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Aviation Green Paper
Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government
GPO Box 594
CANBERRA ACT 2601

Dear Sir

COMMENTS ON AVIATION GREEN PAPER

I write to you in regard to your Green Paper on the National Aviation Policy. The Mid-Western Regional Council is located some 3 ½ hours west of Sydney and our main towns are Mudgee, Kandos, Rylstone, and Gulgong. This is a thriving area with ample growth in terms of tourism, the wine industry, and mining.

Recently this region enjoyed 14 return flights per week from the Mudgee airport to Sydney, but this has now ceased. The reason is pure economics in this tough financial time that we are facing. This Council has been very proactive to try and acquire the return of an air service between Sydney and Mudgee. In fact, we have offered \$120,000 subsidy to air operators to provide this service. Still this is not enough with the doubts that are in the minds of the aviation industry, and in particular, to regional parts of Australia. Without an air service we miss out on a number of essential community services that our city counterparts take for granted. For example, doctors under our medical health system now only travel to this region one day per month compared to one day per week when we enjoyed the air service.

This Council submits as part of your National Aviation Policy that the Government needs to ensure that regional Australia is adequately serviced by providing a solution to long-term aviation needs. If the Government is serious about supporting regional Australia and retaining regional Australia as a viable and a great place to live then air services are an essential part of our day-to-day infrastructural needs. This Council asks that as part of this policy consideration be given to supplying incentives to ensure that regional airlines are able to continue servicing regional Australia.

Yours sincerely


WARWICK L BENNETT
GENERAL MANAGER