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MEDIA RELEASE

WHEN ELEPHANTS MAKE LOVE, IT IS THE GRASS THAT SUFFERS

Following the release of Sydney Airport's plans to separate out the usage of the 3 terminals between the Qantas group and the Virgin group, Rex says that it has not received sufficient details on the plan to be able to provide an informed opinion on the impact on regional aviation.

Rex Executive Chairman Lim Kim Hai said, "On the face of it, the main casualty will be the regional travellers seeking to connect on to domestic services and vice versa. Currently there is a seamless connection to all the domestic carriers. Under the proposed plan some of the connections will entail transiting to another terminal which will add on considerable time and inconvenience especially for the transfer of luggage. Obviously this will have an impact on the competitive positions of all the local carriers."

"From our past experience in dealing with Sydney Airport, it had always been the regional carriers and communities that had been short changed in any of their major initiatives. As the old Swahili saying goes, when elephants make love, it is the grass that gets trampled on."

"Nevertheless I am encouraged by the consultative and inclusive approach of the new leadership at Sydney Airport under Kerrie Mather. I am heartened by her understanding of the importance of regional aviation in the whole matrix and of her commitment that "no one will be worse off" under the new scheme."

"I will hold Sydney Airport to this commitment and Rex will work constructively with Sydney Airport to ensure an outcome that will be a step forward for the regional communities."

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 36 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.

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