



PARKES SHIRE COUNCIL

Progress, opportunities and a quality lifestyle for our residents

SMB

Contact Person: Steve Barry

25 February 2009

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

Dear Sir/Madam

NATIONAL AVIATION POLICY - GREEN PAPER

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the National Aviation Policy Green Paper. Parkes Council discussed the Green Paper at the 17 February 2009 meeting where it was resolved that a submission be lodged including comments on the need for expanded funding programmes, such as the Regional and Local Community Infrastructure Programme, to assist airports in marginal situations.

Chapters 4 and 8 of the Green Paper often referenced the difficulties faced by regional airports in maintaining and providing infrastructure to provide for the valuable air services for their communities. Existing support programmes are excellent for assisting the remote airports. However the suggested allocation of existing funds from the untied Financial Assistance Grants is not possible in most cases given that the funding is fully committed to other essential services within Council.

The continuation of the Regional and Local Community Infrastructure Programme would be a welcome decision, but to adequately provide for airport infrastructure as well, a substantial increase in ongoing available funding would be required.

The major issue for Parkes Regional Airport is funding for major infrastructure works. The Airport is seen as commercially viable for the purposes of eligibility for the current funding programmes, and hence that source is unavailable to Council. It is also stated in the Green Paper that it is up to the Council to balance the need for the service and the future infrastructure costs. The lack of available funding for major works is exacerbated with airlines requiring substantial concessions on landing charges to provide the service.

It is considered that the Government needs to explore ways to assist with financing major works at marginal regional airports through funding programmes, such as an expanded Regional and Local Community Infrastructure Programme.

Please note also that Parkes Council was involved in the National Aviation Policy Statement Consultation for Aviation Security held in Sydney on 18 February 2009 and consequently will be party to the Office of Transport Security submission.

Yours faithfully

Alan McCormack
GENERAL MANAGER

per: 
Steve Barry
DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS