

Source: Parkes Champion Post, 6 Feb 09

REX numbers defy trend

6/02/2009 8:52:00 AM

The number of passengers utilising the Parkes air service operated by REX Airlines continues to be strong.

In fact, the numbers are belying an industry trend where figures are dropping.

Parkes Shire Council's Director of Corporate Services, Mr Les Finn presented a report to the last meeting of council which indicated that the airline carried 34,215 passengers during 2008.

'This was an increase of around three per cent on the 2007 figure,' he added.

'The increase in passenger numbers is to be applauded.

'REX management said the numbers belie industry trends and were unique with the company network.

'The growth was underpinned by strong performances during the first half of the year,' Mr Finn said.

He pointed out the figures do not reflect lost revenue and reduced passenger numbers from the cancellation of some services during the year.

'There is no reason to suggest the 35,000 calendar year benchmark should not be realised for 2009.'

Mr Finn said council had an agreement with REX which provided for \$6 per head tax up to 36,060 passengers, and \$3 per head once that benchmark has been realised.

Council's Economic Development Manager, Michael Greenwood said it appeared the 'worst days are behind us in terms of cancellation of flights.'

Mayor Ken Keith added that the unreliability of the service at various points during the year did affect numbers.

'And the more unreliable it became, the more people stopped using the service, so it did affect things later in the year.

'The figures are good news for Parkes and show how strong the community has been.'