



Regional Capitals Alliance

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Submission to the Aviation Green Paper, Towards 2050

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About the Regional Capitals City Alliance of WA.

The Regional Capitals Alliance of WA (RCAWA) is comprised of ten local government areas across regional Western Australia. The capitals of these ten local governments are home to over 250,000 people, making up half of the population of regional Western Australia. The following Councils are members of the Alliance:

- City of Albany
- Shire of Broome
- City of Bunbury
- City of Busselton
- Shire of Esperance
- City of Greater Geraldton
- City of Kalgoorlie-Boulder
- City of Karratha
- Shire of Northam
- Town of Port Hedland

Our Vision

RCAWA to be the sought-after unified voice, key stakeholder and collaborator on matters that impact on the economic and social vibrancy and sustainability of regional Western Australia.

Our Purpose

A strong and cohesive Alliance which facilitates advocacy and collaborative impact to attract equitable investment and positive outcomes for WA's Regional Capitals.

Response to the Aviation Green Paper

The RCAWA response to the Aviation Green Paper provides a context for regional aviation in Western Australia. This is followed by responses to the questions in Chapter 4 of the Aviation Green Paper, Regional and Remote Aviation Services.

Overview Regional Capital Alliance Airports in Western Australia

Members of the Regional Capitals Alliance of Western Australia (RCAWA) are major owners and operators of airports in regional WA. This is outlined in Table One. As such we have a keen interest in State and Federal aviation policy, with a focus on regional and remote aviation services. Our interest is ensuring that residents, industry and business have access to reliable and affordable air services which support the sustainable growth of Western Australia's regional capital cities, without local government bearing an undue burden of the cost of aviation infrastructure and services.

Table One - RCAWA Aviation Interests

Local Government	Name of airport	Relationship to regional airport	Contributes funds to regional aviation services
City of Albany	Albany (Harry Riggs) Regional Airport	Own and operate	
Shire of Broome	Broome International Airport	Do not own or operate	Yes
City of Bunbury	Bunbury Airport	Own and operate	
City of Busselton	Busselton Margaret River Airport	Own and operate	
Shire of Esperance	Esperance Airport	Own and operate	
City of Greater Geraldton	City of Greater Geraldton Airport	Own and operate	Yes
City of Kalgoorlie-Boulder	Kalgoorlie-Boulder Airport	Own and operate	
City of Karratha	Karratha Airport	Own and operate	Yes
Shire of Northam	Northam Airport	Own and operate under management agreement	Yes
Town of Port Hedland	Port Hedland International Airport	Own but do not operate	Yes

The critical role of aviation services to regional economic and social development

WA's regional capital cities provide a critical function within their region as a central focal point for business, industry and the provision of retail and essential services for local residents and the surrounding towns and communities.

Access to an airport and a reliable and affordable air service is critical to building connected communities. This supports the regional capitals providing a good place to live vis a vis the metropolitan area through the provision of liveable, sustainable places to live and to do business. Given the vast geographic distances between the regions and Perth, they connect the community and businesses to important specialist services, make businesses and provide more efficient same-day business travel. They are vital for freight. They are vital for our tourism sector.

Airport access is critical for health services, such as the Royal Flying Doctor Service, and to support emergency service aircraft and personnel in helping regional communities to respond to and recover from natural disasters.

Regional airports continue to generate significant direct and indirect employment and economic activity. Given the remote location and lack of accommodation in regional Western Australia, regional airports play an irreplaceable role in particular in servicing the mining industry via a Fly in Fly Out (FIFO) workforce.

The City of Kalgoorlie Boulder has identified that 70% of their passengers are FIFO workers highlighting the housing stress in the region, and the important regional connecting role that the airport plays for the mining industry.

Regional airports are essential public transport infrastructure

Western Australia is a vast state. WA covers an area of more than 2.5 million square kilometres, one third of Australia's total landmass. It is a similar size to Western Europe.

The WA government has identified nine regional areas across the State. The Commonwealth has identified eight Regional Development Australia regions, one of which is the metropolitan area. Regional capital city airports are located in the major population areas in regional WA and service the surrounding areas.

