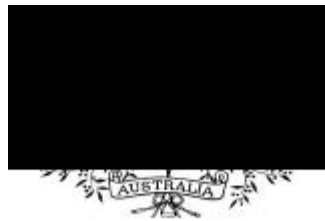




PARLIAMENT OF AUSTRALIA
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES



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MEDIA RELEASE

30th July 2002

Windsor supports Armstrong over regional air inquiry duplication claim and Air Transport Council delays

Independent Member for New England, Tony Windsor has supported National Party State Member for Lachlan, the Hon Ian Armstrong in his statement that the Federal Government's Inquiry into Regional Aviation Services is duplicating one conducted by a joint NSW/Federal Government Working Group last year.

"The Inquiry will be duplicating some of the work of the NSW Air Transport Summit held in early 2001 which then established a working group to review costs impacting on small regional airlines.

The working group comprised representatives of the Federal Government as well as representatives from both the NSW Government and Opposition and myself as the then State Member for Tamworth, along with the most important representatives, those of the aviation industry and industries dependent on the aviation industry as well as representatives of communities impacted on by the decline of regional air services.

NSW Labor Minister for Regional Development Harry Woods and Ian Armstrong co-convened the Summit and did an excellent job in trying to take the politics out of this vital issue to country people," Mr Windsor said.

Mr Windsor believes that the Federal Inquiry is being undertaken to delay having to take action to help the ailing industry.

"The Federal Government Inquiry could quite easily be covered by the Report of the NSW Air Transport Summit Working Group.

The Federal Inquiry will only serve to slow the implementation of the recommendations of the Report and cause delay to rectifying the needs of regional communities suffering through the lack of essential regular affordable air services.

It has taken far too long to get the Working Group Report to the Air Transport Council which was to have reviewed it back in October last year but has been postponed three times to now meeting in early August," Mr Windsor said.

As a Member of the NSW Air Transport Summit Working Group, Mr Windsor has already sent a copy of the report, which he fully supported, to the Federal Committee Inquiry.

Further information from Tony Windsor - Mob 0427 66 8868 or 02 6761 3080