments have also created opportunities for tourism.



Figure 10: Whyalla routes in September 2019



Community

- Council land area: 1,072 square kilometres¹³
- Population 2018: 21,766¹³
- Average population growth 2013-2018: -0.8%¹³
- Council revenue 2018: \$31.1 million¹⁴
- Council expenditure 2018: \$29.9 million¹⁴



Economy

- Number of businesses 2018: 674¹³
- Unemployment rate 2016: 12.4%¹³
- Annual tourist visits 2018 (all transport modes): 147,000¹⁵
- Annual tourist expenditure 2018: \$68 million¹⁵



Aviation

- Airport operator: Whyalla City Council
- Annual outbound RPT passengers 2018: 38,437⁶
- Annual outbound RPT flights 2018: 1,841⁶
- Flight destinations: Adelaide
- Airlines: Qantas Airways, Regional Express Airlines
- Aircraft types commonly serving airport: Saab 340, Dash 8 300
- BITRE airfare spot check July 2018:^u
 - Whyalla to Adelaide \$143 & \$149 (231 kilometres)
- Security screening does not currently take place at Whyalla Airport

^u BITRE conducted spot checks of all city pair airfares on 5 July 2018. The cheapest outbound airfare on 9 August 2018 was collected for each outbound Whyalla route.



Figure 11: Top 10 Industries by Employment - Whyalla¹³

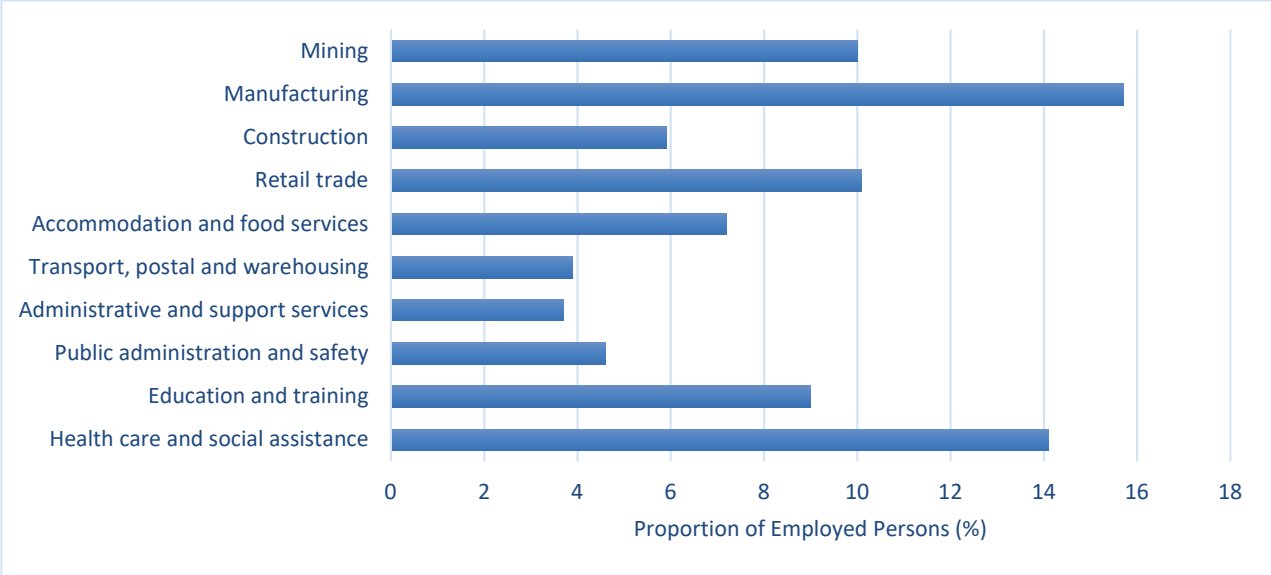
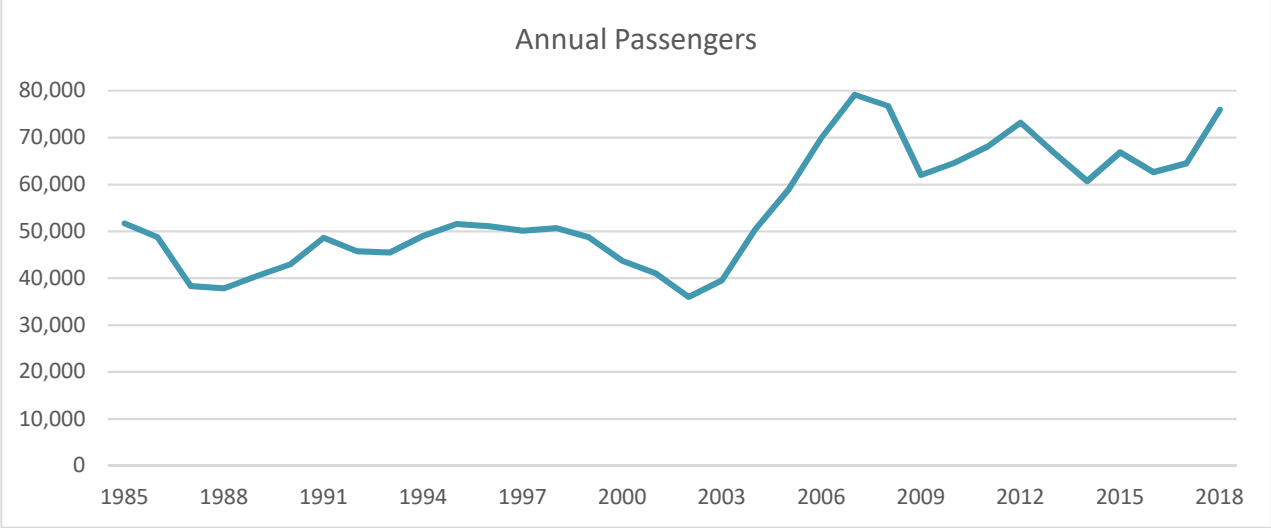


Figure 12: Aviation trends - Whyalla Airport⁶



2.4.2 Security screening

In September 2019, there were 44 outbound flights scheduled each week from Whyalla Airport. Of these, no flights were over the current 20,000 kg MTOW screening threshold and Whyalla Airport is not currently required to conduct screening. However, 16 of these flights are over the proposed 40 seat screening threshold, so Whyalla will be required to implement passenger and check baggage screening for the first time.

Operating costs for the new security settings represented in Section 2.4.2.1 have been estimated on the basis of advice provided by Whyalla Airport.

Whyalla Airport has advised that Whyalla Council will oversee the provision of aviation security screening and this is expected to be delivered by a contracted provider.

2.4.2.1 Proposed security arrangements

The Australian Government has committed \$50.1m through the Regional Airport Security Screening Fund to support the purchase of new screening equipment at eligible regional airports and on this basis the capital costs associated with equipment purchase have not been considered.

Whyalla is the only airport represented in these case studies which will be required to implement security screening for the first time. Whyalla Airport has indicated it will conduct substantial terminal works to accommodate the new screening equipment and update the terminal at an estimated cost of s.47G

Like s.47G Whyalla will serve a mix of aircraft where only some of the aircraft are required to be screened. The case presented here only examines the new security requirements for passenger and baggage screening mandated under the new regulatory requirements.

s.47G

Table 2.7 Estimated annual cost of screening under the new arrangements for Whyalla - only flights with more than 40 seat capacity are screened

Maintenance of equipment ^v	Number of staff to conduct screening ^w	Daily hours of operation ^x	Staff cost per hour ^y	Total security operating cost ^z
s.47G				

On an outbound passenger basis, this equates to a cost per screened passenger of s.47G based on Whyalla Airport only screening passengers required to be screened by the regulations. Data on airline passenger numbers is commercially sensitive, so this assumes all flights have the same load factor (i.e. how full a plane is) to estimate the number of screened passengers at about 17,500 per year.

^v Maintenance costs are projected figures provided by Whyalla Airport

^w Number of required staff at any one time has been advised by Whyalla Airport

^x Average daily hours of operation has been estimated based on daily flight and screening timing variances, per seven days, as advised by Whyalla Airport

^y Hourly personnel costs for screening staff have been averaged based on daily flight schedule across seven days and associated hourly cost schedule information advised by Whyalla Airport

^z Total security operating cost estimate has been provided by Whyalla Airport.

2.4.2.2 Summary

The commencement of security screening at Whyalla Airport is expected to create significant new and ongoing security operating costs for the airport, estimated at s.47G per annum.

The estimated additional s.47G cost per screened passenger, if passed on in full by the airport and, subsequently, passed on in full by the relevant airline may represent a s.47G increase in ticket price (see footnote u in Section 2.4.1).

DRAFT

Chapter 3: Summary

s.47G

The proposed changes to the aircraft screening threshold and airport categorisation will require a few airports to conduct screening for the first time. Whyalla Airport is the only case study airport where this applies, and the case study estimates presented here describe the significant additional ongoing operating costs for these airports to provide the security services. This can be expected to result in considerable additional pass-on costs from the airport to airline clients. How this pass-on may ultimately impact ticket prices is a business decision for the airlines in consultation with the respective airport.

The airport categorisation changes will remove the requirement for some lower passenger volume airports to conduct screening, including s.47G. The removal of mandatory screening gives these airports greater flexibility in business planning, including the option to remove security screening costs passed-on to airlines entirely and, potentially, for airlines to deliver ticket price savings to passengers.

These case studies illustrate that the cost of operating passenger and baggage screening at regional airports varies considerably with passenger volumes and flight schedules. The cost of personnel to conduct screening tends to be the largest contributor to screening costs and is closely linked to departure schedules. Flights scheduled evenly across a day require screening to be operated for a longer period, leading to a corresponding increase in expenditure on screening staffing costs.

Airports with higher passenger volumes have greater flexibility in accommodating security screening costs. The amount of screening equipment at regional airports tends to be similar as the low passenger volumes mean equipment is operated below the capacity of a single screening unit. When comparing airports like s.47G and Whyalla, the equipment costs are similar but the much smaller passenger base at Whyalla results in a significantly higher screening cost per passenger. Some stakeholders raised concerns that the funding available for security equipment upgrades under the Regional Airport Security Screening Fund would not be sufficient at all airports.

