

## Admin, LACO

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**Subject:** FW: Submission on Regional Airfares

**From:** Sonja Mitchell  
**Sent:** Wednesday, 26 July 2017 3:16 PM  
**To:** Committee, Economics & Industry Standing  
**Subject:** Submission on Regional Airfares

Hello from Kununurra.

I have lived most of my life in the Kimberley region and therefore travel by air regularly to and from Kununurra. For the past 10 years I have lived in Perth due to family reasons but my work is in Kununurra and I travel there about 10 times a year. The average return airfare from Perth to Kununurra is \$950.

The businesses I work for are in the tourism industry and we have the constant challenge of trying to encourage visitors to come here when the cost is higher than traveling internationally. Unfortunately few Australians visit our beautiful area due to the comparison in cost. Somehow they rationalise that they will spend their money overseas instead, even though our product offering is often far better than the destinations overseas they visit.

For us to get more visitors we need the fares to drop, it's a chicken and egg situation. If fares were lower people would visit, planes would be full and the airlines will make a profit. Whilst fares are high it limits buyers and there are usually empty seats.

In addition - for us to retain staff - if airfares were less it would make living away from family and friends more appealing.

In areas of high population the government subsidises public transport by providing buses and trains, bus lanes and infrastructure supporting these systems. Why isn't the per capita spend on infrastructure and subsidised bus and train transport applied to citizens in regional WA by means of an RPT subsidy for airlines?

To grow regional industry and to stimulate people to live regional the air fare situation must change.

Kind regards

**Sonja Mitchell**  
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Board member – Tourism Council WA

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