



PRESS RELEASE

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The Regional Aviation Association of Australia (RAAA) today expressed its concern that transport issues faced by regional Australian communities were being ignored in the election campaign.

“Regional Australia is anxiously awaiting the transport policies of the major parties and is concerned that important transport issues, such as the ability of regional and rural Australians to access safe, secure and affordable air transport, are not being taken seriously,” RAAA Chief Executive Officer Paul Tyrrell said today.

“Regional aviation businesses including regional airlines, freight and General Aviation businesses are an essential part of Australia’s national infrastructure and yet we have heard nothing from either the Government or the Opposition about how they will resolve a number of pressing issues affecting the industry.

“Issues such as the pilot and engineer skills shortage and the pressure of increasing security costs are threatening the future viability of air services to Australia’s regional and remote communities. Regional Australia needs to know what the major parties intend to do about these important issues,” Mr. Tyrrell said.

The recent introduction of mandatory security screening processes at a number of regional airports with no security risk analysis and therefore little regard for the appropriateness of the measures or the costs to regional communities, has threatened the viability of a number of routes.

“The new security measures are crippling the industry and we are calling on both major parties to work with the Industry Association to ensure no regional air services are cancelled as a result of the new requirements,” Mr Tyrrell continued.

“Adding to the pressure faced by regional communities has been the cancellation of the \$5 million Enroute Charges Subsidy and the decision by the Government in this year’s Budget to increase the excise on aviation fuel by 25% leading to increased ticket prices.

“Both the Government and Opposition say they are aware of the vital role aviation plays in linking regional and remote communities to our major cities but until we see their transport policies the industry continues to lose hope,” Mr Tyrrell concluded.

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The RAAA was formed in 1980 to protect, represent and promote the combined interests of its regional airline members and regional aviation throughout Australia. Its Members operate in all States and Territories and include airlines, regional airports, engineering and flight training companies. RAAA Airline Members directly employ over 5,000 Australians, carry in excess of 2 million passengers annually and move over 23 million kgs of freight.

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

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