



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Standing Committee on Transport and Regional Services

MEDIA ALERT

Issued: 2 June 2003

Chair: Paul Neville MP

Inquiry into regional aviation in Australia

Dick Smith to give evidence at public hearing Canberra, Wednesday 4 June 2003

The House of Representatives Transport and Regional Services Committee is examining the adequacy of regional aviation services and transport links to Australia's major populated islands.

Next Wednesday, 4 June, the Committee will hold the ninth public hearing of its inquiry.

Appearing will be the former Chair of the Civil Aviation Safety Authority Board and well-known aviator Mr Dick Smith.

Mr Smith served as Chair of the Civil Aviation Safety Authority Board in 1992 and from 1997-99. A strong advocate of aviation reform, he also has considerable personal experience in helicopters, balloons and many other types of aircraft.

In his submission (Submission No 30 on the inquiry website) Mr Smith says, "In recent years many regional airlines have closed down for one simple reason - costs are too high. Safety is one of these costs."

The House of Representatives Transport Committee will question Mr Smith on this and other views.

House Transport Committee Chair, Mr Paul Neville MP, says the inquiry has received more than 170 submissions from interested organisations and individuals.

"The evidence shows that while larger centres are well served by the current aviation arrangements, regional and remote Australia is not. Key issues are costs and returns, service levels, interconnectivity between services, the maintenance of country airports, regulation and coordination," Mr Neville said.

Media and the public are most welcome to attend the public hearing, details of which appear below.

PUBLIC HEARING: Wednesday, 4 June 2003, 9.15am - 10.00am

WHERE: Committee Room 1R4, Parliament House, Canberra

SCHEDULED WITNESS: Mr Dick Smith

For **media comment**, please contact:
Paul Neville, House Transport and Regional Services Committee Chair, on (02) 6277 4940

For **background information**, including the full terms of reference and copies of submissions, please contact the Committee secretariat on (02) 6277 2352 or visit the Inquiry website at www.aph.gov.au/house/committee/trs/aviation/index.htm