

# MEDIA ADVISORY



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## RAAA submission for Aviation Green Paper

The Regional Aviation Association of Australia (RAAA) is pleased to provide their submission today for the Aviation Green Paper, answering vital government questions on aviation priorities for consideration for the Aviation White Paper. Here are some key points:

- **Redirect some of the revenue from the international Passenger Movement Charge back to the aviation industry to provide a safe and secure aviation system for all Australians.**
- **Support for skills today, with a focus on engineering apprentices.**
- **Fair Work changes to the pilot award and pilot bond agreements.**
- **Financial assistance for transition to net zero is essential.**
- **Clear policy guidance on Sustainable Aviation Fuel and emerging technology.**

Regional aviation is a vital piece of the aviation eco-system which provides the critical connectivity for regional and remote communities for business, health and pleasure.

RAAA CEO Mr Steven Campbell stated that regional aviation is already under immense pressure for skills and general costs of doing business, with the push to net zero our industry is extremely concerned about their ability to survive.

“The cost to introduce new and modern fleets of aircraft is exorbitant at the best of times, let alone with new fuels or propulsion systems, Mr Campbell said.

“Our members just can’t see how the economics stack up in making this transition and without government assistance, the move to net zero will only be achieved by having aircraft grounded.

“The government takes in over a Billion dollars from the international Passenger Movement Charge (PMC), this money goes straight to consolidated revenue so in effect is really a TAX and should be called that!

“Part of the PMC revenue should be redirected to support a safe and secure aviation industry which is of benefit to all Australians, Mr Campbell stated.

RAAA Chairman Mr Malcolm Sharp highlighted the need to focus on workforce challenges of today before we worry about the challenges of tomorrow.

“Licenced Aircraft Maintenance Engineers (LAMEs) are in critical shortage and this has been highlighted to government for the last couple of years, more work needs to be done to attract more engineers, particularly apprentices, but also streamlining their training pathways and funding streams, Mr Sharp said.

“Pilot shortages have been well documented but what is not well known is the financial impact to smaller regional airlines and other aviation companies.

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“The movement of pilots to larger airlines is not new to us, however the pace of movement is now causing a massive financial burden to our companies with some telling me they will start reducing their fleets as they cannot keep up the costs of training. We would like to call on the major airlines i.e. the Qantas Group and Virgin to enter into a memorandum of understanding with the RAAA to ensure they only employ pilots who have first met their Return of Service (ROS) obligations with their current employers. The continued pillaging of the Regional Aviation Industry by the major airlines could have a negative safety impact on the whole of the aviation industry.

“It can cost upwards of \$100,000 to train a new pilot and for that pilot to be able to take up a new job within a short period of time leaves that cost with the airline. The Fair Work Commission agreed a few years back to allow for pilot bonds so that we could recoup this, however at the 11<sup>th</sup> hour they halved the amount we could claim and left a lot of uncertainty on what could be included and what couldn't.

“The 50% reduction needs to go, and we need clearer guidelines on what is in and what is not, there is also a need to update the rostering side of the award as it still refers to old language, which once again the pilot union is exploiting, Mr Sharp said.

Mr Campbell also stated that, “General Aviation (GA) has been under pressure for a long time, it is a vital part of the aviation industry especially for providing future pilots and engineers.”

“Access at airports is critical for GA to survive, they need lease stability at reasonable costs. We also need to see CASA move on red tape reduction through their GA Work Plan and take away unnecessary burdens.

“As with regional aviation, GA will need support to make the transition to net zero, with the cost of a new electric aircraft the same as 4 or 5 older ones, current GA businesses cannot grasp how they will achieve this, Mr Campbell said.

Regional aviation has critical challenges today which will be further exacerbated with the push to net zero. Without government financial assistance, the future is not rosy for our regional and remote communities, which will suffer the most from loss of connectivity. The RAAA looks forward to working with government to meet these challenges and to provide for realistic transition plans to net zero for our vital regional aviation industry.

The RAAA submission can be found [here](#).

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The RAAA represents aviation across Australia. It has over 100 members and its Air Operator Certificate (AOC) holding members directly employ over 2,500 Australians, many in regional areas. On an annual basis, the RAAA's AOC members jointly turn over more than \$1.5 billion, carry well in excess of 2 million passengers and move over 23 million kilograms of freight. Our Regional Airport members also provide and manage critical infrastructure across Australian.