

Published name

Linda Nadge

Short comment

Air travel from regions to cities is essential.

I wish to note one example how so, concerning health.

The reality for regional communities (ie low populations, isolated, not close to cities) is air transport is essential to bring in medical specialists. Regional communities require specialist consultations. During the last few years consultations in region have become increasingly difficult to secure due to lack of air services, last minute flight cancellations. Specialist doctors in Adelaide for example, cannot rely upon flights to get to Broken Hill.

This is an issue faced by many regions. Please also note that local governments and regional health services are ill-equipped to deal with these issues (ie airports and airlines, contracting of specialists) because they face the same challenges and issues as airlines.

If there is one outcome from this review process then I hope it is considerate of the needs of regional health now. Longer air routes, Sydney to Broken Hill, and routes offering specific utility, Adelaide to Broken Hill, pose different challenges. The cost of long routes is one thing, however, when essential access to medical services is put at risk, it is clear the system is breaking.

At some point governments need to step in and ensure minimal services for regional communities.

Or, change the system. Stop clumping everything into cities and meaningfully begin to decentralise the nation.

This is not going to happen.

Therefore, it will be easier to have governments step in and subsidise some of the routes. Certainty of flights will help with pilot employment; doctors who do want to provide services in region will be able to schedule reliably. Net zero targets will be challenging in the regions however, big strides in the more populous routes can offset some of this for a while longer as transitions occur.

Put yourself in our shoes and "live" in a part of regional Australia to understand the existing urgency of the failing air transport system in order to come up with solutions for the now as well as the future.