

## MEDIA RELEASE

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### **57 minutes Canberra to Sydney...and less than a decade away**

Canberra Airport will today unveil plans for a \$140 million high speed rail (HSR) facility to be constructed adjacent to the new airport terminal.

“We have long been advocates of a high speed rail link between Canberra and Sydney, and that reality is getting closer with strong support from NSW Premier Barry O’Farrell and the ongoing stalemate over where to build Sydney’s second airport,” Canberra Airport Managing Director, Stephen Byron said.

“Today Canberra Airport is proud to present plans for a superb, multi-modal, transport facility to underline the high speed rail’s integration into Canberra Airport, in accordance with Premier O’Farrell’s vision.

“This terminal will provide a seamless interface for passengers arriving in Canberra by air ready for their 57 minute train trip to Sydney.

“The facility will cost \$140 million (in 2012 dollars) and take two years to build.

“Canberra Airport is today committing to funding the HSR terminal project and will be in a position to consider a start date once the timetable for the HSR is confirmed.”

Mr Byron said Stage Two of the Commonwealth Government’s HSR study was due to be completed by the end of this year, including finalising recommendations for the route.

“We know that Sydney Airport and its surrounding transport infrastructure are already facing capacity issues, and that the *Joint Study into Aviation Capacity for the Sydney Region* advised that passenger demand in the region (including Canberra and Newcastle) will increase from the 2010 level of 40 million to 58 million in 2020 and 88 million by 2035.

“We also know from Stage One of the HSR study that patronage demand for regional fast train services to and from Canberra will be 11 million in 2036, that the cost per trip between Canberra and Sydney will be around \$40 for non-business and \$95 for business. The Infrastructure Partners Australia (IPA) report tells us the trip from Canberra to Sydney will take 57 minutes.

“The high speed rail will be a significant, nation-building project with substantial benefits to the Australian economy, from jobs during construction and for the local steel industry, to international tourism, as well as relieving the congestion endured by Sydneysiders as the population grows to six million in 2036.

“The HSR from Canberra to Sydney should be delivered by 2020, with the terminal at Canberra Airport constructed over the last two years of that period.”

Mr Byron said with the completion of this project, Canberra Airport would become a multi-modal hub for high speed rail, domestic and international airlines, regional and local buses and onsite car parking.

“Passengers will be able to transfer from arriving aircraft to their train in under five minutes without baggage and be in Sydney in less than an hour,” Mr Byron said.

*PLEASE NOTE: High resolution images of the terminal design are available upon request.*

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## Sydney's Aviation Demand Facts

The need for additional aviation capacity for Sydney, and its critical importance, has been well-established.

The paralysis over choosing a site for a second Sydney airport and proceeding with its development continues, as it has done for the past 40 years.

Actual passenger numbers at Kingsford-Smith Airport (KSA) have almost tripled from 12 million in 1990-91 to almost 36 million in 2010-11.

The *Joint Study* found that aviation passenger demand within the Sydney Region (which includes Canberra and Newcastle) will increase from the 2010 level of 40 million to 58 million in 2020, and 88 million by 2035.

Canberra Airport had 3.2 million passengers in 2010-11 – the *Joint Study* identifies this as 8% of the Sydney Region demand; KSA had 89% and Newcastle Airport 3%.

The *Joint Study* advised that a second airport would be required by 2030 and would cost up to \$11 billion, including connecting transport infrastructure.

Sydney Airports Corporation has a contractual first right of refusal over any specific proposal for another airport within 100kms of the current airport.

The *Joint Study* identified numerous issues with KSA approaching capacity including:

- By 2020, there will be no slots available outside 6am – 12noon and between 4-7pm, and none at all by 2027.
- By 2013, the current 8 trains per hour will be full with no seats available for airport passengers during the morning peak, and even with an expansion to 12 trains per hour, the trains will be at capacity by 2018.
- By 2015, capacity at the existing road intersections at the entries to the airport will be exceeded, with traffic queues of 3km (international) and 4kms (domestic); and, by 2023, there will be a “near constant traffic jam on all key roads around the airport”.

The *Joint Study* stated that to deliver a second airport for Sydney by the necessary 2030 deadline, the Commonwealth needed to have commenced investment in the identified site within 5 years. The *Joint Study* emphasised the need to act quickly, warning that “further delay would rule out the remaining sites” (Badgery's Creek and Wilton).

The *Joint Study* identified Badgery's Creek as the preferred site. Qantas, Virgin Australia and BARA have all supported Badgery's Creek. The Commonwealth Minister, Anthony Albanese, the Commonwealth Government and the Federal Opposition as well as the NSW Government and NSW Opposition have all ruled out Badgery's Creek, reaffirming their long-standing policy of opposition to an airport on the site.

