

## **Inquiry into economic and social development in central western New South Wales**

***Appearance before the Standing Committee on State Development, Broken Hill,  
Friday 4 November 2011;***

*Lisa McFayden Royal Flying Doctor Service South Eastern Section*

### Questions taken on notice

#### **Emmdale airstrip**

The RFDS South Eastern Section has landed at Emmdale on two occasions in 2011, and a total of seven times in the last five years.

Emmdale airstrip is located adjacent to the Barrier Highway between Wilcannia and Cobar. It is the only airstrip in the area. We would therefore support it being sealed and upgraded to an all weather strip.

#### **Emergency airstrips**

The RFDS SE uses whatever airstrips are available. Most stations and properties have airstrips and all communities in which we operate clinics have airstrips. Their locations have not been strategically determined but we have ensured that there is a reasonable distribution of landing strips suitable for night landing.

The Council and the local community look after township airports and property owners look after private airstrips. Mining industries have made some good new airports in the bush that can be used for emergencies.

There is an adequate supply of airstrips in the area, although some are deteriorating due to lack of funds to keep them maintained.

#### **Emergency landings**

The RFDS SE does not land in paddocks as the surfaces tend to damage the aircraft undercarriages and the propellers. We do not land on roads for similar reasons. The camber and width of the roads is not suitable for our type of aircraft. Western Australia and South Australia have some sections of major highways specially configured for emergency landings. They have been widened and the side posts can be removed to allow aircraft to land on these sections, but they are infrequently used.

Lisa McFayden, 6 December 2011