



## **SOUTH WEST RED MEDIA RELEASE**

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For immediate release

### ***SWRED urges QantasLink to rethink flight service changes***

South West Regional Economic Development (SWRED) Association members are fearful the Charleville regulated QantasLink service is in jeopardy following a recent announcement of flight service changes.

SWRED chair Annie Liston said members at today's meeting were unanimous in their support of the regulated service continuing for the full extent of the current contract.

"QantasLink representatives earlier in the year advised Murweh Shire Council that they would be phasing out the Q300 aircraft which currently services Charleville," she said.

"Charleville currently has a regulated QantasLink daily service from Brisbane and return. This service is relied upon by residents, business and associated government services such as Department of Education and Training and Queensland Health.

"The economic impact of reducing this service would not just affect Charleville, but would be detrimental to the whole of the south-west region.

"These services from Charleville are also heavily relied upon by other communities in the region.

"Should this service be impacted by the requirement to fly a larger aircraft such as the Q400 into Charleville SWRED is fearful that the added cost of regulated screening would negatively impact the potential growth of the south west and could result in a decline in the need for this service.

"SWRED seeks a commitment from the Queensland Government to ensure this valuable service to our rural communities will be maintained for the duration of the contract.

"We will also require funding assistance from both the Federal and State Governments to ensure the cost of the required screening and future operation of the airport, are fully covered.

"SWRED further calls on QantasLink to not abandon the south-west and ensure that the daily service to Charleville is continued."

Mrs Liston said SWRED members supported the current Senate inquiry into rural and regional air routes and prices and would welcome the opportunity to make a submission to this enquiry.

The Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Committee (RRAT) will focus on the social and economic impacts of fare costs and service delivery for non-metropolitan communities. The inquiry is expected to report to the Senate in March 2018.

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