Given the vastness of the state, air travel is not a luxury but an essential transport mode for business and residents. For many communities, air travel is similar to a public transport service between the region and Perth.

In metropolitan areas, local governments are generally not responsible for the provision of public transport services. However, in regional WA they have the dual responsibility for the provision of airport infrastructure and to provide support for aviation services. This is regardless of the size of the local government or their capacity to pay.

Regional Airport	Regional location – State and Federal	Distance from Perth by road
Albany (Harry Riggs) Regional Airport	Great Southern	418 km
Broome International Airport	Kimberley	2046 km
Bunbury Airport	South West	173 km
Busselton Margaret River Airport	South West	223 km
Esperance Airport	Goldfields-Esperance	697 km
City of Greater Geraldton Airport	Midwest	419 km
Kalgoorlie-Boulder Airport	Goldfields-Esperance	593 km
Karratha Airport	Pilbara	1527 km
Northam Airport	Wheatbelt	103km
Port Hedland International Airport	Pilbara	1629 km

The aviation green paper needs to strongly recognise the important public transport role that air services play in regional Western Australia.

Regional airports are vital for training

The Bunbury and Northam airports provide an important location for pilot training. This role played by regional airports is often overlooked and needs to be stronger in the aviation green paper. There is an opportunity to build on the strengths of smaller regional airports as training facilities.

Financial challenges facing regional local governments

Commonwealth Financial Assistance Grants (FAGS) are the major source of Federal funding to local government. Over time, the roles and responsibilities of local governments have increased as a result of growing community demand, cost shifting, and the need to address market failure, particularly in rural areas where it is commonly not financially viable for the private sector to provide essential goods and services such as airport infrastructure.

While the roles and responsibilities of local government have grown significantly over time, its revenue base has not¹. Financial Assistance Grants used to be 1 percent of Commonwealth tax revenue (CTR). They have declined by around 43% in relative terms, and now amount to approximately 0.55% of CTR severely impacting on local government finances. The outcome of FAGs not increasing with the costs of goods and services is that many local governments have insufficient revenue-raising capacity to maintain or upgrade their infrastructure or provide the level of services that their communities both need and desire.

Despite being critical social and economic infrastructure, Councils are required to identify, plan and source funding for airport infrastructure, often without the staff, resources and in house expertise. Also, funding is often through competitive grant rounds where funding requests outstrip the available funds.

Airport fees and charges are one way to recoup infrastructure costs, but it is a balancing act to understand the impact of these fees on passengers and airlines. Councils subsidise airports because of the economic and social value of having air services to their town.

The Local Government Act 1995 (the LG Act) allows for a local government to impose and recover a fee or charge for any goods or service it provides, including admission to any facility owned, controlled or managed by the local government (Section 6.16 of the LG Act).

Fees and charges for regional airports are required to take into consideration the cost to provide the service, importance of the service to the community, and the price at which an alternate service may be provided (Section 6.17 of the LG Act). For many small to medium sized regional airports, the ability to pass on costs through airport fees and charges is curtailed by the risk of losing RPT air services if costs are too high.

The challenges of isolation, harsh weather conditions, constrained local government salary packages, and the high cost of living in remote areas are limitations to attracting and retaining qualified airport staff at small to medium sized regional RPT airports. The role of airport fees and charges need to be considered in light of this and the other higher costs of airport operations in regional WA such as staffing and construction costs.

¹ <https://alga.com.au/policy-centre/financial-sustainability/background-on-local-government-funding/>

Question One - Where should the Australian Government focus its engagement in regional and remote aviation, including helping achieve Closing the Gap outcomes, noting established state, territory and local government responsibilities and programs?

Members of the RCAWA have identified the following key challenges that they face in relation to aviation infrastructure and services which place a significant financial strain onto local governments:

- Ageing infrastructure
- Meeting net zero requirements
- Increasing security costs
- Skill shortages
- High staffing costs
- High regulatory cost burden
- Identifying and embedding new technologies
- Lack of capacity to implement master plans that support expansion due to increased demand.

For example, both the City of Albany and Shire of Esperance have advised that their airstrips are approaching their end-of-life, requiring a major capital investment (approx. \$30m for both Albany and Esperance, or \$60m total) to ensure service delivery can continue.