As the Productivity Commission notes in its draft report on Economic Regulation of Airports, many regional airports do not have sufficient demand to cover the costs of running the airport, which means the efficient charge for aeronautical services is more than passengers are prepared to pay.²¹ Airports and councils in this situation may not pass on the full cost of providing airport services, including passenger screening, to airlines and passengers. s.47G

[Airlines have raised concerns that additional costs associated with security screening may reduce the financial viability of regional routes, potentially leading to airlines reducing the frequency of flights or exiting routes.](#)

The case study estimates provide an indication of the financial impact of screening changes, but any change to airfares, [service frequency or routes](#) will be dependent on business decisions made by councils, airports and airlines.

Chapter 3 of the report on the operation, regulation and funding of air route service delivery to rural, regional and remote communities examines the social and economic importance of regional aviation services, including the effects of high airfares.²

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- ¹⁹ Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2018, *Regional Statistics by LGA Annual 2011 to 2018, Longreach R 34710*, cat. no. 1379.0.55.001
- ²⁰ Australian Trade and Investment Commission, 2019, *Local Government Area Profiles 2018, Longreach (R), Queensland*
- ²¹ Productivity Commission, 2019, *Economic Regulation of Airports (draft report)*



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Attachment A: Aircraft types servicing case study airports

Saab 340



Maximum take-off weight 13,155 kg

Seats 34

Cruise speed 505 km/h

Range 1,732 km

Servicing: Kingscote, Longreach,
Wagga Wagga, Whyalla

Dash 8 300



Maximum take-off weight 19,505 kg

Seats 50

Cruise speed 505 km/h

Range 1,520 km

Servicing: Kingscote, Wagga
Wagga, Whyalla

Dash 8 400



Maximum take-off weight 28,998 kg

Seats 74

Cruise speed 667 km/h

Range 1,668 km

Servicing: Longreach,
Rockhampton, Wagga Wagga

Fokker 100



Maximum take-off weight 45,810 kg

Seats 100

Cruise speed 845 km/h

Range 3,170 km

Servicing: Geraldton, Rockhampton

Boeing 737-800



Maximum take-off weight 78,240 kg

Seats 176

Cruise speed 834 km/h

Range 5,449 km

Servicing: Rockhampton

s.47G



s.47G



Red text is editable - black text is calculated within the spreadsheet and changing it is not recommended

Items highlighted orange are directly referenced in the report text (see table to right for copy/paste table data)

Annual RPT passengers outbound 2018
Annual revenue estimate from screening charge (ex GST)

Screening Costs Old
Equipment

Annual maintenance
Staff required to operate
Staff cost per hour

Only >20 MTOW screened
Proportion weekly seats screened (old)
Screened pax (old)
Unscreened pax (old)
Kingscote weeks of operation per year
Daily hours of operation
Annual staffing cost
Total annual operating cost (rounded)
Cost per screened passenger

All pax screened
Daily hours of operation
Annual staffing cost
Total annual operating cost (rounded)
Cost per screened passenger

Screening Costs New
Equipment

Capital cost (only required new equipment)

Annual maintenance
Staff required to operate
Staff cost per hour

Only >40 pax screened
Proportion weekly seats screened new
Screened pax (new)
Unscreened pax (new)
Daily hours of operation
Annual staffing cost
Total annual operating cost (rounded)
Cost per screened passenger

All pax screened
Daily hours of operation
Annual staffing cost
Total annual operating cost (rounded)
Cost per screened passenger

Comparisons
Mandatory screened old vs new total
Mandatory screened old vs new per pax
Mandatory screened old vs new % increase
All pax screened old vs new total
All pax screened old vs new per pax
All pax screened old vs new % increase

Whyalla
38,437

s. 22(1)(a)(ii)

For pasting into the report tables

Maintenance of equipment	Number of staff to conduct	Daily hours of operation	Staff cost per hour	Total operating cost
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s. 22(1)(a)(ii)

WYA new 40 pax
WYA new all
s.47G

s. 22(1)(a)(ii)

s. 22(1)(a)(ii)

Calculations and thinking on airfare comparisons - very difficult to draw conclusions

Airfares for reference (BITRE 2018)

1st flight
2nd flight
Security cost proportion of airfare
Old mandatory

Old all

New mandatory

New all

Whyalla to Adelaide \$143 & \$149
(231 kilometres)

s. 22(1)(a)(ii)

\$143

s.47G

Screening hours	Rules		
1 October 2019	Start = first flight time -2.75 hours	0.11	
	Time between flights 2.75 hours	0.11	
	Time after flights 0.25 hours	0.01	
See XXX Timetable sheet for details - rounded to the nearest half hour			
All screened	s. 22(1)(a)(ii)	Whyalla	s. 22(1)(a)(ii)
> 20 MTOW screened		11.0	
> 40 pax screened		0.0	
		6.0	

Number of seats

Saab 340	34
Dash 8 300	50
Dash 8 400	74
Fokker 100	105
Boeing 737-800	174

	s. 22(1)(a)(ii)	Whyalla	s. 22(1)(a)(ii)
Flights - > 20 MTOW screened		0	
Seats - > 20 MTOW screened		0	
Flights - > 40 pax screened		16	
Seats - > 40 pax screened		800	
Flights - all screened		44	
Seats - all screened		1752	
Portion of flights over 20 MTOW		0%	
Portion of flights over 40 seats		36%	
Portion of seats over 20 MTOW		0%	
Portion of seats over 40 seats		46%	
Very rough load factor		42%	

Case Study Data Summary

Whyalla to Adelaide \$143 & \$149 (231 kilo

Full schedule 1 October 2019
Whyalla

Time	Carrier	Dest	Aircraft	Screened old	Screened new								>20 MTOW		>40 pax			
						Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Flights	Seats	Flights	Seats	Flights	Seats
8:00 ZL	ADL	ADL	Saab 340				1	1	1	1			4	136	0	0	0	0
8:30 ZL	ADL	ADL	Saab 340								1		1	34	0	0	0	0
8:50 QF	ADL	ADL	Dash 8 300		1		1	1	1	1		1	6	300	0	0	6	300
10:30 ZL	ADL	ADL	Saab 340				1	1	1	1			5	170	0	0	0	0
12:40 ZL	ADL	ADL	Saab 340				1	1			1		4	136	0	0	0	0
15:10 ZL	ADL	ADL	Saab 340					1	1	1	1		3	102	0	0	0	0
15:20 QF	ADL	ADL	Dash 8 300		1		1			1	1		4	200	0	0	4	200
17:10 ZL	ADL	ADL	Saab 340			1	1	1	1	1	1		5	170	0	0	0	0
17:30 QF	ADL	ADL	Dash 8 300		1		1	1	1	1	1		6	300	0	0	6	300
19:10 ZL	ADL	ADL	Saab 340				1	1	1	1	1		6	204	0	0	0	0
													0		0	0	0	0
													0		0	0	0	0
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Average daily time		0:00					
Over threshold screened new							
	0:00	0:00	0:00	0:00	0:00	0:00	0:00
	0:00	0:00	0:00	0:00	0:00	0:00	0:00
	8:50	8:50	8:50	8:50	8:50	8:50	0:00
	0:00	0:00	0:00	0:00	0:00	0:00	0:00
	0:00	0:00	0:00	0:00	0:00	0:00	0:00
	0:00	0:00	0:00	0:00	0:00	0:00	0:00
	15:20	0:00	0:00	15:20	15:20	0:00	15:20
	0:00	0:00	0:00	0:00	0:00	0:00	0:00
	17:30	17:30	17:30	17:30	17:30	0:00	17:30
	0:00	0:00	0:00	0:00	0:00	0:00	0:00
	0:00	0:00	0:00	0:00	0:00	0:00	0:00
	0:00	0:00	0:00	0:00	0:00	0:00	0:00
	0:00	0:00	0:00	0:00	0:00	0:00	0:00
	0:00	0:00	0:00	0:00	0:00	0:00	0:00
	0:00	0:00	0:00	0:00	0:00	0:00	0:00
	0:00	0:00	0:00	0:00	0:00	0:00	0:00
	0:00	0:00	0:00	0:00	0:00	0:00	0:00
	0:00	0:00	0:00	0:00	0:00	0:00	0:00
	0:00	0:00	0:00	0:00	0:00	0:00	0:00
	0:00	0:00	0:00	0:00	0:00	0:00	0:00
	0:00	0:00	0:00	0:00	0:00	0:00	0:00
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	0:00	0:00	0:00	0:00	0:00	0:00	0:00
	0:00	0:00	0:00				

s. 22(1)(a)(ii)

From: s.47F
Sent: Tuesday, 26 November 2019 11:36 AM
To: s.47F
Cc:
Subject: RE: IE78334 - 3-32 - For Urgent Attention of Whyalla Airport Manager - aviation security [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED] [SEC=OFFICIAL]

OFFICIAL

Hi s.47F

Many thanks for turning this around quickly.

In terms of next steps, we'll start sharing text with airlines soon, with a view to finalising and providing a copy of the report to the Senate committee (my understanding is the report will become public shortly thereafter).

We will be in touch if there is anything further.

s.47F

OFFICIAL

From: s.47F <s.47F@whyalla.sa.gov.au>
Sent: Thursday, 21 November 2019 4:22 PM
To: s.47F <s.47F@infrastructure.gov.au>
Subject: RE: IE78334 - 3-32 - For Urgent Attention of Whyalla Airport Manager - aviation security [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED] [SEC=OFFICIAL]

Hi s.47F

Please see responses below,

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2. Could you please confirm you are satisfied with the presentation of the terminal works figure of s.47G I understand there have been ongoing discussions around this figure and I note the Whyalla Airport Upgrade Business Case presents similar figures with a slightly different breakdown.

s.47G

Any further information please don't hesitate to contact me.

Regards

s.47F

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I am happy to discuss further.

