

Source: ABC News Online, South East NSW, 24 Jan 08.

Council offers cautious support for Rex decision

Cooma-Monaro Shire Council is to hasten slowly with its support of a move by the south-east New South Wales passenger airline, Regional Express (Rex), to extend its licence to the Snowy Mountains for another five years.

Rex withdrew flights between Sydney and Cooma at the end of the ski season, saying it would not resume services until May because of a pilot shortage.

The council is keen to see an all-year-round service, but it is worried that the airline might pull out completely if it asks the State Transport Department to impose more stringent licence conditions.

Mayor Roger Norton says the council is disappointed that the region is left without an airline service for half the year.

"We're concerned about the disadvantage it places on people, particularly health," he said.

"We need our people to have ready access to Sydney with the plane for treatment and also for some of the specialists who come here.

"We are also concerned about our tourism, particularly in the winter time, but we were getting an increase in summer tourism and our business people need to go to Sydney from time to time, down and back in the one day."