

Source: Port Lincoln Times, 13 July 2006.

Weekend flights dry up

REGIONAL Express has added an extra return flight to Port Lincoln tomorrow after all flights were booked out days in advance.

Flights to Adelaide on Friday were booked out until Rex added the extra flight and yesterday there was only one flight with seats available for this Saturday.

Passengers flying from Adelaide to Port Lincoln could only book morning flights on Friday and Saturday.

Local travel agent Geoff Nottle said he could not believe it on Monday when he went to book people on a Friday flight and there were only three seats available for the whole day.

Mr Nottle said events such as the football in Adelaide or the Wangary bushfire coronial inquest when it returns to Port Lincoln, put extra pressure on limited seats.

He said Rex was doing the best it could to cover the increased demand.

"They can't just flick their fingers and get another two aircraft here."

Rex managing director Geoff Breust said the

extra Friday flight would leave Adelaide at 3.35pm and return from Port Lincoln at 4.40pm.

Rex is putting on eight extra weekend flights from July 22 and adding another six weekday flights from August 14.

Member for Flinders Liz Penfold said people on Eyre Peninsula often had to get to Adelaide urgently for medical appointments and it could be stressful and inconvenient if seats were not available.

Mr Nottle believes the best solution would be for another airline to join Rex in Port Lincoln to cater for the demand.

Mr Breust said if another operator entered the Port Lincoln market Rex would not be concerned.

Between now and the end of July Mr Breust said Rex had 9216 seats between Port Lincoln and Adelaide - 4725 had already been sold and 4491 were vacant.

Mr Breust encouraged people who could not get the flight they wanted, to book another flight and go on a waiting list for their preferred flight.