



**Labor doesn't govern for all
23 June 2003**

Member for Flinders Liz Penfold slammed the Labor State Government's selectiveness in its support for airline services to Coober Pedy.

Mrs Penfold said the Government's discriminatory assistance for air services to the opal centre was a slap in the face to regional and rural South Australia.

"Obviously Premier Mike Rann and his Ministers – in this case Transport Minister Michael Wright – do not believe in having a policy that applies equally across the state," she said.

In an agreement struck with Coober Pedy Council, the Council is waiving its \$9 per head tax, with Regional Express (Rex) matching that amount in fare reductions.

The Department of Transport and Urban Planning is contributing \$20,000 to help Council maintain the airstrip and associated infrastructure for the next 12 months.

Transport Minister Wright said the grant would help to cover the shortfall that council would normally receive from air passenger charges, and that a return air fare between Adelaide and Coober Pedy would drop as much as \$60.

Mrs Penfold said requests for support to keep air services operating to Cleve and Wudinna were refused.

"The reasons given for assisting Coober Pedy are the same ones that apply to all Eyre Peninsula services however they were not considered of sufficient significance then," she said.

The reasons mentioned were the drop in air patronage due to a number of factors including terrorist activity affecting air travel all over the world, and community security.

Mrs Penfold said she was advised last year that the Queensland state government subsidises its regional air services.

Mr Wright also announced that the South Australian Tourism Commission will contribute \$20,000 towards a joint promotion campaign aimed at attracting higher numbers of passengers, particularly tourists, on the air services.

But Mrs Penfold said the same arguments applied to Wudinna.

"Wudinna has the spectacular Gawler Ranges and the Sceale Bay sea lion colony, both of which attract international tourists.

"Plus there is the social justice issue for young and old accessing health and education facilities in Adelaide.

“Perhaps what has made the difference is that Coober Pedy is in a Labor electorate. Does that mean its constituents are somehow more important to the Labor government? If so, the government is condemned for its partisanship when it is supposedly governing for the whole of South Australia, not selected sections of it,” Mrs Penfold said.

LIZ PENFOLD GIVES EVIDENCE AT AVIATION HEARING

14 APRIL 2003

Member for Flinders Liz Penfold has called for State and Federal Government support for air services to regional areas when she recently gave evidence to the Federal enquiry into Commercial Regional Aviation Services.

Although Eyre Peninsula is already putting \$1 billion into Australia’s economy she believes this could be doubled in 10 years.

“But if we are to fulfil this enormous potential for tourism, farming, fishing, aquaculture and mining business the region must be properly serviced by air” she said.

“People will not come to regional areas or stay in them if they and their families cannot gain employment and adequately access health and education services and fulfil their sporting and cultural potential” she said.

Mrs Penfold said she was very disappointed that hers was the only direct written submission that she was aware of and therefore she was the only person called to give evidence to the enquiry from the electorate. She said other people did give evidence as part of larger submissions.

“I concentrated on the social injustice of the current situation where only major towns on Eyre Peninsula now have an air service. I was expecting that the details of individual cases would be covered by submissions from the people and councils concerned” she said.

“The enquiry will accept submissions for the next 3 months and I urge individuals and councils to put their cases. Terms of reference for the enquiry are available from my office” she said.

“Taxes from our region have helped to put infrastructure and services in other areas and now we need their help to do the same in ours” she said.

Mrs Penfold called for a Federal regional aviation policy to delineate the responsibilities of the Local, State and Federal governments and to cover all aspects of air transport, to give leadership and guidance and to help provide equity for the people of Australia who live outside the capitals.

REGIONAL AVIATION SERVICES HEARING

9 April 2003

Member for Flinders Liz Penfold will appear at the Inquiry Into Commercial Regional Aviation Services in Australia hearing at Glenelg next Monday 14 April.

The hearing is part of the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Transport and Regional Services inquiry into regional aviation services and alternative transport links to major populated islands.

Mrs Penfold has been invited to appear at the hearing after putting in a submission to the inquiry.

“The aviation industry is undergoing a period of change. It is possible that Port Lincoln and Ceduna will be the only two airports in the electorate where commercial aircraft are able to land.

“It is important that an inquiry of this nature understands the problems and difficulties that our region faces,” she said.