

## media release

23 October 2008

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **GLADSTONE AIRPORT UPGRADE PROJECT**

The Gladstone Regional Council has almost completed the re-engineering of the project to reconstruct the runway at Gladstone Airport to allow tenders for the project to be called in November 2008. The rework was required following the refusal by the Civil Aviation Authority [CASA] to allow the temporary use of the taxiway as a runway.

"The project will now be undertaken in a series of stages commencing in February 2009 with completion by June 2010," Mayor George Creed said.

"As previously advised, to just reconstruct the current 1635 metre runway would necessitate the closure of the airport for a period of up to six months," Mayor Creed said. "This is totally unacceptable," he said. The project now includes extending the runway to 1960 metres with the capability to use 2020 metres for takeoff only. "This still means that we will need to close the airport for a period of about four weeks mid year whilst the middle section of the runway is reconstructed," Mayor Creed said.

The previous option of using the taxiway as a temporary runway would have avoided this closure period and it would have been done whilst meeting all safety requirements.

"Any suggestions that we move to build a new airport are totally irrelevant as the existing runway must be reconstructed now," Mayor Creed said. "Planning and construction of a new airport takes at least 10 years. Time which we don't have," he said.

Apart from that, no funding commitment has been received from either the State or Federal Government for the project which is estimated to cost \$65M. "A new airport would likely cost in the vicinity of \$500M", Mayor Creed said.

Council will be holding discussions with Qantaslink over the next fortnight to co-ordinate and minimise disruption during the reconstruction works.

"Following this, Council will be conducting a "Business Briefing" and a "Community Briefing" in mid November," Mayor Creed said.

"More detailed sessions will then be arranged as part of a comprehensive community information strategy," he said.

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