

**Submission  
No 5**

## **INQUIRY INTO REGIONAL AVIATION SERVICES**

**Organisation:** Bourke Shire Council

**Date received:** 4/03/2014

---

# The Council of The Shire of Bourke

29 Mitchell St, Bourke, N.S.W 2840  
P.O. Box 21, Bourke, N.S.W 2840  
Telephone (02) 6830 8000 Fax (02) 6872 3030  
Email: [bourkeshire@bourke.nsw.gov.au](mailto:bourkeshire@bourke.nsw.gov.au)  
Web: <http://www.bourke.nsw.gov.au>



Please address all  
communications to  
the General Manager

Our Ref: RE-KSH-A6.1

4<sup>th</sup> March 2014

The Director  
Standing Committee on State Development  
Parliament House  
Macquarie Street  
Sydney NSW 2000

Dear Sir

*Re: Submission in respect of Regional Aviation Inquiry*

Attached hereto is a brief submission in respect of the above enquiry.

Bourke Shire Council would welcome the opportunity to discuss the lack of an aerial regular passenger transport service (RPT) direct with the committee should the opportunity arise.

Additionally, Council would be happy to provide additional information should that deemed to be of benefit to the Standing Committee.

Yours faithfully

Ross Earl  
General Manager

Encl.



**SUBMISSION**

**BY**

**BOURKE SHIRE COUNCIL**

**TO**

**THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON  
STATE DEVELOPMENT**

**RELATING TO**

**REGIONAL AVIATION SERVICES**

## **Bourke**

Bourke is an iconic town located in Far Western New South Wales some 760 kilometres north west of Sydney. Currently the nearest aerial regular passenger service is located at Dubbo which is 360 kilometres east. Cobar, which is 165 kilometres west, did have a service but is currently without a provider.

The town of Bourke is serviced by CountryLink three (3) days a week which is a bus out of Dubbo and involves five (5) hours travel.

## **Airport Facilities**

Bourke has excellent facilities both in regards to the airstrips themselves and terminal building together with refuelling facilities.

## **Background to Air Services to Bourke**

Bourke had an air service provided by Air Link up until 2009 and since that time has not had an aerial regular passenger transport service (RPT). The service was direct to Sydney/a connecting flight to Dubbo to meet the RPT.

The airport is used regularly by the Royal Flying Doctor Services, Transport and freight planes together with other charter aircraft and private planes

## **Current Situation**

The Department of Premier and Cabinet (DPC) are undertaking a feasibility study in relation to the re-establishment of the air service to Bourke which in all impossibility would be a triangulation service involving Walgett and Dubbo.

The Department has sent a request to potential users of the service to gain an indication of expected numbers of passengers and gain an insight into their usage pattern. Indicative pricing has now been provided and potential users are being asked to again comment on potential usage.

This process is currently being finalised.

## **Potential users of an Air Service if Established**

Potentially users would fall into two categories, firstly those who would travel from Sydney thus using the established commercial flights to Dubbo then onto Bourke and secondly those based in Dubbo who would use the service to reduce their travelling time and get more time "on the ground". A number of regionally based services emanate from Dubbo.

The advantage to all potential users is be able to reduce the 9-10 hour return trip to around 2-3 hours increasing productivity, negating the need in some instances for an overnight stay and at the same time substantially reducing any risk under Work Health and Safety provisions.

The listing of potential users included but not limited to:-

1. Health providers
2. Education Representatives
3. Family and Community Service Representatives
4. Legal Fraternity
5. Politicians
6. Training Providers
7. Staff travelling to Sydney for training and conferences
8. Potential employees attending interviews
9. Commercial and Banking Representatives
10. Auditors
11. Specialist service providers e.g. IT
12. Tourists

### **Economic Advantages of an Air Service**

There are obviously many economic benefits to the establishment of an air service from Dubbo. These include:-

- The economic and social benefits of having staff in Bourke for a greater amount of time
- The benefits of having Doctors and specialists on the ground for extra days as a result of accessible flights
- The ability to have expensive professional staff in Bourke at an affordable rate rather than travelling
- The ability for local professional staff to return to distant homes if required either as an emergency or as part of their leave
- The ability to have freight to Bourke overnight out of Sydney is of benefit to the economy
- The ability to bring higher yielding visitors directly into the region
- Increase the use of other local business in the areas of accommodation, fuel sales and hire cars

### **Potential for a Shared Freight /Passenger Service**

The concept seems to be very logical and given that it is anticipated that a number of the potential users would be “Day Trippers” or “Overnighters” their requirements in regards to luggage should be significantly reduced having regard to those planning extended stays.

The ability to combine the freight and passenger service would need to be considered in light of current regulation regarding transport of both on the same plane.