

PETER DRAPER

INDEPENDENT MEMBER FOR TAMWORTH

MEDIA RELEASE

TRANSPORT PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY TO VISIT GUNNEDAH

14th April 2004

Today in the NSW Parliament, Member for Tamworth Peter Draper met with Joe Tripodi, Parliamentary Secretary for the Minister for Transport Michael Costa. Following the meeting, Mr Draper has extended an invitation for Mr Tripodi to visit Gunnedah and inspect the Gunnedah airport.

"As a result of the commencement of the new air service to Gunnedah operated by Big Sky Express, Gunnedah Shire Council has asked me to approach the Government for assistance to upgrade infrastructure at the airport," Mr Draper said.

"Following the collapse of Yanda Airlines several years ago, Gunnedah has been without a commercial airline service, but with Big Sky now operating daily flights, Council would like assistance from the State Government to upgrade certain facilities," Mr Draper went on to say.

"After discussing this issue with Mr Tripodi, he has agreed to travel to Gunnedah to meet with Council representatives and inspect the airport personally," Mr Draper continued.

"The operations of a bigger aircraft with good frequency of service puts pressure on country airports, and it is pleasing to see Gunnedah Shire Council being proactive in initiating dialogue with the Government."

Also during the meeting Mr Draper raised the issue of country bus operators with Mr Tripodi.

"It is essential that as a result of the Sinclair Report into bus operations in NSW, country operators are not disadvantaged," Mr Draper said.

"I have been approached by several local operators who are concerned that their business's may be disadvantaged, as the report seems to discount the vast distances country bus operators travel, and in many cases the poor road infrastructure they have to travel on," Mr Draper said.

"I intend to seek a meeting for the Parliamentary Secretary with local bus operators during Mr Tripodi's visit, so he can hear first hand how the proposed changes will impact on local operators," Mr Draper continued.

"It is important that Government hears the concerns of country bus operators when making decisions that will affect the long-term viability of their businesses," Mr Draper concluded.

End Release.

www.peterdraper.com.au

Media Contacts: Peter Draper mob. 0417 290 376 Electorate Office ph. 6766 1422
Parliament House ph. 9230 2341