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## **RAAA report – Aircraft Maintenance Engineer Shortage – Crisis and Opportunities**

Today the Regional Aviation Association of Australia (RAAA) has released its report on addressing the critical shortage of aircraft maintenance engineers (LAME/AMEs) in Australia. The report makes 7 areas of recommendations for government and the Civil Aviation Safety Authority (CASA).

RAAA CEO Steven Campbell says this report focuses on short- and long-term solutions to address our critical shortage with recommendations that are very achievable. Our hope is that our industry does not have to wait for an aviation white paper process, which will take years, before the government focuses on solutions such as the ones we are proposing.

“We value the white paper process to provide long term policy strategy by government, but we can’t wait to fix today’s problems, so we have decided to give the solutions on engineering skills shortages to government now.

“All aviation sectors are affected by this shortage on a daily basis; we just need to look at increasing flight delays and flight cancellations. Our regional areas are particularly affected, remote communities and businesses could lose access to basic air services which are vital for connectivity, medical and mail services.

“The author of the report, Ms Sheridan Austin has years of experience in this field and has consulted with other industry experts to not only understand how we got here, but to also put forward tangible solutions that will seek to address the shortages going forward,” Mr Campbell said.

Ms Sheridan Austin said it was a great opportunity for her to collate the knowledge she has with the experienced minds of the industry to understand the root issues we have and to then provide measures to alleviate them.

“During my career in the aircraft engineering sector, I have seen a rapid decline in the number of aircraft engineers becoming qualified each year. Since 2016, we have seen an average of 135 aircraft engineer licences being issued, as opposed to an average of 297 in each of the 10 years prior. This does not even keep up with the attrition rate, Ms Austin said.

“There is a myriad of reasons behind this decline but what is apparent is that we need to ‘grow our own’ engineers for long term stability, but we need skilled migration of experienced engineers as soon as possible with immediate recognition of those skills by our regulator CASA.

# MEDIA RELEASE



“Education is key for the longevity of the sector as well. The aviation industry must work with government to promote aircraft engineering as an exciting and rewarding career.

“We also need to align the training of apprentices so that they are educated and funded under a national framework, rather than under the current state and territory models. To help develop the training capacity required to build an innovation-oriented aircraft maintenance workforce, and to ensure that maintenance training makes a significant contribution to Australia’s education exports, a National Aerospace/Aviation College (NAAC) should be established.

“Now that we have identified the issues, we must immediately act to secure the future of aviation, said Ms Austin.

A copy of the report can be found at

[https://raaa.com.au/wp-content/uploads/RAAA\\_LAME\\_policy\\_submission\\_WEB.pdf](https://raaa.com.au/wp-content/uploads/RAAA_LAME_policy_submission_WEB.pdf)

Our Registered Training Organisation members such as Aviation Australia are already working closely with us to find solutions on streamlined training pathways. The RAAA looks forward to working with all levels of government to move these recommendations forward to ensure that we see positive outcomes as soon as possible.

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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.