

# Far North West Joint Organisation

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Tuesday 7 May 2019

## MEDIA RELEASE – AIR SERVICES TENDER UPDATE

Plans to return air services to the Far North West region are progressing with negotiations set to commence between the Far North West Joint Organisation and two NSW airlines.

Chairperson of the Far North West Joint Organisation and Mayor of Cobar Shire Council, Lilliane Brady OAM, today announced that the tender for the provision of air services to Bourke, Cobar, Walgett and/or Lightning Ridge has moved to the negotiation stage following a meeting of the Board of the Joint Organisation last Friday, 3 May.

Cr Brady said the tender process drew out two strong air service providers and the Far North West Joint Organisation looks forward to identifying a final provider.

“In previously announcing the formation of the Far North West Joint Organisation, the Deputy Premier announced a share of \$20 million as a subsidy for the provision of air services to the Far North West region,” Cr Brady said.

“The Joint Organisation has successfully worked in collaboration with officers from the NSW Department of Premier and Cabinet to bring the project to this point.

“The full funding for this project has been paid by Government into the Joint Organisations’ Bank Account and earning interest as I speak.”

The decision to proceed with negotiations follows a unanimous decision from the Mayors of Bourke, Cobar and Walgett as voting representatives of the Joint Organisation Board that neither supplier’s response to the tender was clearly more acceptable than the other.

Cr Brady noted that the importance of the provision of air services to the western area was a priority project for the Joint Organisation.

“Bourke and Walgett Shires have not had access to a regular passenger air service since 2008,” Cr Brady said.

“In the case of Cobar, it is 16 months since an air service was available to the Shire and the impact on our communities of not having access to regular passenger air services, already isolated by distance, is significant.”

“We are working on a solution and hope to have it soon.”

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