REGIONAL AIRPORTS

CONTRIBUTING TO AND CONNECTING OUR COMMUNITIES

PROTECT REGIONAL AIRPORTS

The Australian Airports Association (AAA), with support from the Australian Local Government Association (ALGA), the Regional Aviation Association of Australia (RAAA), and the Australian Logistics Council (ALC), are seeking direct Federal Government funding support for essential infrastructure at regional airports.

WHY ARE REGIONAL AIRPORTS IMPORTANT?

45% of Australia's tourism

It is estimated that regional Australia accounts for **45 per cent of Australia's tourism industry**, with regional airports being a critical enabling gateway.

360,000+ flights

In 2016-17, domestic RPT aircraft movements were in **excess of 1.2 million.** Of this, over 360,000, or **nearly 25%,** were to or from an airport in **regional Australia**.

15m passengers

Domestic passengers account for around 117 million trips per year. **Regional passengers** are estimated to make up 12 per cent of this total, or 15 million passengers per year.

500 aircraft

Across Australia, airports house more than 500 aircraft available to be deployed for **firefighting** duties.

4450 jobs

Regional airports directly employ **over 1700 full-time workers** and support an additional 2750 jobs.

over 6000

Over 6000 **emergency evacuations** are facilitated by regional airports a year.

WHAT HAPPENS TO REGIONAL AIRPORTS WITHOUT FUNDING?

Sub optimal safety

Many regional airports are operating runways and infrastructure that is **70+ years old**, with substantial upgrades needed to meet modern aviation safety standards.

Regional isolation

Regional communities **risk being cut off** from health care, education, economic and travel opportunities.

Infrastructure deficit

There is an estimated **$170 million shortfall** in infrastructure funding over the next 10 years, with **costs to increase by 40 per cent** over the same period.

CASE STUDIES

SAFE AIRPORT
INFRASTRUCTURE

Towards the end of 2017 CASA undertook a surveillance inspection at Moree Airport and issued a number of safety findings about the condition of all pavements at the airport, relating to:

1. Pavement irregularities and settlement deformation
2. Loss of frictional characteristics of the pavement
3. Poor ride quality

Because Moree sits on highly reactive black soil, the pavement surface quickly develops minor depressions and deformations. Steps to correct identified minor pavement deficiencies in the past have only resulted in relocating the problem from one area to another. Reconstructing the entire pavement areas (97,000m^2 of sealed pavement) is well outside of the owner/operator Moree Plains Shire Council's budget, and adhoc efforts have not provided the expected level of endurance. A reconstruction would still not guarantee the absence of some minor 'bird baths' in the finished pavement. Previously any pavement improvements were staggered to take into consideration the availability of funding, as well as the ability to realistically complete all works in one year. The repairs expected by CASA would impact on current and future maintenance programs to a devastating level, as they would need to be completed all at once.

The importance of maintaining Moree Airport to service the regional area as well as itinerant air travellers from around Australia is pivotal to the economy of the Moree Shire, as well as assisting with airport maintenance costs.

In an endeavor to satisfy the requirements CASA's requirements, Council released a request for quotations to provide recommendations on how to proceed with remedial pavement works.

The ability to have access to ongoing government funding to complete pavement works for Moree Plains Shire Council mean that a safer and more reliable infrastructure would be available at Moree Airport for all users.

DRIVING REGIONAL
TOURISM

The Fraser Coast Council owned and operated Hervey Bay airport is a prime example of how local government can be encouraged to invest in its airport to support rapid aviation growth, and is then required to continue to upgrade and maintain the asset after a downturn in passenger throughput.

The mid 2000s saw an influx of low-cost airline services, with the likes of Virgin Blue, and Jetstar beginning to deploy aircraft to regional airports from city centres, to target leisure, cost conscious traveller. One of the beneficiaries of this expansion was Hervey Bay. In 2004 the small Queensland tourism centre saw 34,000 passengers pass through its airport. However, the attraction of jet aircraft services from Virgin and Jetstar, led Council to take the bold step to extend the runway to facilitate larger aircraft. In 2005, an investment of $15 million saw the airport jet aircraft ready and within three years passenger numbers had lifted to 217,000. However, in 2009 the bubble burst with Jetstar withdrawing its services amid the global financial downturn and subsequent downturn in tourism. Passenger numbers fell below 150,000 in 2011 and have slowly recovered in recent years but not to the levels of 2008. However, the cost of maintaining and upgrading the runway and its associated apron and taxiways remains.

While the runway was extended in 2005 by over 500m, it was identified at the time that this area would require further work in future years. When recently investigating the condition of the older part of the runway, it was recommended that Council should overlay the whole of the air strip, the airfield lighting system was also non-complaint because of its age. Due to seasonal weather, the opportunity to complete these projects individually is limited, therefore Council has to consider completing the works at the one time. The combined cost to Council for these projects is likely to be in excess of $10 million.

Having a safe and compliant airport is essential for a region that relies heavily on tourism for its local economy, and large capital costs such as this take many years to recoup with limited airlines to contribute towards the upkeep.

FINANCIAL CHALLENGES

AERONAUTICAL INFRASTRUCTURE DEFICIT

$170 million

* This is the funding required for essential repairs and upgrades of runways, taxiways, aprons and lighting systems. This figure is based on a 2016 ACIL Allen Report, using 2014-15 data.

