

Mr Neville Howell,
Chief Operating Officer,
Regional Express Holdings Ltd,
PO Box 807,
MASCOT. NSW. 1460.

Correspondence to:
The Secretary,
70 Bournda Park Way,
WALLAGOOT. NSW. 2550.

By Email: hr@rex.com.au

Dear Mr Howell,

Re: Sydney/Merimbula Air Service

The Bega Valley Shire Residents & Ratepayers Association (BVSRRRA) is a voluntary, community-based, not-for-profit organisation committed to supporting best practice standards of performance on the part of local government in New South Wales, but in particular in the Bega Valley Shire.

Among the many issues that our Association is concerned with is the ongoing success of commercial passenger air services that Rex currently provides to & from Merimbula Airport.

As you may be aware, Bega Valley Shire Council is currently pursuing a significant upgrade of Merimbula Airport, utilising funding from the state & federal governments & local ratepayers.

The upgrade involves, amongst other things, a proposed extension of the current runway by 200 metres to the north. In its funding submission to the NSW Government, Council stated that the purpose of the runway extension was to ensure compliance with take-off weight requirements for aircraft such as the ATR72 & Q400.

The BVSRRRA has been told that the strategic imperative driving Council's determination to extend the Merimbula Airport runway & open it to services using larger alternate aircraft is borne from its concern that the current SAAB 340 fleet of aircraft being used by Rex to service the routes is ageing & that there is also a danger that if & when the Sydney/Merimbula air route is deregulated, Rex might decide to abandon the service.

The BVSRRRA cannot know whether the above suggestions may have merit, so it thought it would write to Rex & seek its comments regarding the future of the SAAB 340 aircraft servicing the route, as well as reassurances regarding Rex's intentions in servicing the route.

We realise that Rex may be commercially constrained from offering a comprehensive response, but we would appreciate receiving any response that

might help clarify the situation for us, in particular amid a climate where there are currently a number of unhelpful, unsourced rumours & claims on the subject circulating in our community.

We thank you in anticipation for your assistance with our inquiry.

John Richardson
Secretary/Treasurer
Bega Valley Shire Residents & Ratepayers Association

Tel: 0264945669
Email: secretary@begavalleyshireratepayers.asn.au
Website: <http://www.begavalleyshireratepayers.asn.au>