Kind regards,

s.47F

Director | Trade and Aviation Market Policy Section
Aviation Industry Policy Branch | Aviation and Airports
Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Cities and Regional
Development
GPO Box 594, Canberra ACT 2601

s.47F

@infrastructure.gov.au | w
www.infrastructure.gov.au

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s.47F

Manager - Airport Operations



Whyalla Airport

PO Box 126

Whyalla SA 5600

s.47F

f. 08 8645 0155

e.s.47F

[@whyalla.sa.gov.au](mailto:s.47F@whyalla.sa.gov.au)

w. whyalla.sa.gov.au



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From: s.47F [@whyalla.sa.gov.au](mailto:s.47F@whyalla.sa.gov.au)>

Sent: Wednesday, 9 October 2019 11:16 AM

To: s.47F [@infrastructure.gov.au](mailto:s.47F@infrastructure.gov.au)>

Cc: s.47F [@whyalla.sa.gov.au](mailto:s.47F@whyalla.sa.gov.au)>

Subject: FW: IE78334 - 3-32 - For Urgent Attention of Whyalla Airport Manager - aviation security

[SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

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1.Estimates of screening costs:

s.47G

s.47G



Regards

s.47F



Manager - Airport Operations

s.47F

From: s.47F
Sent: Thursday, 21 November 2019 4:30 PM
To: s.47F
Subject: FW: IE78334 - 3-32 - For Urgent Attention of Whyalla Airport Manager - aviation security [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED] [SEC=OFFICIAL]

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From: s.47F <[REDACTED]@whyalla.sa.gov.au>
Sent: Thursday, 21 November 2019 4:22 PM
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GPO Box 594, Canberra ACT 2601

s.47F

@infrastructure.gov.au | w
www.infrastructure.gov.au

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s.47F

Manager - Airport Operations



Whyalla Airport
PO Box 126
Whyalla SA 5600

s.47F
f. 08 8645 0155

e.s.47F @whyalla.sa.gov.au
w. whyalla.sa.gov.au



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From: s.47F [redacted] <s.47F@whyalla.sa.gov.au>

Sent: Wednesday, 9 October 2019 11:16 AM

To: s.47F [redacted] <s.47F@infrastructure.gov.au>

Cc: s.47F [redacted] <s.47F@whyalla.sa.gov.au>

Subject: FW: IE78334 - 3-32 - For Urgent Attention of Whyalla Airport Manager - aviation security
[SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

Hi s.47F [redacted]

Information as requested, any further information please contact me,

1.Estimates of screening costs:

s.47G [redacted]

Regards

s. 22(1)(a)(ii)

From: s.47F
Sent: Tuesday, 19 November 2019 4:26 PM
To: s.47F @whyalla.sa.gov.au
Cc: s.47F @whyalla.sa.gov.au; s.47F
Subject: RE: IE78334 - 3-32 - For Urgent Attention of Whyalla Airport Manager - aviation security [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED] [SEC=OFFICIAL]
Attachments: Regional Aviation Security Screening Case Studies Whyalla.docx

OFFICIAL

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 Aviation Industry Policy Branch | Aviation and Airports
 Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Cities and Regional
 Development
 GPO Box 594, Canberra ACT 2601

s.47F



Australian Government
Department of Infrastructure, Transport,
Cities and Regional Development

s.47F [redacted]@infrastructure.gov.au | w
www.infrastructure.gov.au

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From: s.47F [redacted]@whyalla.sa.gov.au>
Sent: Wednesday, 9 October 2019 11:16 AM
To: s.47F [redacted]@infrastructure.gov.au>
Cc: s.47F [redacted]@whyalla.sa.gov.au>
Subject: FW: IE78334 - 3-32 - For Urgent Attention of Whyalla Airport Manager - aviation security
[SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

Hi s.47F [redacted]
Information as requested, any further information please contact me,
1.Estimates of screening costs:

s.47G

s.47G

Regards

s.47F

Manager - Airport Operations



Whyalla Airport
PO Box 126
Whyalla SA 5600

s.47F

f. 08 8645 0155

e. s.47F [@whyalla.sa.gov.au](mailto:s.47F@whyalla.sa.gov.au)
w. whyalla.sa.gov.au



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s.47F

Manager - Airport Operations



Whyalla Airport
PO Box 126
Whyalla SA 5600

s.47F

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From: s.47F [@infrastructure.gov.au](mailto:s.47F@infrastructure.gov.au)

Sent: Monday, 7 October 2019 10:33 PM

To: Customer Service <customer.service@whyalla.sa.gov.au>

Subject: IE78334 - 3-32 - For Urgent Attention of Whyalla Airport Manager - aviation security [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

Importance: High

FOR URGENT ATTENTION OF THE WHYALLA AIRPORT MANAGER

Dear Sir/Madam,

The Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Cities and Regional Development (Infrastructure) is conducting case studies of six regional airports, examining the ongoing operational security costs at these airports. Whyalla Airport has been selected as one of the case study airports and your assistance in providing information to inform discussion around airport security would be greatly appreciated.

I regret that I was unable to reach you at Whyalla Airport late last week by phone to explain this matter personally, hence this email.

Our case studies have a particular focus on the impact that the new passenger screening requirements and airport categories will have on the cost of screening. The case studies will be provided to the Senate Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport References Committee.

The Department of Home Affairs has provided some guidance to us on equipment that will likely be required at your airport for the enhanced screening requirements. Home Affairs has also provided some other approximations around screening staff and we are seeking further insight from the estimates that you provide.

My deep apologies, but we are working with some incredibly tight time frames created by Federal Senate Estimates requirements later this month.

It would be greatly appreciated if you could provide responses by **COB Wednesday 9 October**. I understand there may be limitations on how much information or detail you're able to provide in this timeframe.

Could you please provide the following information:

1. Estimates of security screening costs under the new arrangements in the following categories:
 - a. Annual equipment maintenance. If you are able to include an estimate in terms of a proportion of purchase cost, it would be much appreciated. (for example, average annual maintenance cost is in the vicinity of 15% of equipment purchase price)
 - b. Screening personnel costs. Note that this is all the personnel required to provide the screening service, so it's not limited to just those directly processing passengers and baggage. It would be very helpful if you are able to present in the following format:
 - i. Average number of staff required to operate the screening at any one time.
 - ii. Average cost of a screening staff member per hour.
 - iii. Average number of hours that screening is required to run each day.
2. Are you able to provide an indication of what proportion of the cost of passenger screening you may look to pass on to airlines?
3. Based on the cost estimates above, what proportion of annual airport operating expenditure do you expect will be spent on operation of your passenger and checked baggage screening under the new arrangements?
4. Do you expect there will be any significant terminal works required to accommodate the new screening requirements?

Thank you for contributing to these case studies. I will seek to contact you by phone tomorrow (Tuesday 8 Oct) to discuss further and to answer any queries you may have.

Kind regards

S.47F

Director | International-Regional

Aviation and Airports Division

Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Cities and Regional Development

GPO Box 594, Canberra ACT 2601

S.47F

S.47F [@infrastructure.gov.au](mailto: @infrastructure.gov.au) | w www.infrastructure.gov.au



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Department of Infrastructure, Transport,
Cities and Regional Development



Passenger security screening enhancements – case studies on financial impacts at six regional airports

November 2019



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November 2019

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Communications Branch
Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Cities and Regional Development
GPO Box 594
Canberra ACT 2601
Australia

Email: publishing@infrastructure.gov.au
Website: www.infrastructure.gov.au



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DRAFT

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Regional Aviation

Regional aviation plays a key role in economic and social connectivity for regional Australia. Aviation supports regional communities by providing essential access to health care, education, legal and financial services.

It is vital in supporting economic growth in these communities by connecting regionally-based businesses to domestic and international markets, and has been a key enabler of growth in mining, agriculture and tourism in many of Australia's regions.

The House of Representatives Standing Committee on Infrastructure, Transport and Cities noted in its inquiry into the role of transport connectivity on stimulating development and economic activity (2016) that transport connectivity is integral to the liveability, economic opportunities and competitiveness of a region.¹ It underpins the role of regional cities and towns as service access hubs and nodes in the national transport network; raising competition in markets to both stimulate and shift economic activity.

The Senate Standing Committee on Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport examined the challenges faced by regional airports and aviation service providers in its report on the operation, regulation and funding of air route service delivery to rural, regional and remote communities.² The key issues considered included: the remoteness of rural and regional communities, and the importance of access to key infrastructure and support services; a deregulated and privatised aviation sector, and the effect on participation of airlines in regional markets; the challenges of funding regional airports; and the challenges to economic viability for airlines operating in remote areas, due to economies of scale and market forces.


1.2 Aviation Security

The Australian Government is committed to strengthening Australia's comprehensive and strong aviation security system to ensure safe and secure air travel. The evolving nature of terrorism continues to test and shape Australia's aviation security standards and regulatory settings. The disrupted terrorist plot at Sydney Airport in July 2017 highlighted the innovation and determination of individuals seeking to inflict harm on the travelling public. It also reinforced that aviation remains a high profile and ongoing target for terrorists.

Through the Department of Home Affairs (Home Affairs), the Government continues to review security settings in the context of evolving threats and, if required, adjusts security settings accordingly. In 2018, to keep ahead of the evolving threat environment, the Government announced that major and regional airports will upgrade their security screening technology.

Once implemented, Home Affairs estimates that 99 per cent, or 80.5 million departing passengers, will depart from an airport which undertakes security screening with X-ray advanced technology and body scanners.

Home Affairs applies security settings in the aviation sector based on its assessment of the level of security risk at each airport, and the aircraft it hosts. Home Affairs works to ensure that security requirements are commensurate with risk, particularly in regional areas, where security costs are generally higher. Based on the evolving threat, Home Affairs is amending the security screening



threshold from aircraft over 20,000 kg maximum take-off weight (MTOW) to aircraft with seating capacity of 40 or more and which operate from an airport with more than 30,000 annual departing passengers.

One result of a screening threshold based on aircraft size (weight or seating capacity), is that airports may have some flights which require screening and some flights which do not require screening. Airports must implement security screening in accordance with regulatory requirements. An airport may choose to implement security arrangements beyond the regulatory requirement, such as screening all passengers, even when not required by the regulator. Business decisions like this are a matter for the airport.

The challenge is to maintain the integrity of the entire aviation security network while recognising the differences in risk across international and major domestic aviation operations in comparison to regional and remote aviation. Maintaining a risk based, proportionate security framework is critical to ensuring public confidence in aviation and to support a viable and sustainable regional aviation industry.

It has been a longstanding policy of successive governments that industry is responsible for the cost of security, including operating costs. The majority of regional airports required to upgrade screening equipment already conduct security screening and are responsible for managing the associated costs.


The Australian Government has committed \$50.1m through the Regional Airport Security Screening Fund to support the purchase of new screening equipment at eligible regional airports.

1.3 Case Studies

The case studies presented in this paper examine the costs of security screening in a representative range of regional airports. This examination has been brought about by the Aviation, Air Cargo and International Mail Security Package announced as part of the 2018-19 Budget which includes changes to strengthen passenger screening requirements at a number of regional airports. The focus is on providing an estimate of the cost of passenger screening at regional airports that is as transparent as possible, noting the need to restrict the release of sensitive information regarding aviation security arrangements.

