

Rex gives its reservists wings to fly

► RIVERINA

By Andrew Pearson

REGIONAL Express (Rex) is flying high after becoming the first regional airline to sign an agreement that helps its employees balance their military commitments.

A memorandum of understanding, which sets out a detailed framework of how both organisations can effectively manage a joint workforce, was signed on Thursday night by Head of Cadet, Reserve and Employer Support Division of the Australian Defence Force (ADF), Major General Paul Brereton and Rex general manager of network and strategy, Warrick Lodge.

It involves the defence force taking into account the operational requirements of Rex and the impact on its employees who are away doing defence service.

The agreement also ensures Rex acknowledges its obligations as a civilian employer of reservists to release them when required for defence service and that both parties agree to co-operate in managing the career of their joint employees.

Mr Lodge said Rex had a strong affiliation with the ADF and the agreement would further strengthen that relationship.

"It's not just about signing a document, it's something we take seriously in terms of the value we place on defence reservists," Mr Lodge said.



SIGNED SUPPORT: Head of Cadet, Reserve and Employer Support Division of the ADF, Major General Paul Brereton (left) and Rex general manager of network and strategy, Warrick Lodge sign a memorandum of understanding regarding reservists on Thursday night. Picture: Les Smith

The airline also carries a large number of defence personnel, given the defence bases in Wagga and Albury, and its workforce contains a number of defence reservists.

"We've always been a supportive employer and this agreement strengthens that even further," Mr Lodge said.

"We can see the value of

(reservists) within our workforce."

Major General Brereton said the most important aspect of the agreement was the support it would provide reservists.

"It gives an enormous amount of comfort to Rex's employees who are reservists that they've got two employers who understand the require-

ments of the other and work to support them," he said.

Major General Brereton said although this type of arrangement had previously been established with emergency services and the health sector, Rex was just the third employer in the aviation sector and first regional airline to be involved.