



Inquiry into annual and financial reports 2024–2025

Answer to question taken on notice

Asked by: Ms Leanne Castley MLA

Addressed to: Minister for Health

In relation to: Helipad Design

Hearing: 18 November 2025

Uncorrected Proof Transcript p 27-28

Transcript provided: 27 November 2025

Answer Due: 4 December 2025

[...]

MS CASTLEY: Great. Is it true that aircraft are prohibited from using the landing site when the parking pad is occupied?

Ms Stephen-Smith: There has been, and I am not sure if that issue has been rectified, there has been some concerns raised around the design of the parking site subsequent to it opening. These concerns, as far as I understand, were not raised during—there was a very detailed design process. The building meets all required standards. But I think one of the providers did raise a concern about that issue. And so yes, I think you are right, that that has been raised. I am not sure whether—I believe it has been rectified. But I am not 100 per cent certain. So I will take it on notice.

MS CASTLEY: So pilots have raised concerns about the safety of the helideck?

Ms Stephen-Smith: Well I would not put it like that, Ms Castley. The provider raised some issues around a particular type of use of the helideck. And those concerns were taken into account. And as I said, it was never intended that it would be a regular thing that a helicopter would be parked and another one would be arriving at the same—or there at the same time. So it has not caused any disruption to the way the service operates. We obviously only used to have one helipad previously anyway. So the parking bay was an extra addition.

MS CASTLEY: So why would we have—why did we need two? Why do we—

Ms Stephen-Smith: My recollection is that the design of the parking bay was about if, for example, and look—what I might do, is I might take the question on notice, because I am not—I am remembering the conversation, but not remembering it very well. It was quite some time ago that we talked about the sort of how you would use a parking bay and a helideck. So we will take the details, the question on notice, and come back to you with what the original purpose of reason that we included the parking bay was. And then, what concerns have been raised and how they have been addressed.

[...]

MS CASTLEY: Okay. All right. And was the single pad design ever considered or costed, rather than

the double—the two?

Ms Stephen-Smith: I suspect it probably was. But again, I will take that question on notice, as to whether the parking bay was always part of the design or whether that got added at some point through the process.

MS CASTLEY: And if I could also understand the cost of the additional in your answer, that would be great. I guess the rest of my questions, I will wait for your questions on notice. Thank you.

Rachel Stephen-Smith MLA: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:

There is a single Helicopter Landing Site (HLS) and an adjacent parking position located on Level 9 at the northern end of Building 5 at Canberra Hospital.

A parking position is recommended for tertiary trauma centres like the Canberra Hospital when the HLS may be required to accommodate a second helicopter.

The combined helipad and parking bay configuration was included within the lump sum price agreed as part of the overall contract.

Through development of the design, a range of options for helicopter movements were considered including a single HLS, HLS plus parking bay and two separate HLS. The Canberra Hospital Expansion Project Aviation Schematic Design Report (May 2021) documented the inclusion of the single HLS with a parking bay which was then constructed.

Since commissioning the HLS, Infrastructure Canberra is aware of five minor defects related to the HLS. Four have been rectified and the remaining defect relates to line marking paint that has cracked and is planned to be rectified during December 2025.

Approved for circulation to the Standing Committee on Social Policy



Signature:

By the Minister for Health, Ms Rachel Stephen-Smith MLA

Date:

7/12/25