

Statement from Western Queensland Alliance of Councils:

URGENT SOLUTION NEEDED AS REX SERVICE SUSPENDS QUEENSLAND SERVICES INDEFINITELY

Medical supplies, health workers and essential equipment are amongst the long list of critical services that are potentially now out of reach for remote and regional communities in Western Queensland with Regional Express (Rex) suspending all services across the State indefinitely.

Mayors from across Western Queensland have called on the Queensland Government to step up and find a solution as a matter of urgency.

These services provide a lifeline for many of our communities - from larger centres including Longreach, Mount Isa or St George, remote communities such as Birdsville and vulnerable communities such as Mornington Island, Doomadgee, Burketown and Normanton.

We can't afford complacency or to wait for lengthy discussions. We need a workable solution now that ensures our communities remain connected to essential services that can be delivered in a timely manner.

These air connections mean we have a safety net to ensure not only vital services can continue but also our workforce and industries which pump \$9.5 billion into the State's economy.

We are also home to some of Queensland's most vulnerable people – we should not be left out in the cold to risk people's lives.

Using costly private air freight as a substitute is beyond reach for these small regions and road freight can take days to reach many of our communities.

Our communities deserve to have the security and peace of mind of knowing that there is a link that can provide essential services during this crisis, just like our mates on the coast and in SEQ.

The Western Queensland Alliance of Councils members include the councils of the North West Regional Organisation of Councils, the Central West Queensland Remote Area Planning and Development Board, and South West Queensland Local Government Association.

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