

Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport

QUESTION ON NOTICE

Additional Estimates 2025 - 2026

Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications, Sport and the Arts

**Departmental Question Number:** SQ26-000253

**Division/Agency Name:** Agency - Airservices Australia

**Hansard Reference:** Written, 20 February 2026)

**Topic:** AIRSERVICES - Sydney Airport

**Senator Matt O'Sullivan asked:**

1. As of December 2025, how many air traffic controllers are there for Sydney airport, and what is the authorised strength required?
2. According to media reports, 91 controllers were recruited in 2025. How many new air traffic controller recruits are anticipated to start at Sydney airport in 2026?
3. Are the issues such as the 15 January delays in Sydney, and similar ones at Brisbane airport on 23 December 2025, related only to recruitment shortages, or are there other factors involved?

**Answer:**

1. Total supply for Sydney tower as at 31 January 2026 was 43.5 controllers. We require 39 controllers to staff the mature roster.  
Total Supply for Sydney Terminal Control Unit (TCU) as at 31 January 2026 was 67.7 controllers. We require 52 controllers to staff the mature roster.
2. As at 31 January 2026, Sydney tower had 14 trainees commencing in 2026.  
Sydney TCU has 28 trainees commencing in 2026.
3. The issues referenced were not a result of recruitment shortages, but other constraints. We continue to recruit to enable standby staff arrangements.