

MEDIA RELEASE



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AAA welcomes WA Government funding for regional airports

The Australian Airports Association (AAA) has welcomed the WA Government's announcement that it will fund nearly \$1.4 million in regional aerodrome upgrades.

AAA Chief Executive Officer Caroline Wilkie said the grants, to be delivered under the Regional Airports Development Scheme (RADS), would provide much needed support for regional airports in WA.

"Regional airports are the lifeblood of their communities and must be appropriately funded to ensure they can meet the needs of local people and businesses," Ms Wilkie said.

"These grants will deliver vital improvements to 12 regional airports, helping keep their communities connected and thriving."

The WA Government announced 12 projects would receive grants as part of the scheme, with airports across the state to benefit from the funding.

The grants would fund a range of works including runway improvements, lighting, airport CCTV, security fencing and terminal upgrades.

Ms Wilkie said the funding announcement came as the AAA continued its push to Protect Regional Airports to ensure regional airports across the country could continue to meet their communities' needs.

"We know regional airports are doing it tough and more Federal Government funding is an essential part of supporting their sustainable future," she said.

"While we applaud the WA Government's commitment, more still needs to be done at a national level to ensure our regional communities aren't left behind."

The AAA also welcomed the WA Government's support for the recommendations of the Final Report to the Parliamentary Inquiry into Regional Airfares.

Ms Wilkie said the AAA looked forward to participating in the upcoming review of the State Aviation Strategy.

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About the Protect Regional Airports campaign

More than 15 million passengers fly in and out of regional Australia each year. To continue being a successful and prosperous nation, the back bone of Australia, the regions, need equitable access to markets, health care, exports and produce - all of which are facilitated by regional airports.

The AAA, with support from the Australian Logistics Council (ALC), Regional Aviation Association of Australia (RAAA), Royal Flying Doctor Service (RFDS) and Australian Local Government Association (ALGA), are asking the Government to provide all regional airports access to funding to undertake essential infrastructure investment to improve safety and keep our regions connected.

The Protect Regional Airport campaign is designed to raise awareness of the contribution regional airports make to Australia and to encourage the Australian Government to commit to a two-pronged funding proposal.

The proposal is to:

1. Extend and expand the Regional Aviation Access Programme (RAAP) to a \$15 million allowing remote communities such as Milyakburra in the NT or Mimili in SA to also benefit; and
2. Develop a new \$25 million a year program similar to the RAAP that would allow regional centres like Moruya, Biloela, Manjimup or Cummins to apply for funding.