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Australian airports outline reform pathways in Aviation Green Paper response

The Australian Airports Association (AAA) has lodged its submission in response to the Australian Government's Aviation Green Paper.

"This is a once in a decade opportunity to get the right policy and regulatory settings for a thriving and sustainable airport sector," AAA Chief Executive, James Goodwin said.

"We have set out a positive and collaborative reform agenda to improve competition and capacity, reduce aviation emissions, while working to improve disability access, supporting regional airports and streamlining planning processes," he said.

"This submission is the culmination of the views of hundreds of people at airports across Australia having their say on the future of the sector during what will be a period of significant change,"

"Australia's airports must remain a vital part of Australia's economic and social fabric. Airports are critical infrastructure, providing services that generate substantial employment and increase connectivity within Australia and internationally through trade and tourism," Mr Goodwin said.

The AAA submission is calling for the Australian Government to:

- Direct the Australian Competition and Consumer Committee (ACCC) to conduct an inquiry into anti-competitive behaviour in domestic aviation.
- Consider an independent Airline Ombudsman to improve consumer confidence.
- Implement the recommendations of the Harris Review into Sydney slots.
- Fund regional airports to ensure these vital pieces of infrastructure are safe and functional by reinstating the Regional Airports Program (RAP) and Remote Aerodrome Upgrade Program (RAUP) grant program.
- Develop a viable and scalable domestic Sustainable Aviation Fuel (SAF) industry and set a viable target for the SAF industry before moving towards a mandate.
- Streamline planning processes to unlock investment and jobs in airports by increasing the Major Development Plan (MDP) monetary trigger to at least \$50 million in the short term with a view to longer term reforms.
- Undertake a review of the current aviation agencies including Airservices Australia and the Civil Aviation Safety Authority as well as the regulatory settings to ensure a fit-for-purpose framework out to 2050.
- The Ministers for Home Affairs and Infrastructure hold a roundtable on disability access.

"These these recommendations are a feasible and proportional response to the key issues facing the aviation sector currently and would help increase confidence and investment through to 2050," he said.

Airports are key drivers of the economy with recent analysis published by Deloitte Access Economics found that in 2022 Australia's airports contributed \$105 billion in value added to the national economy, supporting 690,000 full time equivalent jobs. The economic activity at and facilitated by airports, contributed around 5% of Australia's gross domestic product (GDP) and supported 6% of full time equivalent (FTE) jobs in 2022.

"This important contribution to Australia's economy could be at risk from increased regulation and a lack of clear policy pathways to enable further progress," Mr Goodwin said.

The AAA submission has been developed through extensive consultations with a wide range of members. including:

- 676 individuals
- 94% of member airports
- Subject matter experts from seven AAA committees and working groups

"I would like to thank the AAA membership, who overwhelmingly engaged in the process to provide their say on the issues that matter to them," Mr Goodwin said.

The AAA Aviation Green Paper submission can be found [here](#).

The AAA is the national voice for airports, representing the interests of more than 340 airports and aerodromes across Australia. It also represents more than 150 corporate members supplying products and services to airports and the wider aviation industry.

Ends.

Contact the AAA for media enquiries on 02 6230 1110.