

MEDIA RELEASE



23 April 2019

Funding pledge ensures sustainable future for regional airports

The Australian Airports Association (AAA) has welcomed the Australian Labor Party's (ALP) commitment this week to create a \$100 million fund for regional airports if elected as part of its Regional Tourism Fund.

AAA Chief Executive Officer Caroline Wilkie said the funding would help address the critical need for regional airport funding across the country.

"The AAA has long been campaigning to address the financial challenges faced by regional airports and this week's announcement is welcome recognition of the importance of sustainable regional funding," Ms Wilkie said.

"This will help address the \$170 million aeronautical deficit that exists in the regions to ensure our regional airports can continue to serve their communities.

"A dedicated fund will keep regional airports' safe and sustainable, while also supporting the growth of tourism beyond our city centres."

The ALP's funding commitment would grow the nation's regional airports, providing local councils with access to grants for airport maintenance, funding projects on a dollar-for-dollar basis.

Importantly, it would help ensure regional airports can continue to maintain the highest standards of safety, with their costs expected to rise 40 per cent over the next 10 years.

Ms Wilkie said this week's announcement provides the industry with certainty following an allocation for a regional airport fund in the recent Federal budget.

The AAA also welcomed additional commitments as part of the Regional Tourism Fund, which recognised the importance of the regions to Australia's domestic and international tourism offering.

This included commitments to improve infrastructure around existing tourism attractions, expand the range of tourism experiences in individual regions and funding for Tourism Australia.

The AAA launched the Protect Regional Airports campaign in 2017 to recognise the important role regional airports play and campaign for sustainable funding.

In addition to providing vital connection for their communities, regional airports facilitate 6000 emergency transfers each year and house 500 aircraft used for firefighting purposes.

MEDIA RELEASE



Protect Regional Airports was also supported by the Regional Aviation Association of Australia, Australian Local Government Association and Australian Logistics Council. Regional Capital Australia also supported the need for regional airport funding.

ENDS