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High Speed Rail more than viable

Nearly 12 million passengers will be using a high speed rail (HSR) service between Canberra Airport and Sydney CBD by 2036 according to forecasts released today by Canberra Airport.

“Anyone who alleges that there is no case for HSR is simply not looking at the evidence,” Canberra Airport Managing Director, Stephen Byron said.

“The case is really very simple. Sydney needs a second airport because Kingsford-Smith Airport (KSA) will be at capacity by 2027. But demand will continue to grow – and where do those passengers go?

“Passenger demand for HSR between Canberra and Sydney will be boosted significantly from KSA overflow and support the viability of the HSR as a solution to Sydney’s aviation capacity needs, provided the HSR delivers passengers directly to Canberra Airport.”

Mr Byron said the best outcome was for a second Sydney airport to be built at Badgery’s Creek but that would never happen.

“Forty years of history tells us that. Both the Federal and NSW Governments have repeatedly ruled out building an airport at Badgery’s Creek and the Federal Government has not moved to shore up its preferred site at Wilton. The land there is not yet owned by the Commonwealth and local opposition to Wilton is mounting in a grassroots movement reminiscent of Badgery’s Creek. People don’t want to live next to airports.

“In the meantime, it is only 15 years until KSA is at capacity according to the *Joint Study on Aviation Capacity for the Sydney Region* and if nothing is done the revenue foregone for NSW and Australia will be billions of dollars.”

The Canberra Airport study concludes that in 2030, the number of passengers overflowing from a capacity constrained KSA and using Canberra Airport and the HSR will be 2.5 million, and this will boost the total number of HSR passengers by 37% to 9.3 million. In 2035, the number of passengers overflowing from KSA and using Canberra Airport and the HSR will be 4.5 million, boosting the total number of HSR passengers by 62% to 11.8 million. By 2040, the number of passengers overflowing from KSA and using Canberra Airport and the HSR will be 10.5 million – a boost of 133% to 18.4 million.

“With HSR from Canberra Airport, passengers will reach the Sydney CBD in 57 minutes – faster than from Wilton, Badgery’s Creek, or even KSA given the ground transport forecasts.

“And although they show Canberra Airport’s relative advantage, the raw travel times fail to capture the biggest transformation of the HSR option: the certainty of travel time. The HSR will be on time, every time, as it is elsewhere in the world with average delays measured in seconds not minutes.

“This sort of clockwork operational performance represents a stark contrast to both the airline delays forecast into KSA post-2027 and the near permanent traffic jam likely to occur between KSA and the Sydney CBD.

“Airlines will choose Canberra as their port because with HSR they can deliver their passengers into the Sydney CBD in under an hour and with superior certainty,” Mr Byron said.

The report *Canberra Airport to Sydney CBD High Speed Rail: The Impact of a Second Sydney Airport Not Being Built - Passenger Forecasts* is attached with Appendices.

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