

INTRASTATE AIR SERVICES

**19. Hon KEN TRAVERS to the Minister for Transport:**

- (1) Can the minister confirm that he sent a letter to stakeholders regarding a review of intrastate air services in Western Australia dated 24 December 2009, advising them that information on how licences would be awarded, the number of licences to be awarded and minimum standards would be provided early in the new year?
- (2) Can the minister advise when this information will be provided to the industry?
- (3) Does the government intend to seek any further feedback from any stakeholders before issuing tenders?
- (4) When does the minister currently expect licences will be awarded to new operators and the existing licences terminated?

**Hon SIMON O'BRIEN replied:**

- (1) Yes, around 24 December I sent out a letter to key stakeholders in the aviation sector who would have an interest in where intrastate routes were likely to head. That was some general information.
- (2) The interaction, which will be a briefing for the sector and a request for proposals, will occur later this month. Incidentally, I think this is a very important matter so I will make sure that a briefing about this matter is offered to the opposition spokesman and other party spokespeople in due course.
- (3) Feedback from interested stakeholders will occur as a result of the request for proposals process. As the member would be aware, licences are issued by the government to operate commercial air routes inside Western Australia, as required by the Transport Co-ordination Act 1966. After a decade that has involved some turmoil in the Western Australian aviation sector, other arrangements were put in place—network contracts and so on—to deal with some emergencies. As we approach the expiry of the licences that were issued in the past and which I, incidentally, extended last year, it is appropriate to go to the aviation sector to find out what services may be available to the Western Australian public to ensure that we are getting the best services available. That process will produce substantial feedback.  
  
The member also referred to tenders and specifications. It is important to reiterate that it is appropriate that we go to the marketplace at this time to get the best deal we can for the various communities around Western Australia. The way to do that is with a request for proposals. There will not be a tender process as such.
- (4) In addition to the briefing for the sector this month, again, I indicate that I will ensure that Hon Ken Travers is briefed. All will formally be revealed at that time. I anticipate that we will be receiving proposals by the end of May. Decisions about the granting of licences will be made in the third quarter of this year. To anticipate a question that might be on the honourable member's mind, yes, there will be a need to extend the current batch of licences that would otherwise conclude on 30 June.