



KANGAROO ISLAND COUNCIL

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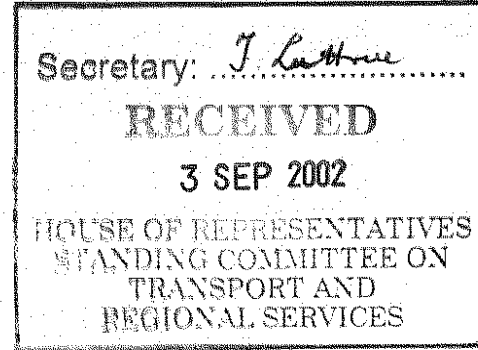
When replying please quote:

30th August 2002

119 RR:JB

To The Secretary
House of Representatives
Standing Committee on Transport and Regional Services
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2601

Dear Sir/Madam



Re: Inquiry into Commercial Regional Aviation Services in Australia and Transport Links to Major Populated Islands.

THE ADEQUACY OF COMMERCIAL AIR SERVICES TO OUR ISLAND COMMUNITY:

The Community owned Kingscote Airport, Kangaroo Island is located some 130 km by air from the capital city hub Airport of Adelaide, relies on a healthy Tourism Industry to sustain adequate air services.

Kangaroo Island Council as Kingscote Airport Owner recognises that commercial air services are a partnership between Airline and Airport Operators.

Prior to September 14th 2001, this community was serviced by Regular Passenger Transport carriers Kendell Airlines and Emu Airways. The subsequent demise of Ansett Airlines resulted in reduced Kendell Airline services that in turn significantly reduced airport-operating revenue.

This highlighted the financial vulnerability of a small community such as ours to maintain airport ground facility infrastructure when exposed to external factors beyond our control.

Kingscote Airport is a Gateway to what is recognised within the Tourism Industry as one of Australia's premier Eco-Tourism destinations. Our Island Community comprised of just over 4000 people is hard pressed to financially maintain the current level of infrastructure let alone accommodate the necessary capital investment required to ensure that adequate airport facilities are provided to sustain an appropriate level of commercial air services both now and in the future. To ensure the Airport facilities and infrastructure remain compliant assistance is required.

Given that Kingscote Airport as a community owned facility is operated on a non-profit basis, (i.e. all revenue generated by the facility is reinvested into the facility) we seek consideration by the Standing Committee to explore avenues whereby communities such as ours could access funding assistance.

THE ADEQUACY OF ALTERNATIVE SEA SERVICES TO OUR ISLAND COMMUNITY:

Kangaroo Island is well served by a "Sealink" operated ferry service. However, unlike the ferry service between Tasmania and Melbourne, the 16 kilometre stretch of water between Penneshaw on Kangaroo Island and Cape Jervis on mainland South Australia has not been declared a **sea road** leaving the cost of travelling on and off the Island by car a rather expensive exercise.

Currently a small (insignificant) freight subsidy applies to the ferry service however, this will cease in less than two years. Thus further isolating our community.

There are no travel concessions (pension etc.) for both ferry and air travellers to either Islanders or visitors which financially disadvantages an already isolated community.

THE ROLE OF ALL THREE LEVELS OF GOVERNMENT IN SUPPORTING AND ASSISTING THE DEVELOPMENT OF REGIONAL AIR SERVICES AND ISLAND TRANSPORT SYSTEMS:

Recognising the diverse air transportation needs of regional and rural communities throughout Australia and the varying infrastructures to support them ranging from self funded profit making enterprises to outback communities totally reliant on Government funding to maintain essential services, it would seem reasonable, if not already in place, to formalise a national strategic plan.

Such a plan could address issues such as:-

- Uniform planning and development control measures to better protect obstacle limitation surfaces.(e.g. we currently rely on the goodwill of our airport neighbours for permission to reduce the height of or remove altogether any trees on their properties that may impact on aircraft performance gradients.)
- Assess economic impact on existing air transport infrastructure of any proposals to construct additional airports, other than emergency facilities, together with consideration for the introduction of appropriate buffer catchment zones.
- Environment- provides a possible forum for community input into flight paths.

- Capital works funding structure that could be accessed by communities on a justifiable needs basis to ensure adequate air services and/or transportation systems keep pace with demand.

Yours faithfully

Robert Rattray
Chief Executive Officer
Kangaroo Island Council