This paper summarises potential costs and provides further context for the operation of case study airports, but does not presuppose the decisions airport owners may make about managing or recovering costs of security screening. The costings presented are based on providing the mandated level of passenger and baggage screening.

The effect of changing passenger screening costs on airfares depends on commercial decisions made by aviation businesses. Regional airport operators, usually local government, make decisions about whether and how their operating costs are passed on to airport customers. Direct customers can include airlines, retailers, passengers and other air operators. Airlines determine ticket prices on the basis of a broad range of factors, including passenger screening costs passed on by airports. Some screening cost estimates in the paper are represented on a per passenger basis, but this does not equate to a change in airfare prices.



Airports were selected to cover a range of regional airport locations, community compositions, flight departure profiles and passenger volumes and existing screening requirements. The selected airports are Rockhampton QLD, Wagga Wagga NSW, Geraldton WA, Whyalla SA, Kingscote SA and Longreach QLD.

1.4 Stakeholders

In preparing the case studies, the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Cities and Regional Development (Infrastructure) engaged with key stakeholders, including the case study airports and relevant airlines, to ensure the projected changes to the ongoing costs of security screening are robust.

While stakeholders have been closely involved in preparing the report, they do not necessarily endorse its contents.

Information and estimates to inform the security screening costings were gathered from both the Department of Home Affairs and the six case study airport operators. Data on regional aviation and communities was gathered from the Bureau of Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Economics (BITRE), the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), the Australian Trade and Investment Commission (Austrade) and local government reports.

s. 47C(1)





s. 47C(1)



DRAFT

Chapter 2: Case Studies

2.1 Whyalla

2.1.1 Regional profile

Whyalla is located 385 kilometres northwest of Adelaide on the Upper Spencer Gulf. The local economy is focused around the Whyalla steelworks, production of oil, LPG and salt, as well as shipping of steel products and ore. The town's industrial history and nearby marine environments have also created opportunities for tourism.

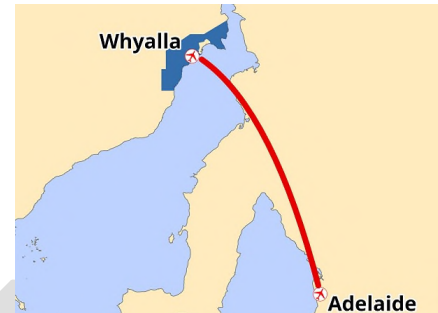


Figure 1: Whyalla routes in September 2019



Community

- Council land area: 1,072 square kilometres³
- Population 2018: 21,766³
- Average population growth 2013-2018: -0.8%³
- Council revenue 2018: \$31.1 million⁴
- Council expenditure 2018: \$29.9 million⁴



Economy

- Number of businesses 2018: 674³
- Unemployment rate 2016: 12.4%³
- Annual tourist visits 2018 (all transport modes): 147,000⁵
- Annual tourist expenditure 2018: \$68 million⁵



Aviation

- Airport operator: Whyalla City Council
- Annual outbound RPT passengers 2018: 38,437
- Annual outbound RPT flights 2018: 1,841
- Flight destinations: Adelaide
- Airlines: Qantas Airways, Regional Express Airlines
- Aircraft types commonly serving airport: Saab 340, Dash 8 300
- BITRE airfare spot check July 2018:^a
 - Whyalla to Adelaide \$143 & \$149 (231 kilometres)
- Security screening does not currently take place at Whyalla Airport

^a BITRE conducted spot checks of all city pair airfares on 5 July 2018. The cheapest outbound airfare on 9 August 2018 was collected for each outbound Whyalla route.



Figure 2: Top 10 Industries by Employment - Whyalla³

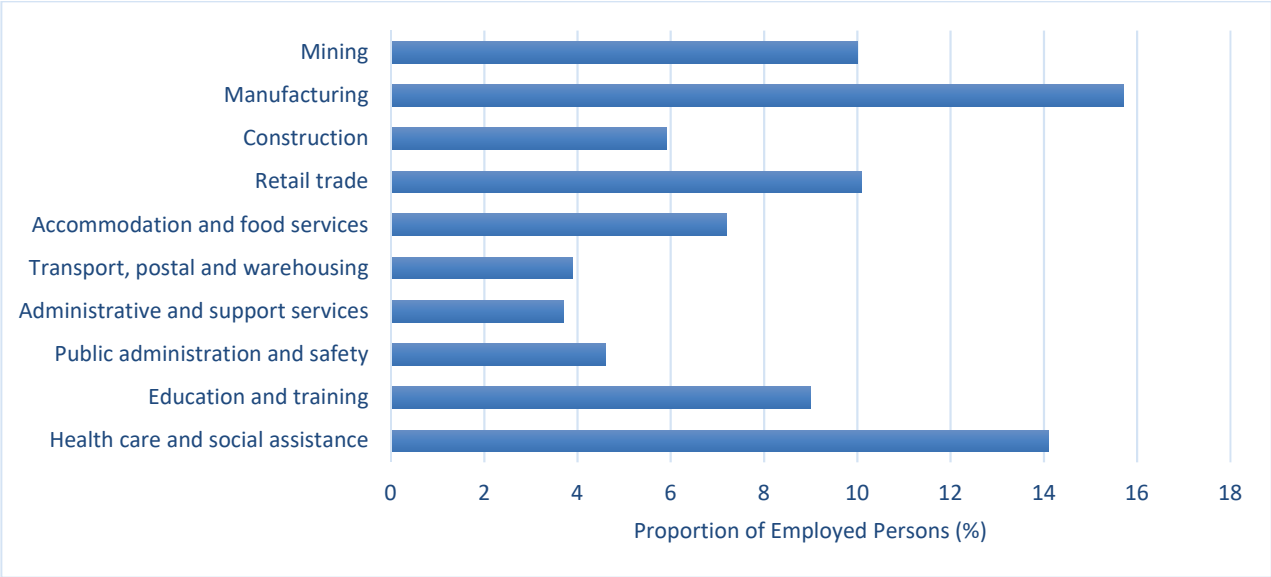
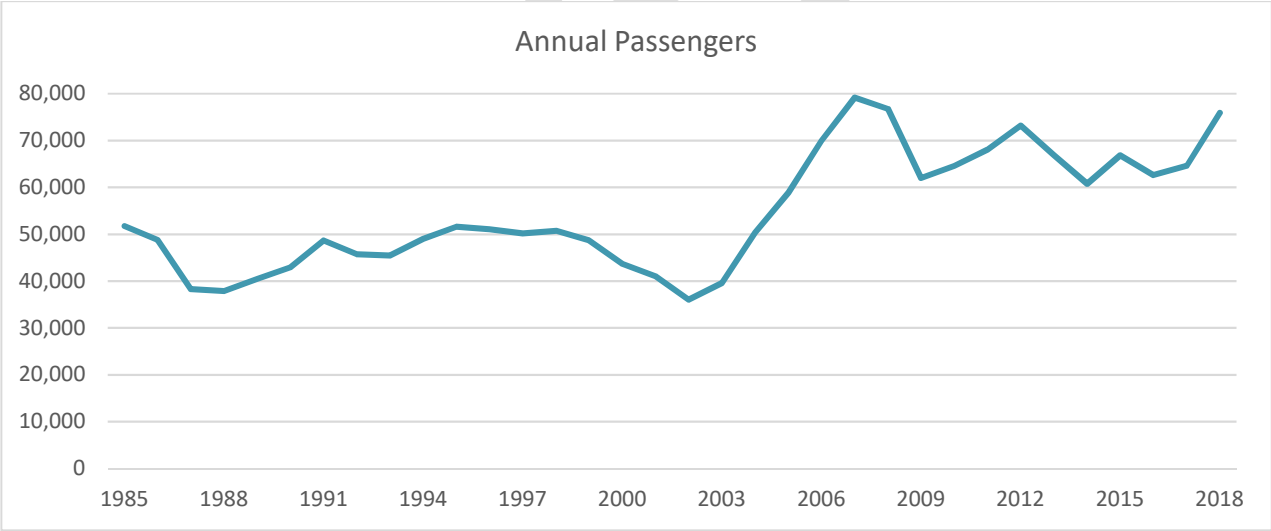


Figure 3: Aviation trends - Whyalla Airport



2.1.2 Security screening

In September 2019, there were 44 outbound flights scheduled each week from Whyalla Airport. Of these, no flights were over the current 20,000 kg MTOW screening threshold and Whyalla Airport is not currently required to conduct screening. However, 16 of these flights are over the proposed 40 seat screening threshold, so Whyalla will be required to implement passenger and check baggage screening for the first time.

Operating costs for the new security settings represented in Section 2.1.2.1 have been estimated on the basis of advice provided by Whyalla Airport.

Whyalla Airport has advised that Whyalla Council will oversee the provision of aviation security screening and this is expected to be delivered by a contracted provider.

2.1.2.1 Proposed security arrangements

The Australian Government has committed \$50.1m through the Regional Airport Security Screening Fund to support the purchase of new screening equipment at eligible regional airports and on this basis the capital costs associated with equipment purchase have not been considered.

Whyalla is the only airport represented in these case studies which will be required to implement security screening for the first time. Whyalla Airport has indicated it will conduct substantial terminal works to accommodate the new screening equipment and update the terminal at an estimated cost of s.47G

Like s.47G Whyalla will serve a mix of aircraft where only some of the aircraft are required to be screened. The case presented here only examines the new security requirements for passenger and baggage screening mandated under the new regulatory requirements.

s.47G

Table 2.1 Estimated annual cost of screening under the new arrangements for Whyalla - only flights with more than 40 seat capacity are screened

Maintenance of equipment ^b	Number of staff to conduct screening ^c	Daily hours of operation ^d	Staff cost per hour ^e	Total security operating cost ^f
s.47G				

On an outbound passenger basis, this equates to a cost per screened passenger of s.47G based on Whyalla Airport only screening passengers required to be screened by the regulations. Data on airline passenger numbers is commercially sensitive, so this assumes all flights have the same load factor (i.e. how full a plane is) to estimate the number of screened passengers at about 17,500 per year.