Geraldton is the largest city north of Perth and is an important international port that relies heavily on the airport for transport of personnel, tourists and emergency services. Unfortunately, the lack of funding for capital upgrades has severely limited any potential for growth and development of the airport. The city has insufficient resources in the foreseeable future for the city to undertake significant but essential upgrades to the facilities and infrastructure at the airport.

The City of Busselton is working on increasing regular passenger transport Routes to the East Coast. They have direct flights to Melbourne, and they are in negotiations for securing a Sydney route. This will take the pressure off the Perth Airport and support the growth of tourism in the South West Region. To drive this economic opportunity a new terminal and support infrastructure is a priority.

The Shire of Northam has developed a master plan for the expansion of capacity for hangar space and associated infrastructure such as parking, toilets and equipment for natural disaster response. The master plan has been developed in response to increased demand for air services to support local businesses, tourism, natural disaster response and pilot training. To date, the Shire has been unsuccessful in obtaining funding under the Regional Airports Development Scheme and as a result has limited capacity to support the increased demand for air services operating out of Northam.

The City of Kalgoorlie Boulder has identified that it has limited resources to undertake costly infrastructure upgrades, including essential compliance works for security and regulatory requirements.

Whilst State and Federal government grants are welcome, these grants are competitive with no guarantee that the time and effort in applying for funding will result in funding. Requests for investment outstrips the available funds. A key component of the airport is the landside development such as car parks and access into the airport terminal. These components are not funded under grants. There is a need for a more systematic method of ongoing asset maintenance and improvement that does not place additional burden on local governments.

Another key issue is increasing security costs. Given the frequency, speciality and cost of security services, these services are often not based in regional towns. This adds to the cost of delivering security services. Where regional and remote airports are marginally over or narrowly within security thresholds, assisted and government subsidised screening is critical to minimise barriers to growth.

Regional skills shortages add to the cost of airport operations with competition for a workforce. These skills shortages makes it difficult for Councils to undertake airport planning, development and management while also maintaining the specialist knowledge required to comply with stringent industry regulation. Skills shortages also make it difficult for Councils to be abreast of identifying and embedding new technologies into airport operations due to limited qualified and experienced staff.

An analysis of future skills and workforce needs would help position local governments to better respond to emerging needs. This analysis should look at the current and future workforce needs of remote and regional airports.

In regional and remote WA, the lack of housing availability for essential airport workers remains a persistent barrier. Local governments have to provide housing or significant rental subsidies to attract and retain staff. This is not an issue that airports in the metropolitan area need to address.

Another identified issue is the disproportionately high regulatory cost burden for regional airport operators. The regulatory costs of airport and air services in regional and remote Australia are significant. Work undertaken by Regional Capitals Australia notes that Civil Aviation Safety Authority (CASA)'s regulatory imposts are higher for regional and remote airports, comprising 12 per cent of total expenditure, compared to about 4 per cent for major airports and major regional airports.² As an example, the City of Greater Geraldton has essential compliance works for security and regulatory requirements including security that contribute significantly to the general operating costs of the airport as well as capital upgrades required to meet safety and regulatory standards.

Appendix One contains case studies of the Broome International, City of Greater Geraldton and Kalgoorlie Boulder airports which further illustrate the identified issues. These case studies were prepared for the Regional Capitals Australia Regional Airports Policy³ and highlight the challenges and the opportunities that face these regional airports.

² Regional Capitals Australia Regional Airport Policy www.regionalcapitalsaustralia.org.

³ Op Cit.

