

Response by Leeton Shire Council Supplementary Questions Inquiry Into Regional Aviation Services

STANDING COMMITTEE ON STATE DEVELOPMENT INQUIRY INTO REGIONAL AVIATION SERVICES Supplementary questions: Leeton Shire Council

Answers are to be returned to the Committee secretariat by Friday 11 July 2014.

Question 1:

In your submission (page 2) you mention that council is aware of the issues with licensing of this route which need to be addressed to ensure the long term viability of regional aviation. Can you expand on those issues and any suggestions you have to improve the current system?

Leeton Shire Council Response

In consultation with the current RPT operator there is a desire to streamline the ongoing licence system in terms of approving licences to viable operators rather than being faced with situations such as the Brindabella collapse which could have a significant effect on a regional community.

Therefore one of the key components of the licensing system should be a shorter licensing review period with a more streamlined process to enable any critical issues to appear sooner and be addressed rather than leaving these for longer periods which could result in airlines struggling to meet their ongoing commitments (i.e. staying under the "radar").

Question 2:

Council is supportive of greater protection for sole operators of regional license such as REX but doesn't agree with 5 year license terms. Can you suggest other ways in which the Government could support RPT providers?

Leeton Shire Council Response

The main way the Government can support RPT providers is by ensuring regional operators have access to Kingsford Smith Airport in Sydney.

If access to Kingsford Smith is taken away or reduced (i.e. for example Regional Express forced to Bankstown Airport for example) then there would be a real threat that customers of the service would look for alternate transport opportunities such as driving to Sydney.

The greatest concern for our Council would be that passenger numbers would drop as result of this this placing in jeopardy the provision of an air service to our airport.

The need for regional access to Sydney airport is critical as it has high level transport options between the airport and the main CBD area of Sydney where a majority of our passengers require access to. Alternatively they have direct access to transit to other

domestic airport services (i.e. links to Melbourne, Brisbane etc) as well as international services.

The same argument above would relate to the proposed 2nd Sydney Airport at Badgery's Creek with Council's view at present being that access to Kingsford Smith be retained as a matter of high importance.

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Leeton Shire Council