^b Maintenance costs are projected figures provided by Whyalla Airport

^c Number of required staff at any one time has been advised by Whyalla Airport

^d Average daily hours of operation has been estimated based on daily flight and screening timing variances, per seven days, as advised by Whyalla Airport

^e Hourly personnel costs for screening staff have been averaged based on daily flight schedule across seven days and associated hourly cost schedule information advised by Whyalla Airport

^f Total security operating cost estimate has been provided by Whyalla Airport.



2.1.2.2 Summary

The commencement of security screening at Whyalla Airport is expected to create significant new and ongoing security operating costs for the airport, estimated at **s.47G** per annum.

The estimated additional **s.47G** per screened passenger, if passed on in full by the airport and, subsequently, passed on in full by the relevant airline may represent a **s.47G** increase in ticket price (see footnote a in Section 2.1.1).

DRAFT

Chapter 3: Summary

s.47G

The proposed changes to the aircraft screening threshold and airport categorisation will require a few airports to conduct screening for the first time. Whyalla Airport is the only case study airport where this applies, and the case study estimates presented here describe the significant additional ongoing operating costs for these airports to provide the security services. This can be expected to result in considerable additional pass-on costs from the airport to airline clients. How this pass-on may ultimately impact ticket prices is a business decision for the airlines in consultation with the respective airport.

The airport categorisation changes will remove the requirement for some lower passenger volume airports to conduct screening, including s.47G. The removal of mandatory screening gives these airports greater flexibility in business planning, including the option to remove security screening costs passed-on to airlines entirely and, potentially, for airlines to deliver ticket price savings to passengers.

These case studies illustrate that the cost of operating passenger and baggage screening at regional airports varies considerably with passenger volumes and flight schedules. The cost of personnel to conduct screening tends to be the largest contributor to screening costs and is closely linked to departure schedules. Flights scheduled evenly across a day require screening to be operated for a longer period, leading to a corresponding increase in expenditure on screening staffing costs.

Airports with higher passenger volumes have greater flexibility in accommodating security screening costs. The amount of screening equipment at regional airports tends to be similar as the low passenger volumes mean equipment is operated below the capacity of a single screening unit. When comparing airports like s.47G and Whyalla, the equipment costs are similar but the much smaller passenger base at Whyalla results in a significantly higher screening cost per passenger. Some stakeholders raised concerns that the funding available for security equipment upgrades under the Regional Airport Security Screening Fund would not be sufficient at all airports.

As the Productivity Commission notes in its draft report on Economic Regulation of Airports, many regional airports do not have sufficient demand to cover the costs of running the airport, which means the efficient charge for aeronautical services is more than passengers are prepared to pay.⁶ Airports and councils in this situation may not pass on the full cost of providing airport services, including passenger screening, to airlines and passengers. s.47G

The case study estimates provide an indication of the financial impact of screening changes, but any change to airfares will be dependent on business decisions made by councils, airports and airlines.

Chapter 3 of the report on the operation, regulation and funding of air route service delivery to rural, regional and remote communities examines the social and economic importance of regional aviation services, including the effects of high airfares.²



Reference List

- ¹ House of Representatives Standing Committee on Infrastructure, Transport and Cities, 2016, *Harnessing Value, Delivering Infrastructure: Inquiry into the role of transport connectivity on stimulating development and economic activity*
- ² Senate Standing Committee on Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport, 2019, *Operation, regulation and funding of air route service delivery to rural, regional and remote communities*
- ³ Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2018, *Regional Statistics by LGA Annual 2011 to 2018, Whyalla C 48540*, cat. no. 1379.0.55.001
- ⁴ Whyalla City Council, 2018, *Annual Report 2017/2018*
- ⁵ Australian Trade and Investment Commission, 2019, *Local Government Area Profiles 2018, Whyalla (C), South Australia*
- ⁶ Productivity Commission, 2019, *Economic Regulation of Airports (draft report)*
- 

s.47G



Aviation Security case studies project plan

1. Department to provide airlines and airports two weeks to provide feedback on case studies
 - Airlines to be consulted on their understanding of the current costs and the expected changes on cost for the airport/s they utilise.
 - Qantas S.47F – to be asked about Rockhampton, Wagga Wagga, Geraldton, Whyalla, Kingscote and Longreach
 - Virgin S.47F – to be asked about Rockhampton
 - REX (contact to be provided by Home Affairs) – to be asked about Wagga Wagga, Whyalla, Kingscote and Longreach
 - Airports provided relevant extracts of draft text for comment and views
 - Current timeline allows for phone hook up to be scheduled between Department and airlines to further discuss any issues (week of 4 November)
2. Department to reconcile views and follow up with airlines and airports on any final details week of 11 November
 - May need to review some numbers depending on what airports provide (noting current gaps in data)
3. Two weeks to prepare briefing and clear internally
 - Summary of case studies as well as the final case study document
4. To provide clear through office and prepare and provide defensive points to Office
 - Q&As, QTB and possible media release
5. Department officials to conduct briefing week of 25 November

w/c	21-Oct	28-Oct	4-Nov	11-Nov	18-Nov	25-Nov
Department of Home Affairs to provide input						
Provide to airports for comment						
Provide to airlines for comment						
Reconcile feedback and views						
Prepare briefing						
Prepare defensive points and brief exec/Office						
Provide briefing						Department to provide briefing to Senators

s. 22(1)(a)(ii)

From: s.47F @whyalla.sa.gov.au
Sent: Wednesday, 9 October 2019 11:16 AM
To: s.47F
Cc:
Subject: FW: IE78334 - 3-32 - For Urgent Attention of Whyalla Airport Manager - aviation security [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

Hi s.47F

Information as requested, any further information please contact me,
1.Estimates of screening costs:

s.47G

Regards

s.47F

Manager - Airport Operations



Whyalla Airport
PO Box 126
Whyalla SA 5600

s.47F
f. 08 8645 0155

s.47F [@whyalla.sa.gov.au](mailto:whyalla@whyalla.sa.gov.au)
w. whyalla.sa.gov.au



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s.47F
Manager - Airport Operations



Whyalla Airport
PO Box 126
Whyalla SA 5600

s.47F
f. 08 8645 0155

e.s.47F [@whyalla.sa.gov.au](mailto:whyalla@whyalla.sa.gov.au)
w. whyalla.sa.gov.au



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From: s.47F [@infrastructure.gov.au](mailto:whyalla@infrastructure.gov.au)

Sent: Monday, 7 October 2019 10:33 PM

To: Customer Service <customer.service@whyalla.sa.gov.au>

Subject: IE78334 - 3-32 - For Urgent Attention of Whyalla Airport Manager - aviation security [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

Importance: High

FOR URGENT ATTENTION OF THE WHYALLA AIRPORT MANAGER

Dear Sir/Madam,

The Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Cities and Regional Development (Infrastructure) is conducting case studies of six regional airports, examining the ongoing operational security costs at these airports. Whyalla Airport has been selected as one of the case study airports and your assistance in providing information to inform discussion around airport security would be greatly appreciated.

I regret that I was unable to reach you at Whyalla Airport late last week by phone to explain this matter personally, hence this email.

Our case studies have a particular focus on the impact that the new passenger screening requirements and airport categories will have on the cost of screening. The case studies will be provided to the Senate Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport References Committee.

The Department of Home Affairs has provided some guidance to us on equipment that will likely be required at your airport for the enhanced screening requirements. Home Affairs has also provided some other approximations around screening staff and we are seeking further insight from the estimates that you provide.

My deep apologies, but we are working with some incredibly tight time frames created by Federal Senate Estimates requirements later this month.

It would be greatly appreciated if you could provide responses by **COB Wednesday 9 October**. I understand there may be limitations on how much information or detail you're able to provide in this timeframe.

Could you please provide the following information:

1. Estimates of security screening costs under the new arrangements in the following categories:
 - a. Annual equipment maintenance. If you are able to include an estimate in terms of a proportion of purchase cost, it would be much appreciated. (for example, average annual maintenance cost is in the vicinity of 15% of equipment purchase price)

- b. Screening personnel costs. Note that this is all the personnel required to provide the screening service, so it's not limited to just those directly processing passengers and baggage. It would be very helpful if you are able to present in the following format:
- i. Average number of staff required to operate the screening at any one time.
 - ii. Average cost of a screening staff member per hour.
 - iii. Average number of hours that screening is required to run each day.
2. Are you able to provide an indication of what proportion of the cost of passenger screening you may look to pass on to airlines?
 3. Based on the cost estimates above, what proportion of annual airport operating expenditure do you expect will be spent on operation of your passenger and checked baggage screening under the new arrangements?
 4. Do you expect there will be any significant terminal works required to accommodate the new screening requirements?

Thank you for contributing to these case studies. I will seek to contact you by phone tomorrow (Tuesday 8 Oct) to discuss further and to answer any queries you may have.

Kind regards

s.47F

Director | International-Regional

Aviation and Airports Division

Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Cities and Regional Development

GPO Box 594, Canberra ACT 2601

s.47F

e s.47F @infrastructure.gov.au | w www.infrastructure.gov.au



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s.47F



Red text is editable - black text is calculated within the spreadsheet and changing it is not recommended

Items highlighted orange are directly referenced in the report text (see table to right for copy/paste table data)

Annual RPT passengers outbound 2018
Annual revenue estimate from screening charges (ex GST)

Screening Costs Old
Equipment

Annual maintenance
Staff required to operate
Staff cost per hour

Only >20 MTOW screened
Proportion weekly seats screened (old)
Screened pax (old)
Unscreened pax (old)
Kingscote weeks of operation per year
Daily hours of operation
Annual staffing cost
Total annual operating cost (rounded)
Cost per screened passenger

All pax screened
Daily hours of operation
Annual staffing cost
Total annual operating cost (rounded)
Cost per screened passenger

Screening Costs New
Equipment

Capital cost (only required new equipment)

Annual maintenance
Staff required to operate
Staff cost per hour

Only >40 pax screened
Proportion weekly seats screened new
Screened pax (new)
Unscreened pax (new)
Daily hours of operation
Annual staffing cost
Total annual operating cost (rounded)
Cost per screened passenger

All pax screened
Daily hours of operation
Annual staffing cost
Total annual operating cost (rounded)
Cost per screened passenger

Comparisons
Mandatory screened old vs new total
Mandatory screened old vs new per pax
Mandatory screened old vs new % increase
All pax screened old vs new total
All pax screened old vs new per pax
All pax screened old vs new % increase

Whyalla
38,437

s. 22(1)(a)(ii)

For pasting into the report tables

	Maintenanc e of equipment	Number of staff to conduct	Daily hours of operation	Staff cost per hour	Total operating cost
s. 22(1)(a)(ii)					
* WYA new 40 pax	\$194,000	9	6	\$52	\$1,219,000
WYA new all	\$194,000	9	11	\$52	\$2,073,000

s. 22(1)(a)(ii)

s. 22(1)(a)(ii)

Calculations and thinking on airfare comparisons - very difficult to draw conclusions

Airfares for reference (BITRE 2018)

1st flight
2nd flight
Security cost proportion of airfare
Old mandatory

Old all

New mandatory

New all

Whyalla to Adelaide \$143 & \$149
(231 kilometres)

s. 22(1)(a)(ii)

\$143

49%

38%




Australian Government

Department of Infrastructure, Transport,
Cities and Regional Development



Passenger security screening enhancements – case studies on financial impacts at regional airports

October 2019



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October 2019

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Communications Branch
Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Cities and Regional Development
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Canberra ACT 2601
Australia

Email: publishing@infrastructure.gov.au

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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Regional Aviation

Regional aviation plays a key role in economic and social connectivity for regional Australia. Aviation supports regional communities by providing essential access to health care, education, legal and financial services.

