



**SNP Security**  
 Sydney Night Patrol and Inquiry Co. Pty. Ltd.  
 ABN 11 000 013 090  
 Established 1923  
 Master Licence 40074602

30-32 Richmond Road  
 Homebush NSW 2140  
 Australia  
 Tel: 61 2 8762 8866  
 Fax: 61 2 9746 1479  
 www.snpsecurity.com.au

Security Alarms  
 CCTV  
 24 Hour Monitoring  
 Access Control  
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4 November 2003



Committee Secretary  
 Joint Statutory Committee of Public Accounts and Audit  
 Department of the House of Representatives  
 Parliament House  
 CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Sir / Madam

## REVIEW OF AVIATION SECURITY IN AUSTRALIA

I was in attendance at the Joint Committee's meeting in Sydney, on Thursday, 2 October, 2003, in particular, the presentation and cross-examination of Mr Jeff Lawrence, National Secretary of the LHMU.

During the course of the hearing, he commented on a number of matters, which involved our Company, SNP Security, and some of his responses, in my opinion, were inaccurate and may not have presented the true picture for the Committee.

- Firstly, when he was questioned by the Chairman regarding the employment of Screeners at Sydney Airport, he did not clarify that the responsibility for passenger screening rests with the Terminal Operator.

Despite his indication to the contrary, we are not exclusively contracted by Qantas Airways.

For passenger screening services at the International Terminal and Domestic Terminal 2, we are contracted by Sydney Airport Corporation Limited (SACL) - the Terminal Operator.

For passenger screening services at the Qantas Domestic Terminal 3, we are contracted by Qantas Airways Limited - again, the Terminal Operator.

As all staff are trained to the prescribed DOTARS standards, we can roster our screening staff to work in any of the three Terminals and, sometimes for logistical or cost-based reasons, interchanges between Terminals take place.

- Secondly, throughout his presentation, Mr Lawrence referred to a lack of uniform level of standards for training and when asked by Ms Plibersek if training was provided through accredited courses, he stated that he did not think so.



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I found this an astonishing response. Since 2000 there has been a national system of screener accreditation, based on a Federal Government designed and approved training program, which all passenger screening staff must undergo and successfully complete.

*(The Committee may wish to obtain a copy of the DOTARS publication – "An Implementation Guide To Accredited Screener Training" – April 2000, which explains the whole Training/Accreditation Program).*

- Thirdly, in respect of background checks, when asked by Ms Plibersek if his membership had to undergo stringent enough background checks, he appeared ambivalent to the question. He failed to mention that all Security Officers in the State of New South Wales, in order to obtain their security licence, must undergo police background checks.
- Fourthly, Ms Plibersek sought information regarding the use of casual staff, as it appeared she had been informed that such personnel were poorly trained and required constant monitoring.

As Mr Lawrence, in his reply, specifically referred to SNP, I would like to state our Company's position on the matter.

SNP employ three categories of staff within the Airport Division, at Sydney Airport, all of whom are trained and accredited screeners – permanent, permanent part-time and casuals.

With the current airport establishment, the break-up is as follows:

Permanent part-time	-	82%
Permanent	-	15%
Casuals	-	3%

Under the Security Industry Federal Award, full-time employees are paid a minimum of 8-hours per shift. The operational peak of the Airport environment results in large numbers of shifts of 6 and 7 hours. Security Officers employed, as permanent part-time, allows us flexibility within the Award to roster staff for shifts of less than 8-hours.

Permanent part-time employees average 34-hours of work per week. This is certainly not a casual employee as inferred by Mr Lawrence.

The criteria set for the Roster Department is to provide:

Permanent part-timers	-	<u>minimum</u> 37.75 hours/week
Permanent	-	<u>minimum</u> 38 hours/week
Casuals	-	<u>minimum</u> 4 hours, ad hoc

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I believe Mr Lawrence continues to confuse the role of the permanent part-time staff with that of a casual.

With 3% casuals on the books, there is much reticence to use them as they cost the Company more money to employ than the other categories of staff.

Whilst casuals are fully trained and accredited screening officers (who do not require any monitoring by other staff) they are mainly brought in to fill one-off, hard to cover, four hour shifts for non-screening duties, such as aircraft guarding, crowd control, aircraft searches, etc.

They are certainly not a poorly trained, second-class category of security officer, as was the implication.

I trust this information will clarify any misconceptions as a result of Mr Lawrence statements.

Yours sincerely  
**SNP SECURITY**

  
**TOM ROCHE**  
General Manager

General Manager, Joint Statutory Committee of Public Accounts and Audit (New Zealand)