

5th August, 2002

SUBMISSION TO:

**The Secretary
Standing Committee on Transport and Regional Services,
Parliament House,
Canberra, ACT, 2600**

THE ADEQUACY OF COMMERCIAL AIR SERVICES IN REGIONAL AND RURAL AUSTRALIA.

This submission is in respect of a commercial air service between Gippsland, Victoria and Sydney, NSW, via Albury, NSW.

For industry representatives, and the community in general, to gain access to air travel it is currently necessary to travel to Tullamarine airport on the other side of Melbourne, involving travel time of approximately 2½ hours. There are no air flights available in or out of the Latrobe Valley.

If there were a commercial air link between Latrobe Valley and Sydney, it would be possible to fly to Sydney in less time than it takes to drive to Tullamarine airport.

A stop at Albury to set down and pick up passengers would add to the viability of such a service. Past experience has shown that to include Albury as a stopping point between Latrobe Valley and Sydney is popular with many people. There are historically strong business and family links between Gippsland, Albury and North-East Victoria.

CONCLUSION

It is quite understood that an air link between Latrobe Valley and Sydney via Albury would have to be commercially viable. In the past there has been such a service available. If economic considerations indicated that a service, which operated on possibly 3 days each week, could be viable and profitable for the airlines, such a service would be extremely valuable for people traveling between Sydney and the Latrobe Valley.

It is suggested that the Committee give consideration to the introduction of a commercial air link between Latrobe Valley and Sydney, via Albury, on three days a week, to enable industry, business and the community to have access to a much more direct air link northwards. The existing availability of commercial flights from Tullamarine only is of great inconvenience to those who need to travel to Albury and Sydney, as it is for those traveling to Gippsland from other parts of the country.

Submitted by:

Grahame & Lynda Code
Donnelly's Creek Road
Aberfeldy, via
Erica, 3825
Victoria.

Telephone: 03 5165 6205

Email: codes@austarnet.com.au