



4 October 2019

Hon Michael McCormack MP
Minister for Infrastructure Transport and Regional Development

By Email: michael.mccormack.mp@aph.gov.au

Dear Deputy Prime Minister,

RE: MANDATORY SCREENING OF DOMESTIC AIRFREIGHT

I am writing to you in relation to the Coalition Government's decision to implement mandatory domestic screening of air cargo in Australia.

The Regional Aviation Association of Australia (RAAA) represents regional aviation across Australia. We have around 100 members and our Air Operator Certificate (AOC) members directly employ over 2,500 Australians, many in regional areas. On an annual basis, the RAAA's AOC members jointly turnover more than \$1.5 billion and carry well more than 2 million passengers and move over 23 million kilograms of freight.

As you are well aware, the Coalition Government has committed to additional security measures to strengthen Australia's air cargo security in response to evolving threats. While we understand that it is essential for Australia's aviation industry to employ effective security measures to address threats and protect our trade and travel, we believe that the full effects of the mandate have not been properly investigated or planned for.

Investment in regional aviation is regulatory intensive, involves large capital investment costs, narrow profit margins and is highly competitive. We understand from several operators that the cost and timeframes involved may seriously impact the financial sustainability of the sector. This could well have wider economic implications given the vital role that domestic air freight and the overnight parcel express business plays in Australian industry and commerce.

Serving regional aviation, and through it, the people and businesses of regional Australia

Unit 11, 26-28 Winchcombe Court, Mitchell ACT 2911

ABN: 23 008 568 054 Telephone: 02 6162 0305 Email: office@raaa.com.au Website: www.raaa.com.au

While we appreciate that some concessions have already been afforded to regional operators, we urge the government to work with the industry to conduct a full independent review of industry capability and readiness ahead of the mandatory commencement of the policy. At the very least, we urge the government to extend the deadline to align with the US and Hong Kong's requirement of mandatory screening by June 2021.

The industry stands ready to look at all options to increase the safety and security of airfreight but not at the expense of the viability of the industry.

I would welcome the opportunity to discuss this critical issue with you at a time convenient to you.

Yours sincerely,



Jim Davis
Chairman

Regional Aviation Association of Australia
Unit 11, 26-28 Winchcombe Court, Mitchell ACT 2911
T: 02 6162 0305, M: 0408 640 533
E: Jim@davisco.com.au, W: www.raaa.com.au