It is vital in supporting economic growth in these communities by connecting regionally-based businesses to domestic and international markets, and has been a key enabler of growth in mining, agriculture and tourism in many of Australia's regions.

The House of Representatives Standing Committee on Infrastructure, Transport and Cities noted in its inquiry into the role of transport connectivity on stimulating development and economic activity (2016) that transport connectivity is integral to the liveability, economic opportunities and competitiveness of a region.¹ It underpins the role of regional cities and towns as service access hubs and nodes in the national transport network; raising competition in markets to both stimulate and shift economic activity.

The Senate Standing Committee on Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport examined the challenges faced by regional airports and aviation service providers in its report on the operation, regulation and funding of air route service delivery to rural, regional and remote communities.² The key issues considered included: the remoteness of rural and regional communities, and the importance of access to key infrastructure and support services; a deregulated and privatised aviation sector, and the effect on participation of airlines in regional markets; the challenges of funding regional airports; and the challenges to economic viability for airlines operating in remote areas, due to economies of scale and market forces.


1.2 Aviation Security

The Government is committed to strengthening Australia's comprehensive and robust aviation security system to ensure safe and secure air travel. The evolving nature of terrorism continues to test and shape Australia's aviation security standards and regulatory settings. The disrupted terrorist plot at Sydney Airport in July 2017 highlights the innovation and determination of individuals seeking to inflict harm on the travelling public. It also reinforced that aviation remains a high profile target for terrorists.

Through the Department of Home Affairs (Home Affairs), the Government continues to review security settings in the context of evolving threats and, if required, adjusts security settings accordingly. In 2018, to keep ahead of the evolving threat environment, the Government announced major and regional airports will upgrade their security screening technology.

Once implemented, Home Affairs estimates that 99 per cent, or 80.5 million departing passengers, will depart from an airport which undertakes security screening with advanced technology and body scanners.

Home Affairs applies security settings in the aviation sector based on its best judgements about the level of security risk to each airport, and the aircraft it hosts. Home Affairs looks to ensure that security requirements are commensurate with risk, particularly in regional areas, where security costs are generally higher. The risk assessments undertaken by Home Affairs have determined



that security screening requirements will be set on the basis of aircraft size and the number of annual outbound passengers at regional airports. The aircraft size threshold will be changed from aircraft over 20,000 kg Maximum Take Off Weight (MTOW) to aircraft with nominal passenger capacity greater than 40 seats.

One result of a screening threshold based on aircraft size, is that airports may have some flights which require screening and some flights which do not require screening. Airports implement screening as they see fit, provided screening meets the regulatory requirements. An airport may choose to implement security arrangements beyond the regulatory requirement, such as screening all passengers, even when not required by the regulator. Business decisions like this are a matter for the airport and its customers.

The challenge is to maintain the security of the entire network while recognising the differences in threat across international and major domestic aviation operations in comparison to regional and remote airports. Maintaining a risk based, proportionate security framework at regional airports is critical to ensuring public confidence in aviation and to support a viable regional aviation industry.

It has been a longstanding policy of successive governments that industry is responsible for the cost of security, including operating costs. The majority of regional airports required to upgrade screening equipment already conduct security screening and are responsible for managing the associated costs.

1.3 Case Studies

The case studies presented in this paper examine the ongoing costs of security screening in a representative range of regional airports. This examination has been brought about by the Aviation, Air Cargo and International Mail Security Package announced as part of the 2018-19 Budget which includes changes to passenger screening requirements at many regional airports. The focus is on providing an estimate of the cost of passenger screening at regional airports that is as transparent as possible, noting the need to restrict the spread of sensitive information regarding aviation security arrangements.

This paper summarises potential costs and provides further context for the operation of case study airports, but does not presuppose the decisions airport owners will make about managing or recovering costs of security screening. The costings presented are based on providing the mandated level of passenger and baggage screening, with an additional estimate for the case where all passengers departing an airport are screened, regardless of whether their aircraft is over the size threshold.

The effect of changing passenger screening costs on airfares depends on commercial decisions made by aviation businesses. Regional airport operators, usually local government, make decisions about whether and how their operating costs are passed on to airport customers. Direct customers can include airlines, retailers, passengers and other air operators. Airlines determine ticket prices on the basis of a broad range of factors, including passenger screening costs passed on by airports. Some screening cost estimates in the paper are represented on a per passenger basis, but this does not equate to a change in airfare prices.

Airports were selected to cover a range of regional airport locations, community compositions, flight departure profiles and passenger volumes. The selected airports were Rockhampton QLD, Wagga Wagga NSW, Geraldton WA, Whyalla SA, Kingscote SA and Longreach QLD.



1.4 Stakeholders

In preparing the case studies, the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Cities and Regional Development (Infrastructure) engaged with key stakeholders to ensure the estimated changes to the ongoing costs of security screening are robust.

Information and estimates to inform the security screening costings were gathered from Home Affairs and the six case study airport operators. Data on regional aviation and communities were gathered from the Bureau of Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Economics (BITRE), the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), the Australian Trade and Investment Commission (Austrade) and local government reports.

1.5 Methodology

The key determinants of operating costs for passenger screening are equipment maintenance costs, hours of operation for screening, number of personnel required to conduct screening and cost of personnel.

For the purpose of this paper, average daily hours of operation and number of screening personnel were estimated on the basis of outbound flight schedules at each airport in September 2019, combined with annual outbound passenger numbers. Flight schedules are subject to change and can have a significant impact on the cost of providing screening.

Schedules and passenger numbers take Regular Public Transport (RPT) flights into account, but do not include charter flights. Advice from BITRE indicates there are very few charter flights on these routes that require screening.

Estimates of the equipment requirements, maintenance costs and number of screening personnel have been provided by Home Affairs for each airport.

2.4 Whyalla

2.4.1 Regional profile

Whyalla is located 385 kilometres northwest of Adelaide on the Upper Spencer Gulf. The local economy is focused around the Whyalla steelworks, production of oil, LPG and salt, as well as shipping of steel products and ore. The town's industrial history and nearby marine environments have also created opportunities for tourism.

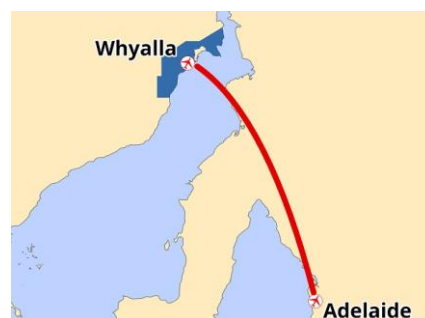


Figure 10: Whyalla routes in September 2019



Community

- Council land area: 1,072 square kilometres¹³
- Population 2018: 21,766¹³
- Average population growth 2013-2018: -0.8%¹³
- Council revenue 2018: \$31.1 million¹⁴
- Council expenditure 2018: \$29.9 million¹⁴



Economy

- Number of businesses 2018: 674¹³
- Unemployment rate 2016: 12.4%¹³
- Annual tourist visits 2018 (all transport modes): 147,000¹⁵
- Annual tourist expenditure 2018: \$68 million¹⁵



Aviation

- Airport operator: Whyalla City Council
- Annual outbound RPT passengers 2018: 38,437⁶
- Annual outbound RPT flights 2018: 1,841⁶
- Flight destinations: Adelaide
- Airlines: Qantas Airways, Regional Express Airlines
- Aircraft types commonly serving airport: Saab 340, Dash 8 300
- BITRE airfare spot check July 2018:⁹
 - Whyalla to Adelaide \$143 & \$149

⁹ BITRE conducted spot checks of all city pair airfares on 5 July 2018. The cheapest outbound airfare on 9 August 2018 was collected for each outbound Whyalla route.