Aware of the concerns over Badgery's Creek, the *Joint Study* nominated Wilton as the alternative. In so doing, it acknowledged that Wilton was more remote, and might not be viable. The aviation industry does not support the Wilton site and it has been ruled out by the Federal Opposition and the NSW Government. Federal and State local members surrounding Wilton have categorically ruled out an airport on the site, warning that it would proceed “over their dead bodies”. There are major rezoning proposals currently before the NSW Government which would see at least 25,000 homes built around Wilton.

To ensure that Wilton could proceed, and without delay, the *Joint Study* recommended a full environmental impact study be undertaken. This has not been commissioned, but an internal department feasibility review has been announced. The *Joint Study* also recommended that the Commonwealth and NSW Governments jointly prepare a supporting infrastructure plan for Wilton. To date no such plan has been forthcoming. The *Joint Study* recommended that a property acquisition process be put in place and that comprehensive community consultation commence; neither of these tasks has commenced. The Commonwealth does not own a site at Wilton and there is no proposal for a specific site.

The *Joint Study* recommended that an interim airport costing up to \$11 billion be developed at the Department of Defence facility at Richmond, because of its doubts over the viability of Wilton by the 2030 deadline. Such a proposal would be subject to first right of refusal by Sydney Airports Corporation.

The *Joint Study* recommended that the Commonwealth and NSW Governments establish a joint body to oversee the implementation of the recommendations. This joint body has not been established.

In summary, after 40 years of debate we are no closer to identifying a site for a second airport for Sydney, much less actually building the project. Of the two remaining sites, one has been ruled out categorically and the other is unlikely to proceed. As Premier O'Farrell said when ruling out any site within the Sydney basin: "Find me an area that's not going to end up causing enormous grief to people that currently live around it..." (2GB, 5 April 2011)

### **Canberra-Sydney High Speed Rail Solution Facts**

The Commonwealth Government's *High Speed Rail Study (Stage 1)* found that that patronage demand for regional services to and from Canberra would be 11 million in 2036, without considering any role for Canberra Airport in meeting Sydney's aviation demand needs.

The *Joint Study* identified Canberra Airport as the only curfew-free airport within reach of Sydney and stated that it provided the potential for night-time services which cannot be accommodated in Sydney, in particular international low-cost carrier services and overnight freight services.

The construction of a High Speed Rail from Sydney to Canberra Airport would expand the ability of Canberra Airport to use its 747-capable, curfew-free infrastructure to service part of Sydney's growing aviation demand.

The cost to construct a High Speed Rail from Sydney to Canberra is forecast at \$10.9 billion, but it would eliminate the need to spend \$11 billion on a new airport for Sydney.

The journey time on a high speed train between Canberra Airport and Sydney would be less than an hour: the IPA report indicated a time of 57 minutes to the Sydney CBD. The *Joint Study* looked at sites to meet the region's aviation demand within one and a half hours of Sydney.

The *HSR Study (Stage 1)* indicated that for a HSR journey from Canberra to Sydney, fares would be \$40 for non-business and \$95 for business travellers.

### **Canberra Airport High Speed Rail Terminal Facts**

The HSR Terminal at Canberra Airport is fully integrated into the aviation terminal making for a seamless transition between the modes. The train platform is elevated and to be built at the same level as the airline check-in desks and the aerobridges for direct boarding of aircraft.

- Architect: Guida Moseley Brown
- Distance from train platform to airport terminal entry: 215 metres
- Distance from train platform to the nearest aerobridge: 315 metres
- Platform length: 250 metres
- Cost to build: \$140 million (in 2012 dollars)
- Time to build: 2 years
- Target Completion Date: 2020

### **Canberra-Sydney Travel Facts**

- Current Canberra–Sydney air passengers annually: 1,035,000
- Air travel market share: about 20%
- Number of Sydney-Canberra flights per day: 48 (32 Qantas and 16 Virgin Australia)

The Canberra–Sydney route accounts for 6.2% of all current flights into KSA. Many of these are Dash-8 aircraft and their replacement by a HSR would allow those slots to be used by international 747 aircraft.

The *Joint Study* found there were 2.5 million domestic passenger connections through KSA. These hubbing passengers represent about 10% of the domestic demand, all of which could be serviced through Canberra Airport in the future.

NSW Premier Barry O’Farrell has recognised the role Canberra Airport can play given the difficulty in delivering a second airport for Sydney:

“Well I don’t believe, and I said this during the campaign, there’ll ever be another airport built in the Sydney Basin. What part of Sydney are you going to impose an airport on? I’ve always believed that the way to address this was through fast train links. I’ve always been a big supporter of the fast train link to Canberra, and if you wanted to do a Snowy Mountains style scheme, you’d go Melbourne, Canberra, Sydney, Brisbane. You’d change the population growth of a couple of States and a Territory. But importantly you’d solve the airport issue.” (2GB, 5 April 2011)

“No other part of Sydney’s going to be contaminated by the sort of noise that is connected with an airport. Let’s accept that fact, and start to invest in linking the Canberra Airport and this city.” (ABC 666 Radio, 15 February 2012)

