



Adam Marshall
Minister for Agriculture
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MEDIA RELEASE

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WESTERN NSW FLYING HIGH WITH NEW AIR SERVICES

Commercial passenger air services will return to the skies of North Western NSW from next month, thanks to a historic deal struck by the State Government and the Far North West Joint Organisation.

Minister for Western NSW Adam Marshall today joined Far North West Joint Organisation Chair and Cobar Shire Mayor Lilliane Brady at Cobar Airport to announce FlyPelican and Airlink would operate 26 new services each week, linking Bourke, Cobar, Walgett and Lightning Ridge to Dubbo and Cobar to Sydney.

Mr Marshall said it was a red-letter day for the west and the air services would make a huge difference to the lives of locals, many of whom hadn't had access to regular passenger services for more than a decade.

"It's been 12 long years since passenger flights last touched down in Walgett and Bourke, which is far too long," Mr Marshall said.

"Country people deserve the same access to transport services as their city counterparts and these new air services will go a long way towards leveling that playing field.

"Better access to air services means improved opportunities for people to travel to other parts of the State to be with loved ones and access jobs, education and healthcare. It'll keep Western NSW communities better connected with the rest of the State.

"Right now, anyone wanting to get to Sydney are driving four hours from Cobar to Dubbo just to get on a one hour flight. From next month, they'll be able to hop onto a direct flight to Sydney, which will make a massive difference to people's lives."

Deputy Premier and Minister for Regional NSW John Barilaro said the air services were made possible thanks to an \$8 million investment by the government.

"If you are sitting in Sydney making plans for the weekend, there is nothing stopping you from getting on a plane and exploring Outback NSW," Mr Barilaro said.

"These air services will carry over 14,000 seats a year to the Far West meaning tourists can roam the opal fields in Lightning Ridge, have lunch at the Port of Bourke Hotel on the Darling River or visit the historic mining town of Cobar, in a matter of hours.

"This is a major win for the Far West Joint Organisation who have partnered with the

NSW Liberal and Nationals Government to restore a vital service back to the Far West.”

Councillor Brady said the return of passenger flights showed Joint Organisations and the NSW Government were working together to deliver much needed, convenient and reliable services for the rural communities they serve.

“Our member councils worked together to negotiate a fantastic outcome for our communities, including discounted fares for locals that will make these services both affordable and convenient for locals,” Cr Brady said.

“I’m very excited the JO has negotiated not only flights from the various western region localities, but also achieved direct flights to and from Sydney’s Kingsford Smith Airport into Cobar, thanks to the collaborative efforts of our Joint Organisation.

FlyPelican CEO Paul Graham said the airline expected Sydney to Cobar would be a popular route for the mining industry, with the first flight scheduled to take off from Sydney bound for Cobar on 24 September 2019.

“FlyPelican is proud to be able to provide these vital air services that will connect the families, friends and businesses of the Cobar district,” Mr Graham said.

Air Link General Manager Ron O’Brien said passengers flying return to Walgett and Bourke would save up to six hours travelling time on a return journey, while the Lightning Ridge service would be a key tourism driver for the iconic outback town.

“For the past 40 years I’ve been passionate about linking communities in regional NSW with Australia’s major cities and I’m incredibly excited that Air Link will be servicing these new routes,” Mr O’Brien said.

FlyPelican will operate from its fleet of Jetstream 32 aircraft, seating up to 19 passengers and two pilots for round trips between Cobar/Dubbo on Monday and Thursday and Cobar/Sydney on Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday.

Air Link services will fly seven-passenger seat Chieftain aircraft on round trips to Dubbo/Bourke on Monday, Wednesday and Friday, Dubbo/Walgett on Tuesday, Thursday and Friday and Walgett/Lightning Ridge on Tuesday and Thursday.

Flights have been scheduled to allow ample time for passengers to transfer to connecting flights from Dubbo to Sydney.

The NSW Government provided \$8 million to ensure routes remain sustainable and affordable for locals, businesses and tourists.

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Full details on services available at www.flypelican.com.au and www.airlinkairlines.com.au

Route 1: Dubbo/Cobar/Dubbo – FlyPelican				
Day	From	Departing	To	Arriving
Monday and Thursday	Dubbo	0955	Cobar	1050
	Cobar	1405	Dubbo	1500

Route 2: Sydney/Cobar/Sydney – FlyPelican				
Day	From	Departing	To	Arriving
Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday	Sydney	0910	Cobar	1050
	Cobar	1405	Sydney	1545

Route 3: Dubbo/Bourke/Dubbo – Air Link				
Day	From	Departing	To	Arriving
Monday and Wednesday	Dubbo	0830	Bourke	0950
	Bourke	1500	Dubbo	1620
Friday	Dubbo	1340	Bourke	1500
	Bourke	1620	Dubbo	1740

Route 4: Dubbo/Walgett/Dubbo – Air Link				
Day	From	Departing	To	Arriving
Tuesday and Thursday	Walgett	0830	Bourke	0950
	Bourke	1500	Walgett	1620
Friday	Walgett	1340	Bourke	1500
	Bourke	1620	Walgett	1740

Route 5: Walgett/Lightning Ridge/Walgett – Air Link				
Day	From	Departing	To	Arriving
Tuesday and Thursday	Walgett	1000	Lightning Ridge	1025
	Lightning Ridge	1430	Walgett	1455