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MEDIA RELEASE

REX RESPONDS TO DESPERATE PLEAS FROM REGIONAL COMMUNITIES

Regional Express (Rex) today announces that it stands ready to service the regional cities that have been abandoned by Virgin Australia.

Rex's General Manager for Network Strategy, Warrick Lodge, said, "Rex has been inundated by desperate pleas from both individuals and community leaders to step into the shoes of Virgin Australia following their announcement to exit eight regional routes".

"These communities are concerned about their future as they face the prospect of being left with Qantas as the sole monopoly provider, especially at a time when their regional economies have been devastated by the COVID-19 pandemic, bushfires and drought."

"Many of these communities have heard about the innovative Community Fare scheme pioneered by Rex that has delivered significant socio-economic benefits to more than 40 regional communities throughout all States of Australia and these abandoned communities would like to receive this benefit too. Rex's Community Fares deliver substantially lower ticket prices for those communities that agree to participate. This results in a boost to local tourism, businesses and leisure travel."

"Our heart is in the country and Rex will strive to provide these regional communities with a service even at break-even levels as part of our contribution to nation building at this time of severe hardship."

"Rex is without peer in the world of regional aviation. When Virgin Australia withdrew from the monopoly routes of Perth-Esperance and Perth-Albany in 2016 due to heavy losses on these routes, the Western Australian Government turned to Rex to pick up the pieces. Prior to COVID, Rex introduced the Community Fare scheme and more flight frequency to these routes resulting in record passenger numbers at a time when regional passenger numbers in WA were in decline. Today, these same routes have bounced back the fastest in the whole of WA."

"Rex will apply this same operational discipline to all the abandoned routes and will help nurse them back to full recovery as the pandemic subsides. While many of the affected regional cities have already reached out to Rex, we invite all affected cities to contact us."

Regional Express (Rex) is Australia's largest independent regional airline operating a fleet of 60 Saab 340 aircraft (pre-COVID) on some 1,500 weekly flights to 59 destinations throughout all states in Australia. In addition to the regional airline **Rex**, the **Rex Group** comprises wholly owned subsidiaries **Pel-Air Aviation** (air freight, aeromedical and charter operator) and the two pilot academies **Australian Airline Pilot Academy** in Wagga Wagga and Ballarat.

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