Figure 11: Top 10 Industries by Employment - Whyalla¹³

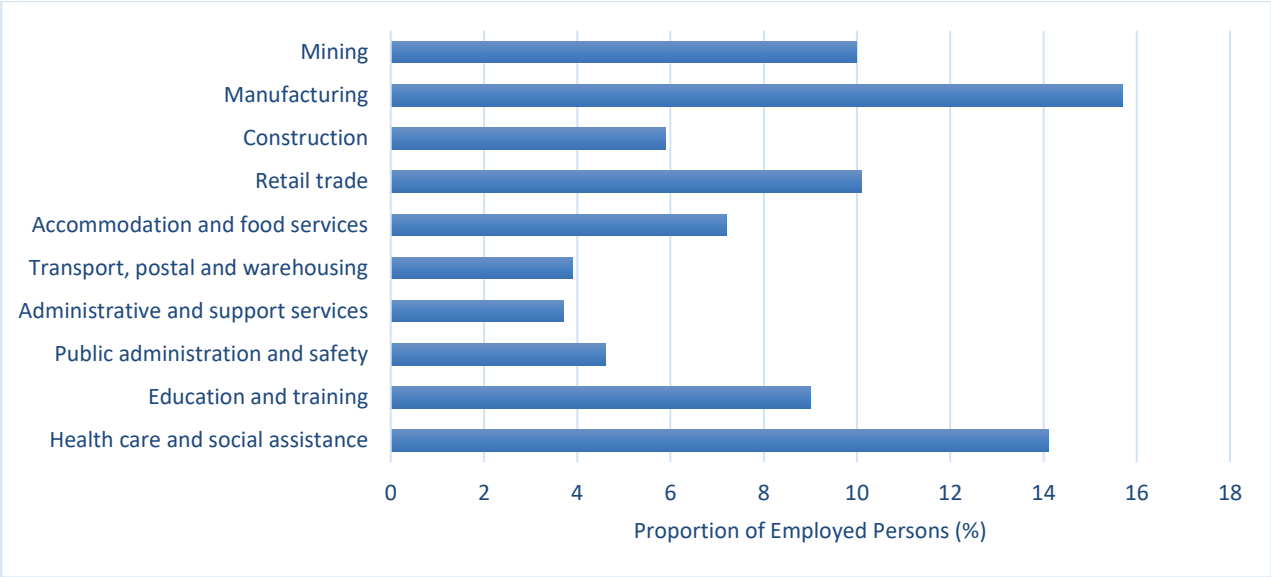
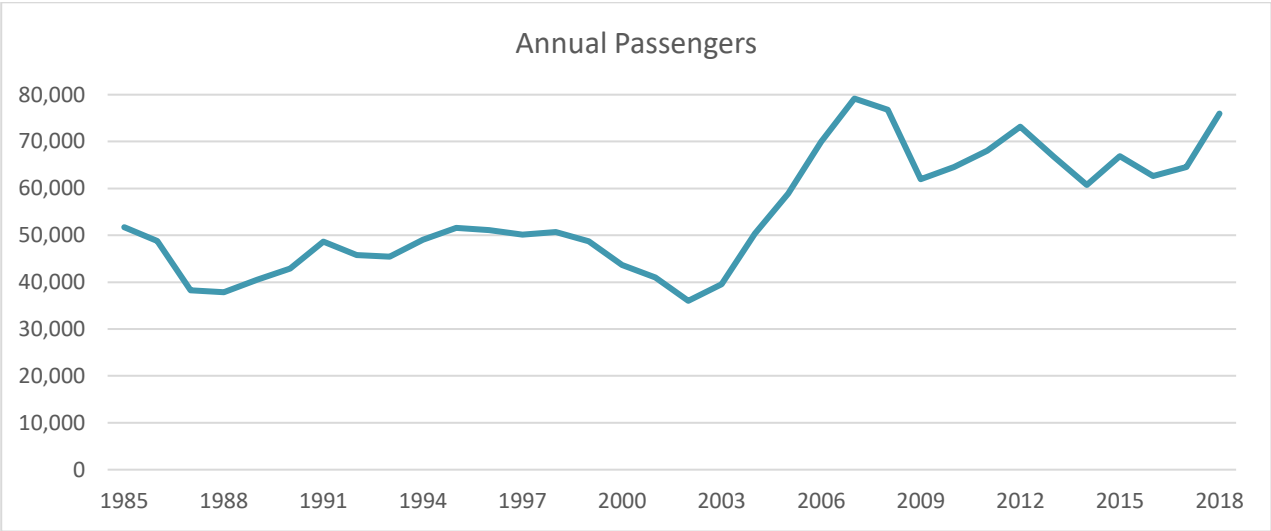


Figure 12: Aviation trends - Whyalla Airport⁶



2.4.2 Security screening

Security screening at Whyalla Airport is provided by XX. Whyalla City Council has indicated that XX% of expenditure related to the airport is spent on passenger and baggage screening.

In September 2019, there were 44 outbound flights scheduled each week, of which no flights were over the 20,000 kg MTOW screening threshold and 16 flights were over the 40 seat screening threshold.

Whyalla Airport is not currently required to conduct screening, due to all flights being under the MTOW threshold. Due to the change to the aircraft size threshold, Whyalla will be required to implement passenger and check baggage screening for the first time.

Operating costs for the new security settings represented in Section 2.4.2.1 have been estimated on the basis of advice from Home Affairs, in consultation with Whyalla City Council.

2.4.2.1 Enhanced security arrangements

Home Affairs estimates the cost of purchasing new equipment at Whyalla Airport to meet mandatory passenger and checked baggage screening to be \$970,000. The Australian Government has committed \$50.1m through Regional Airport Security Screening Fund to support the purchase of new screening equipment at regional airports. Funding may also be available to support modification of terminals to introduce screening at airports like Whyalla, where it is not currently conducted.

Like s.47G, Whyalla will serve a mix of aircraft where only some of the aircraft are required to be screened. The two cases presented here for the new security arrangements are: screening and charging of passengers for whom screening is mandated; and screening and charging of all passengers.

Table 2.9 Estimated annual cost of screening under the new arrangements for Whyalla - only passengers on flights with more than 40 seat capacity are screened

Maintenance of equipment ^r	Number of staff to conduct screening ^s	Daily hours of operation ^t	Staff cost per hour ^u	Total operating cost
\$194,000	9	6	\$52	\$1,219,000

On an outbound passenger basis, this is equivalent to \$69.50 per screened passenger. Data on airline passenger numbers is commercially sensitive, so this assumes all flights have the same load factor (how full a plane is) to estimate the number of screened passengers at 17,500 per year.

In the estimate below, the expected hours of operation have been expanded in alignment with the flight schedule for Whyalla to account for the additional flights that will be screened if all passengers are screened.

^r Maintenance costs are based on 20% of the purchase cost of the equipment, which was estimated by Home Affairs. Actual costs will vary depending on location and equipment service agreements.

^s Number of required staff estimated by Home Affairs. Actual number of screening staff required will vary depending on airport and operational requirements (passenger throughput and flight schedules).

^t Average daily hours of operation estimated on the basis of the 30 September 2019 flight schedules, allowing for a period of 3 hours preparation and screening time around each flight departure.

^u Hourly personnel costs for screening staff can vary widely between different locations. In the absence of detailed local labour cost data, an hourly cost of \$52 was selected as it is the middle of the security staff cost range at major airports.

Table 2.10 Estimated annual cost of screening under the new arrangements for Whyalla – all passengers are screened

Maintenance of equipment	Number of staff to conduct screening	Daily hours of operation	Staff cost per hour	Total operating cost
\$194,000	9	11	\$52	\$2,073,000

On an outbound passenger basis, this is equivalent to \$53.90 per passenger.

2.4.2.2 Summary

The first comparison presented here of screening and charging only passengers on flights that are over the screening threshold results in an estimated additional annual operating cost at Whyalla Airport of \$1,219,000 per year, which equates to an additional cost of \$69.50 per screened passenger.

The second comparison of screening all passengers departing the airport results in an estimated additional annual operating cost at Whyalla Airport of \$2,073,000 each year, which equates to an increase per outbound passenger cost of \$53.90.

The commencement of security screening at Whyalla Airport is expected to create significant new ongoing operating costs for the airport, which will make business decisions about how costs are managed. These costs will be borne by a mix of airport customers and stakeholders, which may include the Whyalla City Council and ratepayers, airlines and passengers, and other airport customers.

The airport, stakeholders and customers may modify their behaviour and business plans in response to the additional costs. This could include adaptation of flight schedules to minimise security screening operating hours, changes in ticket prices and passenger numbers or modification of routes.

These interlinked business decisions by the airport, airlines, passengers and other stakeholders are based on a multitude of factors which make it difficult to predict possible outcomes.

Chapter 3: Summary

These case studies illustrate that the cost of operating passenger and baggage screening at regional airports varies considerably with passenger volumes and flight schedules. The cost of personnel to conduct screening tends to be the largest contributor to screening costs.

s.47G

The proposed changes to the aircraft screening threshold and airport categorisation will require some airports to conduct screening that were not previously required to, including Whyalla. This will create significant additional ongoing operating costs for these airports to provide the security services.

s.47G

Airports with higher passenger volumes often have greater flexibility in accommodating security screening costs. The amount of screening equipment at regional airports tends to be similar as the low passenger volumes mean equipment is operated below the capacity of a single screening unit. When comparing airports like s.47G and Whyalla, the equipment costs are similar but the much smaller passenger base at Whyalla results in a higher cost per passenger.

One of the largest determinants of screening costs is the departing flight schedule. Flights spread evenly across a day require screening to be operated for more of the day than flights which depart in close proximity and lead to a corresponding increase in expenditure on screening personnel.

The airport categorisation changes will remove the requirement for some lower passenger volume airports to conduct screening, including s.47G. The removal of mandatory screening gives the airports greater flexibility in business planning, including the option to remove or reduce security screening costs.

The case study estimates provide an indication of the financial impact of screening changes, but any change to airfares will be dependent on business decisions made by councils, airports and airlines.

Chapter 3 of the report on the operation, regulation and funding of air route service delivery to rural, regional and remote communities examines the social and economic importance of regional aviation services, including the effects of high airfares.²

Reference List

- ¹ House of Representatives Standing Committee on Infrastructure, Transport and Cities, 2016, *Harnessing Value, Delivering Infrastructure: Inquiry into the role of transport connectivity on stimulating development and economic activity*
- ² Senate Standing Committee on Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport, 2019, *Operation, regulation and funding of air route service delivery to rural, regional and remote communities*
- ³ Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2018, *Regional Statistics by LGA Annual 2011 to 2018, Rockhampton R 36370*, cat. no. 1379.0.55.001
- ⁴ Rockhampton Regional Council, 2018, *Annual Report 2017/18*
- ⁵ Australian Trade and Investment Commission, 2019, *Local Government Area Profiles 2018, Rockhampton (R), Queensland*
- ⁶ Bureau of Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Economics, 2019, *Airport Traffic Data 1985 to 2018*
- ⁷ Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2018, *Regional Statistics by LGA Annual 2011 to 2018, Wagga Wagga C 17750*, cat. no. 1379.0.55.001
- ⁸ City of Wagga Wagga, 2018, *Annual Report 2017/2018*
- ⁹ Australian Trade and Investment Commission, 2019, *Local Government Area Profiles 2018, Wagga Wagga (C), New South Wales*
- ¹⁰ Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2018, *Regional Statistics by LGA Annual 2011 to 2018, Greater Geraldton C 53800*, cat. no. 1379.0.55.001
- ¹¹ City of Greater Geraldton, 2018, *Annual Report 2017-2018*
- ¹² Australian Trade and Investment Commission, 2019, *Local Government Area Profiles 2018, Greater Geraldton (C), Western Australia*
- ¹³ Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2018, *Regional Statistics by LGA Annual 2011 to 2018, Whyalla C 48540*, cat. no. 1379.0.55.001
- ¹⁴ Whyalla City Council, 2018, *Annual Report 2017/2018*
- ¹⁵ Australian Trade and Investment Commission, 2019, *Local Government Area Profiles 2018, Whyalla (C), South Australia*
- ¹⁶ Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2018, *Regional Statistics by LGA Annual 2011 to 2018, Kangaroo Island DC 42750*, cat. no. 1379.0.55.001
- ¹⁷ Kangaroo Island Council, 2018, *Annual Report 2017-18*
- ¹⁸ Australian Trade and Investment Commission, 2019, *Local Government Area Profiles 2018, Kangaroo Island (DC), South Australia*
- ¹⁹ Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2018, *Regional Statistics by LGA Annual 2011 to 2018, Longreach R 34710*, cat. no. 1379.0.55.001
- ²⁰ Australian Trade and Investment Commission, 2019, *Local Government Area Profiles 2018, Longreach (R), Queensland*

