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Pilot shortage hits regional airlines

A pilot shortage has hit regional airlines in Western Australia.

The Regional Airlines Association of Australia says Western Australian carriers are employing younger pilots with fewer flying hours to overcome the shortage.

The problem has caused the closure of several routes in the Eastern States for airlines such as Regional Express.

The CEO of the Regional Aviation Association, Terry Wesley-Smith, says the criteria for accepting pilots has changed in recent years.

"It is certainly clear that the airlines are taking people now that they wouldn't have taken some time ago, and one of the criteria that has certainly changed is the age of the people that they are recruiting," he said.