



BALLINA FLIGHT SCHEDULE EXTENDED FOLLOWING SUCCESSFUL TRIAL

Dubbo Regional Council (DRC) and Fly Pelican are excited to announce the Dubbo – Ballina/ Byron flight route has been extended until at least June 2021, following the successful trial in 2020 and into 2021. Mayor of the Dubbo Region, Councillor Ben Shields, has welcomed the extension, saying it demonstrates that the subsidy model has merit.

“Dubbo Regional Council has been able to waive passenger fees until August 2021, which is in line with our Revenue Policy to provide the waiver for a full year. This allows the airline to investigate whether the route is a viable option, and if they would like to continue offering it,” said Councillor Shields.

The frequency of flights between the two popular destinations has also increased, with three direct flights, and two via Newcastle operating each week. The prices will remain the same, starting at \$149 one-way, flying out on Thursday and returning Sunday, so people can extend the weekend. There was a significant increase in visitation to the Dubbo region, and research shows that there was \$1.3 million worth of positive economic activity in the region as a result of the trial period.

“This trial has been so successful, we’re pleased to continue working with Fly Pelican to investigate even more flight options, so that we can welcome even more people to the Dubbo region. This flight route has been supported by a robust marketing campaign, aimed at bringing more people from the Northern Rivers region to the Dubbo region for a holiday, and it paid off,” said Councillor Shields.

The service also created six full time equivalent (FTE) jobs, and a knock-on supply chain effect of \$306,000. Fly Pelican’s Chief Executive Officer Marty Hawley says he’s looking forward to continuing work with Dubbo Regional Council and Dubbo City Regional Airport to reinvigorate regional travel routes.

“By keeping the flight prices at around the \$150 mark, even more people are able to afford a seat on the plane. Our load factors throughout the trial have been incredibly pleasing, and we’re now confident that we can continue offering this service on a more permanent basis. If the people want it, they’ll get it, and they’re certainly showed us that there is demand for the direct route to the Northern Rivers,” said Mr Hawley.

From Tuesday 6 April, flights will operate every Tuesday, Thursday, and Sunday, making the timing perfect for those looking for a long weekend getaway.

“DRC is proud and excited that together with Ballina Shire Council, Ballina Gateway Airport, and Fly Pelican, we have been able to do something remarkable in extraordinary times,” said Councillor Shields.

Feedback received from some of the passengers was that the “pricing was excellent”, “it’s a convenient flight for work”, “affordable and time saving”, and “the opportunity to fly between regions is amazing”.



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Ballina to Dubbo Flight from Dubbo Regional Council on Vimeo.

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