

Graeme Sturges MP
Minister for Infrastructure

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14 JUL 2008

Received by Minister

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(Canberra Office)



09 JUL 2008

The Hon Anthony Albanese MP
Minister for Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Minister Anthony:

I refer to your letter dated 6 May 2008 to the former Tasmanian Premier regarding the Australian Government's Aviation Issues Paper *Towards A National Aviation Policy Statement*. As I am now the Tasmanian Minister responsible for transport issues, your letter has been forwarded to me and I am pleased to respond to you. I understand my colleague, the Tasmanian Minister for Economic Development and Tourism, Hon Paula Wriedt MP, will also be providing a submission to you in relation to her portfolio.

The Tasmanian Government welcomes the opportunity to contribute to the development of a National Aviation White Paper. As an island State, many aspects of Tasmanian life and economic activity depend on the aviation industry. At this initial stage in the process, in relation to my portfolio responsibilities, I would like to ensure that further consideration is given to:

- land use planning at airports;
- the continuance of the Remote Air Service Subsidy Scheme; and
- concerns relating to Civil Aviation Safety Authority groundings affecting air services to remote communities.

The Tasmanian Government supports a strategic approach to airport land use planning. This approach must examine the use and development at a whole-of-site level and consider the relationship between proposed developments and the transport and infrastructure networks and is preferable to the assessment of individual developments on a one-off, discrete basis. In addition, the Tasmanian Government believes in enhanced long-term planning and protection of significant transport infrastructure from land use that compromises long-term operating function.

The Tasmanian Government supports the continuance of the Remote Air Service Subsidy Scheme (RASS). Cape Barren Island currently qualifies to receive a subsidised weekly air service under the RASS. Without this service the Island would be without an essential transport service as a fully commercial service is not viable. It is critical that the RASS continues to support remote communities such as Cape Barren Island.

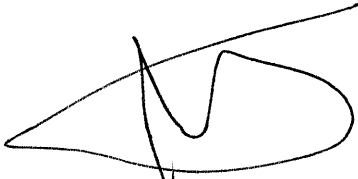
The Tasmanian Government would appreciate consideration being given to the policy implications of regulatory decisions affecting regular passenger transport (RPT) services to remote communities such as those on the Bass Strait Islands. Often remote communities

are serviced by a single RPT operator and are therefore highly vulnerable to regulatory decisions affecting that operator. Whilst noting that safety and other regulatory considerations take precedence over commercial imperatives, it is important that a mechanism be established to address potential threats to services that would severely impact remote communities. Consideration could be given to either advising jurisdictional authorities of such a risk or alternatively ensuring substitute service provision is available.

Once again, I would like to thank you for the opportunity to contribute towards the development of a National Aviation Policy. A detailed submission will be provided by the Tasmanian Government following the release of the Green Paper in September 2008.

If you have any queries in relation to this matter please contact Martin Blake, Director of Infrastructure Policy, in the Department of Infrastructure, Energy and Resources on (03) 6233 6356.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Graeme Sturges', written over a horizontal line.

Graeme Sturges MP
Minister for Infrastructure