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New Route License opens up Port Augusta

By Amy Green

<http://www.transcontinental.com.au/story/4816763/flights-reinstated-for-port/>

Regional Express airlines have been awarded a route licence to operate passenger air services in and out of Port Augusta.

Three weekly round trip services on Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays will run from early September and will be subject to regulatory approval.

The service is expected to open up the region to more domestic and international visitors while improving access for people travelling to Port Augusta for business.

Port Augusta City Council Chief Executive Officer John Banks has welcomed the announcement and the opportunities it opens up for the city.

“I think Port Augusta welcomes good news and I think this is a sign that things are turning to a positive for the city, I think the city is making considerable steps at this time,” he said.

Mr Banks is also hopeful that the three day a week service will grow overtime as more people make use of the passenger air service.

“I’m very mindful of a couple of national conferences that we have occurring here this year — the national Rangelands Conference in September and the SEGRA Conference in October — so I am 100 per cent confident that they will be fully booked in those times, and I think other people will take advantage of the quality service provided by Rex,” Mr Banks said.

Transport and Infrastructure Minister Stephen Mulligan said the airline service will act as a gateway to the outback.

“These services to Port Augusta will make some of our major tourist destinations more accessible for domestic and international tourists seeking to explore some of the more remote parts of our State,” he said. “These services will ... also be critical for people who need to travel to Adelaide for medical treatments.”

Additionally, Rex is offering connections to Coober Pedy, linking the opal mining town and Port Augusta for the very first time.

Flights will be available from Monday, September 11 for the first time since [Sharp Airlines ceased operation](#) in May of this year, however the official schedule is yet to be announced.

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