Based on our knowledge and experience, RCAWA recommends that the Australian Government should focus on new and increased investment in:

- Regional and remote airport infrastructure:
 - Recurrent funding for the Regional Airport Fund to ensure that regional and remote airports can be upgraded and maintained, and to guarantee the sustainability of the regional aviation network
 - Upgrade the guidelines for the Regional Airport Fund to allow for landside developments to be considered
 - To reach net zero targets
- Support for development of master plans and implementation of master plans
- Review the efficacy of Western Australia's Strategic Airport Asset and Financial Management Framework (as recommended by the Productivity Commission) to assess the efficacy of the Framework and new investment to enable regional airports to develop Airport Asset Management and Financial Plans.
- Costs of regional airports to comply with aviation security requirements
- Natural disaster resilience infrastructure - to ensure airport infrastructure is fit for purpose to support an emergency management disaster recovery and response effort
- Driving a whole of government agenda - view airport infrastructure and investment as an enabler for strategic government policies
- Encourage regional connectivity through subsidised flight caps between regional capitals in addition to the existing caps connecting regions to the capital city
- Alignment of Federal and State regional investment policy contexts and frameworks to reduce the administrative and compliance burden on seeking and applying for airport investment and grants.

Question 2 Traditionally, subsidies for intra-state aviation services have been carried by state and territory governments. Does this remain the best structure?

The WA State Government's intrastate Regular Public Transport (RPT) air routes are critical to improve the liveability of regional towns, support tourism development and industry. It is critical for regional communities that in thin markets there are subsidies for intra state aviation services given the role that air services perform in public transport, health and emergency management and economic and social development. Appendix Two is a map of the regulated routes in Western Australia showing this. The continuation of regulated passenger transport routes is important to make air services possible in, out and across the regions.

The WA Government's Regional Zone Airfare Cap, a joint initiative between the State Government and six airlines: Airnorth, Nexus, Qantas, Regional Express (Rex), Skippers Aviation and Virgin⁴, has been a game changer in providing more affordable airfares for residents of regional WA by reducing their maximum resident fare prices to the Zone Cap fare of \$199 or \$299.

A linked and sustainable network of regional capitals is critical for regional residents and businesses. Given the long distances between towns, a hub and spoke model that has Perth at the Centre does not make sense for regional residents in the farthest corners of WA who want to fly between regional towns. For this to occur in north-west Australia, local governments have had to make a financial contribution.

The WA State government has a supported Inter Regional Flight Network (IRFN). This network was extended in July 2023 with local governments contributing funds, in partnership with the State Government to support an increased intra-regional service.

Case study Nexus Airlines

Nexus Airlines is a new regional carrier which began flying between Broome, Kununurra and Darwin in July 2023. Nexus connects regional communities including, Geraldton, Perth, Karratha, Port Hedland, Broome, Kununurra and Darwin. Nexus is backed by Aviair, a Kimberley based company with over 38 years of aviation experience. Nexus Airlines has an exclusive agreement with the WA Government to operate the Inter-Regional Flight Network until June 2027. This agreement outlines the requirements to operate the route, including providing appropriate service levels and fares.

The financial contribution of local government has contributed to the development of this expanded regional service. Operating through the WA State Government supported Inter Regional Flight Network, the extension of the network to Geraldton was achieved with a \$4.05 million injection from the state government, and a similar combined contribution from local governments City of Greater Geraldton, City of Karratha, Town of Port Hedland, and the Shire of Broome.

⁴ <https://www.transport.wa.gov.au/aviation/regional-airfare-zone-cap.asp>.

In return, Nexus will put a cap on ticket prices for residents of these local government areas. This investment has allowed Nexus Airlines to invest in a higher capacity 76-seat aircraft, which in turn will reduce airfares and increase overall passenger experience on the aircraft⁵. There is an ongoing role for government to ensure that initiatives like this remain sustainable.

⁵ <https://www.kdc.wa.gov.au/nexus-airlines-takes-flight-in-the-kimberley-region>.

Question 3 - What opportunities do emerging aviation technologies present for regional and remote Australia?

Given the large geographic area, sparse and dispersed populations across regional WA the use of unmanned aerial vehicles (UAV), more commonly known as drones, may provide a new measure to support community resilience and recovery. Research into the use of drones and emergency technology may provide information that could assist recovery of impacted communities during bushfires, floods and cyclones in regional WA.

Drones are defined as a powered, aerial vehicle that does not carry a human operator, uses aerodynamic forces to provide vehicle lift, can fly autonomously or be piloted remotely, can be expendable or recoverable, and can carry a lethal or nonlethal payload. A drone has its flight controlled either autonomously by on-board computers or by the remote control of a pilot on the ground or in another vehicle⁶.

