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29 October 2020

Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communication  
GPO Box 594  
CANBERRA ACT 2601

Via email: [drones@infrastructure.gov.au](mailto:drones@infrastructure.gov.au)

**Re: Submission - National Aviation Policy Issues Paper on Emerging Technologies**

Fraser Coast Regional Council welcomes the opportunity to put forward feedback on the National Aviation Policy Issues Paper on Emerging Technologies. Council has had a strong focus on drones and UAV technology for some time, having completed the Fraser Coast Drones Strategy in 2018.

Council's strategy outlined a number of actions which Council would look to implement in an effort to take advantage of the many economic, social and environmental opportunities available from this innovative sector.

Fraser Coast Regional Council continues to have a strong focus on drones and UAV investment in the Fraser Coast region and in 2019 held the first regional Drones and Innovation Showcase at Maryborough with nearly 300 delegates and strong support from drones and UAV industry organisations attending.

Council continues to focus on drone's investment in the region, including manufacturing and education of drones and UAV. Council is currently working with a potential proponent to establish a drone's education facility and manufacturing facility in the region.

In general, Fraser Coast Regional Council is supportive of this policy paper put forward and can see the importance and opportunities the paper has identified. Council provides this feedback on the paper itself;

- Council agrees that utilising drones and eVTOL vehicles enables the opportunity to carry out many tasks, in a safer, cheaper and more efficient manner. The flow on increase in productivity and sustainability for these industries could boost economic development and jobs in region.
- Council supports the Australian Government in developing a national whole-of-government framework to manage new aviation technologies
- Council agrees that it is vital that these technologies operate in a manner that is safe, secure and considerate of the community and the environment. Safety and risk are important factors that must be considered

- Council agrees that the proposed core principles for the policy are both appropriate and important and feel this approach to policy development will allow for council to continue to achieve actions set within its Drones Strategy. This will allow FCRC to move forward within a government supported framework, which allows investment but also considers important facets including safety and risk mitigation.

Fraser Coast Regional Council suggests the main issues or actions that government should prioritise to facilitate the growth of emerging aviation technologies is to establish a strong communication network with key stakeholders to enable appropriate information and advice while also working behind the scenes to reduce the red tape to progress many of the opportunities for this sector.

Some potential issues that the Australian government should consider are how international investment in this sector can be better managed and coordinated at a national level to open up opportunities for investment.

From Council's experience, challenges with airspace integration will be important to manage and consider, in line with obvious safety for all and risk mitigation. Also from a local government perspective assistance in understanding and managing privacy laws within this industry needs some consideration and discussion.

It is important to see that the proposed policy approach The Australian Government will develop identifies the need to foster partnerships between government and industry to promote shared outcomes.

Fraser Coast Regional Council believes there are many benefits this sector can provide our region from an economic, social and environmental standpoint and the development of this paper will be a good step forward to seeing this industry progress. Council looks forward to further strategic direction for the industry.

Fraser Coast Regional Council would also welcome and offer any opportunities to be considered to host trials of new aircraft types. This is in line with our drones strategy and the opportunity to attract sector investment in to the Fraser Coast region.

Yours faithfully



**GEORGE SEYMOUR**  
**MAYOR**

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