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MEDIA RELEASE

DUBBO CITY COUNCIL REPORTEDLY LIED TO NSW DEPUTY PREMIER

Regional Express (Rex) expresses serious concerns over the reported lies and misinformation provided by Dubbo City Council to Deputy Premier of NSW Andrew Stoner with regards to security screening at Dubbo airport.

The NSW Deputy Premier was reported to have said to ABC News on 13 February 2013:

"Currently passengers catching smaller planes will have to go through the same security screening (as the larger aircraft) too. The issue of the security screening at Dubbo airport and the inflexibility of the federal regulations there, that was raised with me by the Dubbo City Council."

It is completely untrue that federal regulations lack flexibility with regards to security screening for smaller aircraft. Rex has highlighted, in four official submissions, to Dubbo City Council that the Air Transport Safety Regulations (ATSR) do authorise simultaneous unscreened and screened flight departures from regional airports under an approved Transport Security Program with the Office of Transport Security. Federal regulations do not require Rex's passengers to be security screened at regional airports due to the smaller size of its aircraft.

Rex currently operates parallel services to QantasLink at Albury and Wagga Wagga airports where simultaneous unscreened and screened departures have been operating in compliance with the regulations since July 2012. Rex also operates parallel services to QantasLink at Mildura airport where all airline passengers are screened, however Rex's passengers are not charged for security screening because it is not legally required. Similarly Port Lincoln airport will not require Rex's passengers to pay for screening when it takes effect in April this year, for the same reasons.

If the reported statement by the NSW Deputy Premier to ABC news is true then Council's ill-conceived and mischievous actions in misleading the NSW Deputy Premier point to a disingenuous attempt to lay the blame on the Federal government, now that public scrutiny has been brought to bear on the matter. It is no coincidence that Dubbo City Council has hurriedly removed signage from the airport that was misleading the travelling public by stating that the screening of all passengers was required by law. It is not required by law, only by Dubbo City Council for reasons that they have failed to explain.

Rex has repeatedly called on Dubbo City Council to provide justification for not only insisting that Rex's passengers be screened, but for also insisting that Rex's passengers be charged for screening. Council is in the process of remodelling the terminal and could easily incorporate screened and unscreened departures in their plans as other Councils have done. Council so far has not provided a single good reason for its dubious decision to inconvenience Rex's Dubbo passengers and to make them subsidise QantasLink to the tune of \$300,000 per year which equates to \$8-\$9 per departing Rex passenger (arriving passengers do not need screening for obvious reasons).

Rex demands that the Dubbo City Council comes clean on the true reasons for its decision. If Council refuses, Rex will call on both Federal and State authorities to step in and investigate Council's unusual and unexplained decision for any irregularities and abuses and



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to take appropriate action so as to ensure a just and fair outcome for the community. Rex also calls on all members of the community to make known to their elected representatives their condemnation of Council's outrageous decision to make them pay for security screening that is not required by law.

Regional Express (Rex) is Australia's largest independent regional airline operating a fleet of more than 40 Saab 340 aircraft on some 1,300 weekly flights to 35 destinations throughout New South Wales, Victoria, Tasmania, South Australia and Queensland. The Rex Group comprises Regional Express, air freight and charter operator Pel-Air Aviation and Dubbo-based regional airline Air Link, as well as the pilot academy Australian Airline Pilot Academy.

Rex operates up to seven return flights a day between Dubbo and Sydney with a crew base at Dubbo. Additionally it operates a successful charter business, Air Link, headquartered in Dubbo with a maintenance base and support staff. In total the Rex Group has 27 staff based in Dubbo.

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