

STRICTLY EMBARGOED - UNTIL 1.30pm - April 17, 2011

Opening marks milestone in region's history

The opening of the Gladstone Airport's redeveloped runway and Creed-Kanofski Airport Terminal Building marks a significant milestone in the growth and development of the Gladstone Region, according to Mayor Gail Sellers.

Councillor Sellers said the upgrade had been a significant undertaking by Gladstone Regional Council but the decision had led to the development of state-of-the-art facilities with a capacity to accommodate the forecast increase in passenger traffic during the decades to come.

"These facilities will play a pivotal role in the region's future and reinforce the city's stronghold as a powerful player in the Queensland economy," Cr Sellers said.

The total project costs of \$65 million are being funded by Gladstone Regional Council and a \$5.5 million grant from the Federal Government.

Tenders for the redevelopment were called in November 2008 with the runway reconstruction contract being awarded to Golding Contractors.

Woollam Constructions were awarded the contract to expand the terminal building in September 2009.

Cr Sellers said the project had to be conducted in stages to ensure aircraft operations could continue throughout the work.

"We were advised that we could not use the taxiway as a temporary runway during the project, so decided to extend the runway to a length that allowed us to extend one end at a time to allow for aircraft to operate the whole time," she said.

"Qantas agreed to bring in Q200 aircraft instead of the regular Q400 aircraft for a short time as they could land on the reduced runway while work on the centre section was undertaken.

"On behalf of Council, I thank Qantas for its cooperation during those important early stages and also the residents, especially the neighbours, as this was a significant works project in close proximity to their homes."

The runway project involved extending the runway to the northern and eastern ends, reconstruction of the main central taxiway section and construction of a new Callemondah Drive overpass, as the original access road was closed to public to make way for the runway extensions.

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Cr Sellers said the terminal building works involved an extension of the building, reconfiguration of the arrival and departure halls, extension of the car park facilities and the installation of baggage and passenger security screening.

“We also undertook to extend the width of the runway early this year as a result of impending Civil Aviation Safety Authority requirements that are at various regional airports Australian wide.”

As part of the opening celebrations, Gladstone Regional Council hosted a public open day today from 11.30am to 1pm.

A free shuttle bus operated along the runway allowing the public to view the overall project with static displays showcasing the project and its milestones.

The new security screening facilities were also operational ahead of Strategic Airlines’ first commercial flight into Gladstone tomorrow.

MEDIA INFORMATION: For further information contact Council’s Community Relations Section on 4976 6946.