Whyalla

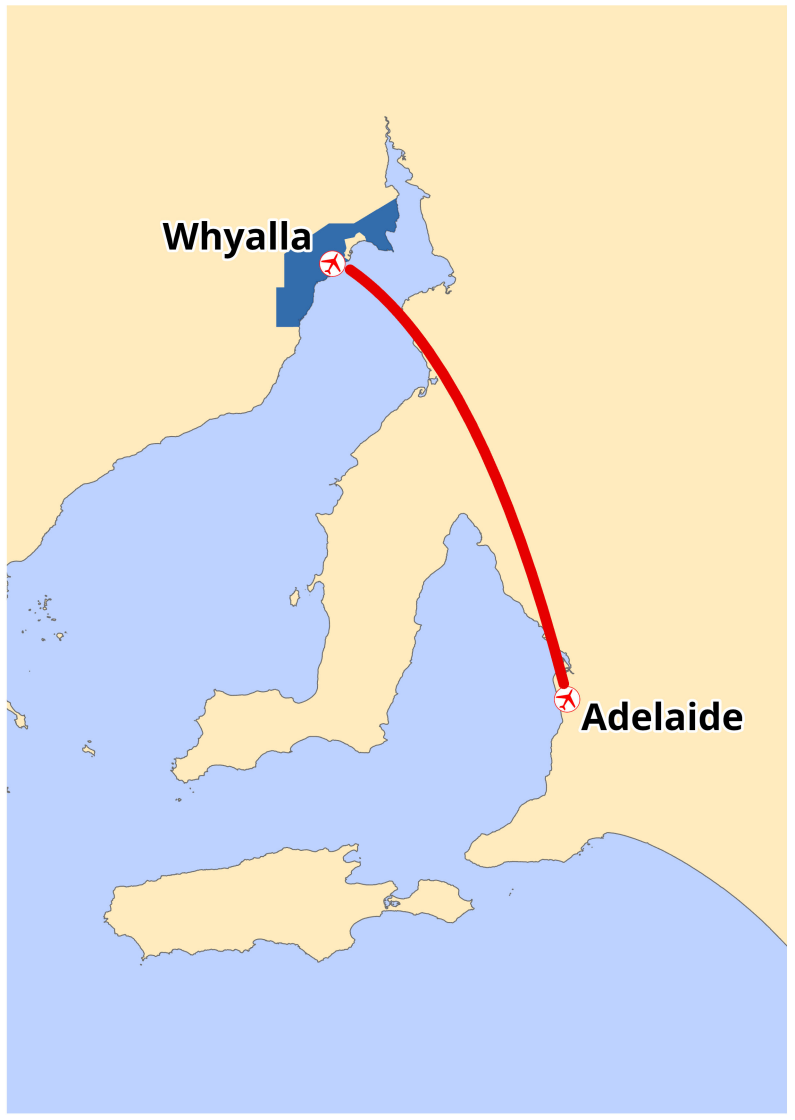
Adelaide



Whyalla



Adelaide



s.47G



Case Study Data Summary

Community

LGA land area
Population 2018
Average population growth 2013-2018
Council revenue 2018
Council expenditure 2018

Economy

Top industries 2016

Number of businesses 2018
Unemployment rate 2016
Annual tourist visits 2018
Annual tourist expenditure 2018

Aviation

Airport operator

Security provided by
Annual outbound RPT passengers 2018
Annual outbound RPT flights 2018
Flight destinations
Current proportion of airport expenditure on security screening

Security Costs

Estimate of cost to provide current mandated passenger screening
Estimate of cost to provide mandated passenger screening under the new arrangements
Estimated change in operating costs for mandated passenger screening

Whyalla

Manufacturing

Whyalla City Council

Adelaide

1,072
21,766
-0.8%

674
12.4%
147,000
68,000,000

0
38,437
1,841

\$ -
\$ 1,902,000
\$ 1,902,000

s. 22(1)(a)(ii)

Whiyalla	\$	1,902,000	38,437
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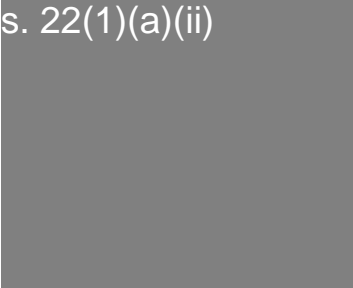
s. 22(1)(a)(ii)

Flight schedules - 12 September 2019
Flights/Seats per week

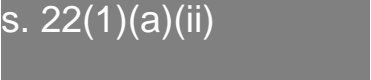


Whyalla
6 630 QF2072 to ADL
0850 Dash 8 300
2 210 QF2074 to ADL
1520 Dash 8 300
5 535 QF2070 to ADL
1730 Dash 8 300
2 210

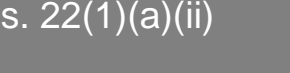
ZL4513 to ADL
0800 Saab 340
ZL4517 to ADL
0830 Saab 340
ZL4519 to ADL
1030 Saab 340
ZL4523 to ADL
1240 Saab 340
ZL4535 to ADL
1510 Saab 340
ZL4537 to ADL
1710 Saab 340
ZL4539 to ADL
1910 Saab 340



Screened flights per week
Unscreened flights per week
Total flights per week
Portion of flights over 40 seats
Very rough capacity factor

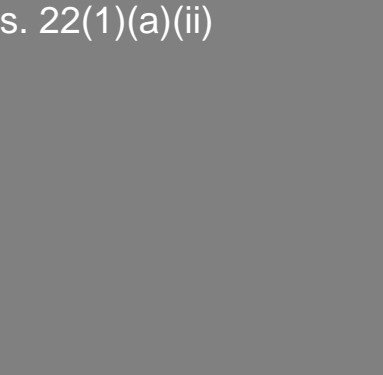


16 800
28 952
81900 44 1752
36% 46%
0.42

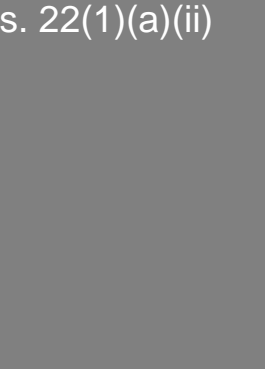


Flight departures, indicative schedule

06:00:00
06:30:00
07:00:00
07:30:00
08:00:00
08:30:00
09:00:00
09:30:00
10:00:00
10:30:00
11:00:00
11:30:00
12:00:00
12:30:00
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14:30:00
15:00:00
15:30:00
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17:00:00
17:30:00
18:00:00
18:30:00
19:00:00
19:30:00
20:00:00
20:30:00



Whyalla



Screened flight 4-7 times each week
Screened flight 1-3 times each week
Unscreened flight 4-7 times each week
Unscreened flight 1-3 times each week

Note unscreened flights not shown if there is a screened flight in that timeslot

Number of seats	
Saab 340	34
Bombardier Dash 8 300	50
Bombardier Dash 8 400	74
Fokker 100	105
Boeing 737-800	174

New Capital		Maintenance delta	Staff hours/day (very rough)	Delta (excl. capex)	Flies to	Notes	2018 Annual Outbound PAX	Operator	Annual revenue estimate from screening charge (ex GST)	
s. 22(1)(a)(ii)										
Whyalla	MVX checked, MVX baggage, BDS, ETD*2, WTMD \$970,000	\$194,000	54	\$1,024,920	ADL	Approx 51 flights per week (~16 QF, other REX)	38,437	Whyalla City Council	9*6	Whyalla council financial statements outline budget ~\$31m 2018 revenue

Staffing (assumptions need refining on a per location basis)

\$52 per hour

365 days per year

how many hours per day?

Rockhampton:

44	Security Charge						
45	(a) CBS Infrastructure	Commercial	GST Applies	\$0.80	Per Arriving or Departing Passenger	Local Government Act 2009	Part 6 S262 (3) (c)
46	(b) All other security activities	Commercial	GST Applies		Cost plus 10%	Local Government Act 2009	Part 6 S262 (3) (c)
47	(c) Passenger and Checked Bag Screening	Commercial	GST Applies	\$3.78	Per Arriving or Departing Passenger	Local Government Act 2009	Part 6 S262 (3) (c)

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Based on current Airport Category

Airport	Airport Category	Currently required to screen passengers and baggage using:	Checked baggage screening X-ray	Cabin baggage screening X-ray	Explosive Trace Detection	Walk-through metal detection	Est Equip maintenance/ service cost per annum ⁽¹⁾	Est No. of screening staff ⁽²⁾
s. 22(1)(a)(ii)								
Whyalla	6	Currently not required to conduct security screening	0	0	0	0	\$0	0

s. 22(1)(a)(ii)

Based on proposed Airport Tier

Airport	Proposed Airport Tier	Will be required to screen passengers and baggage using:	Checked baggage screening X-ray	Cabin baggage screening X-ray	Explosive Trace Detection	Body scanner	Walk-through metal detection	Est Equip maintenance/ service cost per annum ⁽¹⁾	Est No. of screening staff ⁽²⁾
s. 22(1)(a)(ii)									
Whyalla	2	BDS (50%), WTMD, ETD and MVX (EDS) X-ray	1	1	2	1	1	\$194,000	8 - 10

s. 22(1)(a)(ii)

(1) Actual costs will vary depending on location and equipment service/maintenance agreements. This figure is based on 20% of the purchase cost of the equipment.

(2) Actual number of screening staff required will vary depending on airport and operational requirements (passenger throughout and flight schedules)