As drones can cover large areas of land quickly, and data collected through aerial imaging can provide critical information, they are increasingly being used in natural disaster situations. The Commonwealth Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Communications and the Arts has developed a number of case studies on how drones are being used for disaster relief. They showcase the work of Disaster Relief Australia (DRA), a volunteer organisation comprising military veterans and first responders who are certified by the Civil Aviation Safety Authority to conduct aerial mapping and damage assessments using drones to provide rapid response to disasters⁷.

⁶ <https://rmas.fad.harvard.edu/unmanned-aircraft-systems-drones>

⁷ <https://www.drones.gov.au/drones-australia/how-are-drones-being-used-australia/disaster-relief>

Question 4 - What are specific issues experienced by the regional and remote aviation sector in the context of decarbonisation? What elements should the Transport and Infrastructure Net Zero Roadmap and Action Plan include to recognise the specific circumstances of the regional and remote aviation sector?

Decarbonisation needs to consider the economics and broader benefits to regional aviation in reducing the impact of global warming and natural disasters.

Many regional local governments do not have the knowledge and skills to support them to transition to net zero. A dedicated regionally-focussed team within government, and new funding, is needed to provide information and guidance to support net zero transition in the context of emerging technologies. The right policy and regulatory settings will need to be in place at a State and Federal level to support local government airport owners deliver on these targets.

Local government airport owners will need new investment in regional and remote airport infrastructure to support an aviation sector that supports emissions reduction targets while growing jobs and innovation. Specific measures will include new investment for developing net zero reduction plans for the airports, and new investment to implement these plans. This could include investment into renewable technologies. Also, there will need to be investment to support regional airports to work together to plan for the supply chains and the storage of sustainable aviation fuel (SAF). To support this, regional airports will need new investment to upgrade infrastructure in the context of a decarbonisation agenda. This includes support for new fuel, fuel storage facilities and transport. Also, staff will need to become skilled in the use of new technologies.

Question 5 - What opportunities are there to develop domestic bioenergy feedstock production and collection in Australia's regions, and what policy settings from Government would support this?

A focus on the opportunities that regional WA can provide for the development of bioenergy feedstock production to support the development of a diversified portfolio of feedstocks for domestic Sustainable Aviation Fuel products. Policy settings that would support this include building and consolidating on the opportunities across the regions to develop domestic bioenergy feedstock production and collection. This would include:

- Targeted support for research and trial sites in the regions
- Diversification of crops
- Utilisation of transport infrastructure and agricultural supply chain routes
- Using this opportunity to close the gap in Aboriginal employment and business development

Question 6 - What are the challenges faced by regional and remote aviation and airports posed by our changing climate?

The challenge is an increased reliance on air services and airports as part of the natural disaster emergency planning, response and recovery process, and the need for new investment to ensure that they are fit for purpose.

An increase in natural disasters such as tropical lows and cyclones leading to an increase in floods. In our region this means that roads will be closed for longer periods. Airport infrastructure needs to be fit for purpose to support emergency management response and recovery. This includes adequate airport infrastructure for emergency management planes. Local governments do not have the resources to do this work without support from State and Federal Government.

The paper needs to more strongly recognise the critical role of regional and remote airports in emergency management and natural disaster planning, preparation, response and recovery. Airports are critical transport infrastructure and often provide the only reliable transport mode during natural disasters such as cyclones, floods and fires when roads are cut off, not just for remote Aboriginal communities but for all regional towns.

The ability of airports to cater for larger planes than those that normally utilise a given airport for emergency response also needs to be factored into infrastructure and ongoing operational funding streams. As an example a regional airport is unlikely to be able to fund the required upgrades and ongoing maintenance that would enable a fully laden 737 Fireliner to operate, especially given these types of services (and others that might be required during differing natural disasters) often support a much larger region than just the local government operating the regional airport.

Question 7 How do local governments and aerodrome operators consider climate resilience when managing their aviation assets?

A key challenge for WA regional airport owners in considering climate resilience is that the Disaster Relief Funding Arrangements WA (DRFWA) does not fund betterment. If infrastructure is damaged DRFWA will not fund assets to be built back better. There is a need to integrate this more broadly into a zero-emissions reduction framework.

