

LORD HOWE ISLAND BOARD

Business Paper

OPEN SESSION

ITEM

Airport Runway Extension Feasibility Study Update

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Board note the report.

BACKGROUND

Currently Lord Howe Island is serviced by QantasLink's Bombardier DHC-8 200 aircraft which will continue until 2023. However, beyond this, QantasLink may not be economically or operationally able to provide services to Lord Howe Island using the DHC-8 200 aircraft. The DHC-8 200 is QantasLink's smallest aircraft that can service the Island and it is reaching the end of its expected 20 year lifespan.

Lord Howe Island's restricted runway length of 888 metres limits the type of commercial aircrafts that can operate on the Island. While other options have been considered such as leasing or hiring other aircrafts to operate on Lord Howe Island or to get other airlines to operate; without extending the runway, airlines will be restricted in the types of aircrafts that can service the Island.

A sustainable and viable long-term solution is needed to secure the provision of air services to Lord Howe Island. Therefore a request to quote for the Lord Howe Island Airport Runway Extension Feasibility Study was sent out on 11 August 2017 to five (5) qualified engineering consultancies and closed on 11 September 2017. All consultancies submitted tenders which were assessed with the preferred tenderer AECOM Australia Pty Ltd being awarded the contract with Ministerial approval in November 2017. The project has been underway since late November 2017, and scoped to investigate the future aircraft requirements for the island, plane characteristics, existing runway/site limitations, CASA requirements, conceptual design, geotechnical investigation, environmental assessment, community consultation and economic impacts/costs. The project is broken down into a number of milestones.

Milestone	Description	Anticipated time
1.	Completion of detailed assessment of extended runway and suitable aircraft options	March 2018
2.	Completion of preliminary geotechnical investigation	June 2018
3.	Completion of conceptual engineering design	August 2018
4.	Completion of preliminary environmental assessment	September 2018
5.	Completion of economical assessment and preliminary business case	October 2018
6.	Final presentation and report	December 2018

The funding for the project is being sourced predominately through Infrastructure NSW with a small amount of Board staff wages for project management as shown below:

1. Infrastructure NSW - Restart NSW funding	\$450,000
2. Board staff wages	\$ 19,000
TOTAL	\$469,000 (excl. GST)

CURRENT POSITION

AECOM visited the island in December 2017 to undertake their inception meeting, various site inspections and to gather additional background reports of works previously undertaken by the Board.

AECOM have been in consultation with various airline operators in Australia to understand their current and future plans in respect to aircraft type and operations. Qantas have provided Q300 & Q400 performance data and confirmed that their Q400 are using a 90m wide runway strip at other airfields with in Australia. Skytrans confirmed they are currently upgrading to Q200's and Alliance confirmed they will be jet aircraft only before 2022. Discussions are ongoing with local General Aviation (GA) pilots with regards to turbulence.

AECOM have also been in discussions with CASA and Airservices Australia to determine what requirements may apply to the runway should any extension be proposed and issues relating to the south east threshold displacement.

AECOM still have planned face to face meetings with CASA, Qantas and Virgin to follow up on other matters relating to the current and proposed operations before they can provide the draft interim report for milestone 1 which is due this month.

In addition to this project AECOM will update the Obstacle Limitation Surfaces (OLS) map for the current runway along with a recalculation of the current PCN (pavement classification number) for the runway following the overlay in 2015

RECOMMENDATION

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Prepared: John Teague, Manager Infrastructure & Engineering Services

Endorsed: Penny Holloway, Chief Executive Officer