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## MEDIA RELEASE

### REX CLARIFIES IMPACT OF AIRPORT SECURITY MEASURES ON REGIONAL AVIATION IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Regional Express (Rex) wishes to reassure the residents of South Australia (SA) on the future of regional air services in SA following alarmist comments by SA Senator Rex Patrick.

Senator Patrick released a statement on 14 January claiming that new airport security measures proposed by the Federal Government would “put the handbrake on regional growth” because of a “decision to mandate the screening of regular public transport flights carrying 40 passengers or more, down from the current 20,000kg mean take-off weight threshold (approximately 50 seats).”

Senator Patrick has also unashamedly lobbied on behalf of Qantas by making representations that the new threshold will adversely impact Qantas’ larger regional aircraft (50 and 74 seats) and thus erode its competitive position vis-à-vis Rex’s 34-seat aircraft.

Rex’s Chairman, Lim Kim Hai said, “The statements made by Senator Patrick are without merit and as Australia’s pre-eminent regional airline with over 47 years of experience (including that of its component airline Kendell Airlines) it behoves us to set the record straight so that the local communities are not unduly alarmed.”

“First of all, there has not been any public announcement by the Department of Home Affairs on any revised threshold for security screening and neither has the Department published the list of regional airports that may be affected.”

“Even if Senator Patrick’s privileged information turned out to be correct, the new threshold stated would not affect Rex’s operations and so will not impact Rex’s current and future regional air services in SA. Rex’s aircraft type has demonstrated its ability to service effectively a SA city, with annual passenger numbers of 146,000, as a sole carrier and so Rex does not foresee any difficulties in serving any other regional city in SA (all of which have fewer than 77,000 passengers a year) to achieve its full potential for at least the next 20 years.”

“The competitive issue raised by Senator Patrick is simply a red herring. Qantas has, in its fleet, aircraft that are similar in size to Rex’s aircraft and below the purported threshold and so could deploy these aircraft (or purchase additional ones) if it does not wish to be lumbered with the purported additional screening charges. If any airline chooses to use larger aircraft then it must believe the economic case justifies such deployment. Saying that competition will be stifled is simply nonsense.”

“Rex has been a faithful and constant partner of SA regional cities for the past 35 years and I assure the SA regional communities that there will be absolutely no impediment to their growth potential even if the purported new security measures were to be introduced.”

**Regional Express (Rex)** is Australia’s largest independent regional airline operating a fleet of more than 50 Saab 340 aircraft on some 1,500 weekly flights to 60 destinations throughout all states in Australia. In addition to the regional airline Regional Express, the **Rex Group** comprises wholly owned subsidiaries **Pel-Air Aviation** (air freight and charter operator) and the **Australian Airline Pilot Academy**.

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