Appendix One – Airport Case Studies



The City of Greater Geraldton

The City of Greater Geraldton is a local government area in the Mid-West region of Western Australia, 419 kilometres north of the state capital, Perth on the Indian Ocean. Greater Geraldton covers an area of 9,908 square kilometres also incorporating the towns of Mullewa, Walkaway and Greenough settlement.

Airport overview

The Geraldton Airport is owned and operated by the City of Greater Geraldton and is situated approximately 10km east of Geraldton on the Geraldton-Mt Magnet Road.

In addition to daily flight services to Perth, Geraldton Airport also caters for Inter-Regional Flights to the Northwest, General Aviation Charter flights, Royal Flying Doctor Services, RAAF deployments, and fly in fly out mining services to Regional Western Australia.

It's a busy regional airport in Western Australia with approximately 110,000 passenger movements per year.

The airport provides taxiways and parking aprons for aircrafts of most sizes (up to a B789-8/A359) and has three runways. As the only airport in the City, it provides all the air freight logistics for major carriers and general aviation operations.

Challenges

Limited resources for infrastructure upgrades, including essential compliance works for security and regulatory requirements. Establishing and/or maintaining affordable and sustainable existing and new routes.

Financial Implications

The airport income is around \$5.7M and operational expenses \$4.7M. Our current capital commitments are around \$1M per annum that is largely made up of debt serving costs related to recent investments into large infrastructure upgrades and renewals. Revenue is generated from Aircraft landing fees, passenger, screening fees and international alternate diversion agreements.

Problem statement

The airport serves as a hub for multiple airlines and various service providers. Master planning and continuous improvement are critical to facilitate coordination between these stakeholders, ensuring that future design of facilities and services meet the need of the community, airlines, tenants, and other users. Aging infrastructure, carbon emission policies, workforce development and financial limitations, all are factors in maintaining a sustainable and operational efficient airport.

Opportunities

- Increasing air travel and passenger numbers with the Oakajee Strategic Industrial Area planned to create a new heavy industrial area and multi-user deep-water port for strategic and downstream processing industries to service Western Australia's Midwest region.
- New master plan is to meet the future needs of the City, airlines, emergency service providers and airport tenants. This will optimise airport development in the short, medium and long-term.
- Further development of Geraldton Airport as an international alternate diversion port.

Airport Uses

Private Aircraft Storage	41%
Passenger Terminals	24%
Freight	12%
Health Services	9%
Emergency Management	9%
Pilot Training	6%
Defence	6%

Flight Statistics

Number of carriers	4
Number of flights/week	34
Number of passengers/week	2,121

Passengers

Fly In Fly Out	22%
General passenger	78%



About the city

The City of Kalgoorlie-Boulder is in the Goldfield-Esperance region of Western Australia. It is the largest urban centre in the region with a population of over 30,000 people. It's primary source of income is mining and with a vast mineral base of gold, nickel, lithium and iron ore, the community continues to drive the economy.

The City has a relaxed lifestyle and offers all the facilities you would expect in any major regional centre, including an internationally acclaimed mining and engineering program through Curtin University; ranked second in the world and first in Australia.

Kalgoorlie-Boulder is located 595km north-east from Perth and has daily rail, air, road, and freight services.

Airport overview

Given the remote location and lack of accommodation in the city, the Kalgoorlie-Boulder Airport plays a strategic and irreplaceable role servicing mining (FIFO) and an important role in the emergency services sectors, connecting the community and businesses to important specialist services.

Kalgoorlie-Boulder Airport is owned and operated by Kalgoorlie-Boulder City Council. It is one of the busiest regional airports in Western Australia with approximately 380,000 passenger movements per year.

The airport provides taxiways and parking aprons for aircrafts of most sizes (up to a B737-8/A320) and two runways. As the only airport in the City, it provides all the air freight logistics for major carriers and general aviation operations.

Financial implications

- The airport demonstrates long-term positive cashflow with income more than \$17M and operational expenses of \$3M; and
- This is attributed to the consistently high volume of passengers and nearly \$15M in revenue from Aircraft landing fees, passenger, and screening fees.

