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## MEDIA RELEASE

### REX WELCOMES COALITION'S POLICY FOR AVIATION

Regional Express (Rex) welcomes the Plan for Aviation (reproduced below) released by the Leader of the Nationals and Shadow Minister for Infrastructure and Transport Warren Truss on 30 August 2013, and urges Labor to similarly state its position before the election.

Lim Kim Hai, Rex's Executive Chairman said, "The Coalition's Policy addresses critical areas that have been devastating to aviation, especially in the regional aviation sector, and responds to some issues raised in the aviation policy papers presented by the Regional Aviation Association of Australia, The Australian Aviation Associations' Forum, and Rex over the last two years."

"Aviation has been decimated by bad policies and neglect for the best part of the last decade and today it is on its knees with Virgin Australia, Tiger and the Qantas Group all bleeding heavily and in a dangerous tailspin. If Mr Truss gets into government I trust that he will keep his election promises and faithfully carry out the agenda set out in his Aviation Policy. Regional aviation has suffered too much in recent times from broken promises and neglect and deserves better going forward."

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 35 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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**MEDIA RELEASE  
30 August 2013**

**Warren Truss  
Leader of The Nationals  
Shadow Minister for Infrastructure and Transport**

## **The Coalition's plan for Aviation**

The Coalition will strengthen our aviation industry to ensure that it is safe, reliable, competitive and proud to be Australian.

The Coalition's Policy for Aviation will improve consultation, reform the structure of key safety agencies and provide support to struggling sectors of the industry.

The Coalition will invest an additional \$3.5 million to support regional aviation by introducing a new and better targeted En Route Rebate Scheme for regional commercial airline carriers to support low volume and new routes to small and remote communities.

The Coalition will establish a high level external review of aviation safety and regulation in Australia to provide a root and branch assessment of current practices and provide a long-term framework for the future of aviation safety regulation in Australia.

Additionally, the Coalition will:

- focus on the better utilisation of Australian airspace, including tasking Airservices Australia with fast-tracking technological and navigational improvements at airports and pursuing methods to decrease aircraft noise for communities;
- recognise the importance of Australian airports to the economy, from our major gateway airports and small regional airports, to those that support flight training and general aviation;
- revitalise the General Aviation Action Agenda and establish a regular dialogue with the general aviation sector to address industry issues;
- continue to promote aviation liberalisation while recognising the need to protect our national interest;
- enhance aviation skills, training and development by undertaking a study into skills shortages in the broader aviation industry; and
- ensure that aviation security measures are risk based and implemented in a practical and common sense way.

Over the past six years Labor's approach to aviation policy has seen cost after cost added to the bottom lines of airlines and airports, pilots and passengers.

Labor has introduced the carbon tax, increased red tape, raised the Passenger Movement Charge and abolished the En Route Rebate Scheme for small regional airlines.

The Coalition recognises that our aviation sector is a vital part of the economy. It employs in excess of 100,000 people and contributes an estimated \$17.3 billion to the Australian economy.

The Coalition's Policy for Aviation will invest \$6 million to boost the productivity, safety and competitiveness of our aviation sector.