NEW SECURITY INFRASTRUCTURE COSTS

$25 million

* These are the estimated infrastructure costs for regional airports to meet the Government's new security requirements.

HOW CAN GOVERNMENT HELP?
CREATE THE REGIONAL AIRPORT INFRASTRUCTURE FUND (RAIF)

$100m for essential infrastructure

This new fund would deliver **$25 million per year over four years**, to assist regional airports undertake essential aeronautical repairs and upgrades and adapt their infrastructure to meet the Government's security requirements.
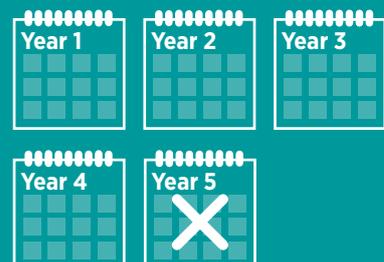
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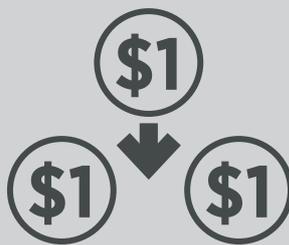
Co-contribution model

As with other Commonwealth funding initiatives, it is envisaged the RAIF would adopt a co-contribution model. This would see **50 per cent** of the funding provided by the Commonwealth, and the remaining **50 per cent** provided by state and local government.

Future-proofing regional Australia

Providing this essential funding assistance will not only ensure regional communities can continue to enjoy safe and efficient air transport, **it will also future proof regional Australia for generations** with infrastructure that drives economic growth.

Year 1   Year 2   Year 3

Year 4   Year 5

ELIGIBLE REGIONAL AIRPORTS

*This is only an indicative list.

NSW
Adaminaby
Albury
Armidale
Ashford
Balranald
Barraba
Bathurst
Bingara
Bombala
Brobenah
Broken Hill
Casino
Cessnock
Coffs Harbour
Coleambally
Condobolin
Coolah
Coonabrabran
Cootamundra
Corowa
Cowra
Crookwell
Deniliquin
Dubbo
Evans Head
Gilgandra
Glen Innes
Goolgowi
Goulburn
Grafton
Griffith
Gunnedah
Harden
Hay
Illawarra
Inverell
Jindabyne
Kempsey
Lake Cargelligo
Lismore
Merimbula
Moree
Moruya
Mudgee
Narrabri
Narrandera

Narromine
Orange
Parkes
Peak Hill
Port Macquarie
Quirindi
Scone Memorial
Tamworth
Taree
Temora
Tenterfield
Tocumwal
Tooraweenah
Trundle
Tullamore
Tumbarumba
Tumut
Tyagarah
Wagga Wagga
Warren
Wellington (NSW)
West Wyalong
Wyong
Young

NT
Batchelor
Eva Valley

VIC
Apollo Bay (Marengo)
Ararat
Bacchus Marsh
Bairnsdale
Ballarat
Benalla
Bendigo
Birchip
Boort
Cobden
Cohuna
Colac
Corryong
Donald
Echuca
Edenhope
Hamilton

Horsham
Kaniva
Kerang
Latrobe
Mangalore
Maryborough (VIC)
Mildura
Mount Hotham
Nhill
Orbost
Patchewollock
Porepunkah
Port Fairy
Portland
Pyramid Hill
Robinvale
Sea Lake
Shepparton
St Arnaud
Stawell
Swan Hill
Warracknabeal
Warrnambool
West Sale
Wycheproof
Yarram-Parkside
Yarrawonga

QLD
Atherton
Ayr
Biggenden
Boonah
Bowen
Bundaberg
Caloundra Aerodrome
Charters Towers
Chinchilla
Clare
Dalbeg
Dalby
Dulacca
Eidsvold
Emerald
Gayndah
Herberton
Hervey Bay

Home Hill
Ingham
Innisfail
Kingaroy
Maryborough (QLD)
Miles
Millaroo
Millmerran
Monto
Moranbah
Moura
Mundubbera
Nanango
Nebo
Pittsworth
Proserpine-Whitsunday
Coast
Redcliffe
Roma
Southport
Stanthorpe
Tara
Thangool (Biloela)
Theodore
Toowoomba
Tully
Warwick
Windorah

SA
Bordertown
Coonawarra
Kadina
Kangaroo Island
Keith
Kingston SE
Lucindale
Maitland
Millicent
Minnipa
Moomba
Mount Gambier
Naracoorte
Padthaway
Peterborough
Port Augusta
Port Lincoln

Port Pirie
Prominent Hill
Quorn
Renmark
Robe
Streaky Bay
Tintinara
Tumby Bay

TAS
Bruny Island
Burnie
Cape Barren Island
Devonport
Flinders Island (TAS)
George Town
King Island
Queenstown
Smithton
St Helens
Strahan

WA
Albany
Argyle
Balgo Hill
Beverley
Boolgeeda
Boyup Brook
Bunbury
Busselton
Cervantes
Collie
Cranbrook
Cunderdin
Denmark
Dongara
Dowerin
Fortescue Dave Forrest
Jurien Bay
Kellerberrin
Kojonup
Leonora
Mingenew
Narrogin
Quairading
Wongan Hills

SUPPORTERS