Problem statement

The airport has outgrown its original design and needs to invest in a new master plan to manage the growing number of passengers and air traffic demands.

Consideration of the aging infrastructure, meeting new net zero carbon policies by 2050, identifying and embedding new technologies in remote areas where there is limited qualified and experienced staff are all cause for concern.

Overarching measures aligned to the master plan need to be implemented without impact to the existing aviation activities and regulatory standards of the airport.

Airport Uses

	Passenger	55%
	Emergency Management	2%
	Health Services	15%
	Pilot Training	5%
	Freight	12%
	Defence	5%
	Other	6%

Flight Statistics

	Number of carriers	3
	Number of flights/week	50
	Number of passengers/week	8,100

Passengers

	Tourism	5%
	Fly In Fly Out	70%
	General passenger	12%
	Other	13%

Challenges

- Limited resources to undertake costly infrastructure upgrades, including essential compliance works for security and regulatory requirements; and
- Skills shortages and housing availability for essential airport workers remains a persistent barrier.

Opportunities

- Kalgoorlie-Boulder Airport's strategic location means that it is uniquely positioned to become an aviation hub, accommodating emerging aviation technologies, and providing testing grounds and research facilities for leading aviation companies;
- Look for alternative revenue streams; paid parking, fluctuating pricing models (penalties, peak periods, efficiencies), airside permits, environment charges, and commercial hubs; and
- Commence scheduled airline passenger services to other major population centres to increase productivity and drive economic growth for the region.

Case study: Broome Regional Airport

About the city

Broome is the largest city in Western Australia's remote Kimberley region, and a major hub for the tourism, LNG, aquaculture, fishing and pearling industries. Broome has a population of nearly 15,000 people however during tourist season it swells to more than 45,000. Broome is a remote location being 2,200km from Perth and 1,900km from Darwin.

The Kimberley Region's is a key contributor to our nation's wealth with an estimated gross regional product is estimated at \$4 billion the city of Broome's contribution to this is almost 40% or \$1.6 billion.

Airport overview

Broome International Airport is privately run and is the major hub for north western Australia, supporting both tourism and industry across the region, including the offshore LNG sector.

Broome Airport is the second largest Royal Flying Doctor Service base in Western Australia, used for patient transport, CareFlight and clinic services for the vast Kimberley and Pilbara region.

Surveillance Australia perform Coastwatch services out of the airport, with Broome the only northwestern base. Australian Borderforce is also present in Broome to attend the airport in the event of emergency arrivals.

Airservices Australia is based at the airport to provide aviation rescue firefighting services, in addition to a dedicated search and rescue helicopter principally to support the offshore oil and gas industry but also assisting with medivac and search and rescue operations.

Financial implications

- Regulation costs (including security) contribute significantly to the general operating costs of the airport as well as capital upgrades required to meet safety and regulatory standards;
- There are insufficient resources in the foreseeable future to undertake significant but essential upgrades to the facilities and infrastructure at the airport.

Problem statement

Broome International Airport plays an indispensable role in Australia's security and is a key gateway for tourism, offshore industry and essential emergency services due to its strategic location on the north western coastline. It is also an enabler of border protection activity and due to the city's remote location is an important facility to connect the community and business sector to specialist services. Airport operations and potential expansion is hamstrung by the lack of resources to undertake essential capital upgrades and manage increasing regulatory and operating costs.





Airport Uses

	Passenger	75%
	Health Services	10%
	Emergency Management	10%
	Defence	4%
	Freight	1%

Flight Statistics

	Number of carriers	13
	Number of flights/week	1,500
	Number of passengers/week	10,000

Passengers

	Tourism	60%
	Fly In Fly Out	20%
	General passenger	10%
	Other	10%

Challenges

- Limited resources to undertake costly infrastructure upgrades, including essential compliance works for security and regulatory requirements; and
- Skills shortages and housing availability for essential airport workers remains a persistent barrier.

Opportunities

- Expand airfreight services to export agriculture and aquaculture products from the region; and
- Drive domestic and international tourism to the region with additional direct flights to major metro capitals and international destinations.

Appendix Two – Regulated Routes Western Australia

