



PARLIAMENT OF AUSTRALIA  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

**TONY WINDSOR MP**  
**INDEPENDENT**  
**FEDERAL MEMBER FOR NEW ENGLAND**

Shop 5  
259 Peel Street  
TAMWORTH NSW 2340

**All Mail:** PO Box 963  
TAMWORTH NSW 2340

**Ph:** (02) 6761 3080  
**Toll Free:** 1300 301 839  
**Fax:** (02) 6761 3380  
**e-mail:** [Tony.Windsor.MP@aph.gov.au](mailto:Tony.Windsor.MP@aph.gov.au)  
**Web Page:** [www.tonywindsor.com.au](http://www.tonywindsor.com.au)

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

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### **Windsor to seek guarantee on Sydney Airport access for regional airlines following PM's comments!**

Independent Member for New England, Tony Windsor is going to seek a guarantee from the Prime Minister that regional airlines will have continued access to Kingsford Smith Airport – Sydney following the Prime Minister's comments that there is no need for a second airport for Sydney.

Mr Windsor believes that the Prime Minister's comments in the media that 'There's a very strong probability, in my opinion, that Sydney will never need a second airport. .... All the advice coming to the Government is that the current airport can handle the traffic out to about 2020' should ring warning bells in the ears of country air travellers.

"It was only 2 years ago that we had to mobilise country people to ensure that country air travellers had continuing access to Kingsford Smith Airport.

Then we had a downturn in air travel due to September 11 and the Ansett collapse which took the pressure off access to KSA.

Now that KSA has been sold off to the highest bidder and whilst the threat of terrorism is still a factor, the Prime Minister's comments that 'technological changes and larger aircraft would probably mean the city could probably survive with Sydney alone' worries me about NSW regional airlines still being able to access KSA at affordable prices," Mr Windsor said.

Mr Windsor is flagging the process of allocation of 'slots' to regional airlines that could be lost to the 'larger' interstate and international aircraft that the Prime Minister is describing.

"I recall correspondence to me from Mr Ernst J Krolke, the then CEO of Airport Co-ordination Australia Pty Ltd, when this issue was last in the headlines, stating that the practice of 'ring fencing' regional airlines slots would cease and go back into the pool for permanent allocation to other airlines if they had not been used for two years. That time is now up.

The guarantees given then by the Government, I'm sure will be revisited with the now private owners of the KSA and if country air travellers don't keep a close eye on any new negotiations of the operating rules, then we could miss out on the access to the centre of Sydney and our ability to do business in a day down and back saving time and money in the process.

This is one of the disadvantages of privatising Sydney Airport and one that we must bear in mind when we debate the Government's proposal to fully privatise Telstra – another essential service to country people," Mr Windsor said.

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