

Positive step in campaign to secure Wagga Wagga Airport's future

Wagga Wagga City Council and the Commonwealth Department of Defence will formalise a Deed of Variation to extend the current Wagga Wagga Airport lease for a period of 12 months. At its Ordinary Meeting on Monday night, Council endorsed signing off on the extension to 30 of June 2026, to be executed through a Deed of Variation of the lease.

Wagga Wagga Airport is operated by Council as a community facility serving the Riverina region on a not-for-profit basis.

The current 30-year lease of the facility from the Commonwealth Department of Defence is due to expire in June 2025.

Mayor of the City of Wagga Wagga Dallas Tout described the variation of the lease as a positive step for Council and the communities and businesses of Wagga Wagga and the surrounding region, who rely on the airport for connection to the rest of Australia.

"We are moving in the right direction with the 12-month extension, which means that that we can extend the sub leases for all of the leaseholders at the airport through to the end of June 2026, which is in excess of 40 leases," Cr Tout said.

"I want to thank the community and stakeholders, who earlier this year actively advocated for Council to retain the lease of the airport.

"We believe that the 12-month extension and the willingness of Defence and the Federal Government to enter dialogue regarding a lease beyond June 2026 is directly linked to the support that has been demonstrated by the community."

Council's General Manager Peter Thompson has communicated that Council's "preferred position" is still for a long-term renewal of the lease.

"This would provide certainty and security for Council and all the families, individuals, businesses, organisations and services who use this vital facility," Mr Thompson said.

"We are putting together a package for Defence focusing on the regional benefit of Council retaining the operation of the airport.

"It will also identify the benefits to the Commonwealth Government from Council as the operator of this facility.

"We expect to have that submission ready for Defence by the end of March next year."

Separate to the negotiations, Council has submitted an application for a \$15 million grant under the Federal Government's Growing Regions Program to assist in funding the essential upgrade of the security screening at the airport to make it compliant with regulations.

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About Wagga Wagga City Council

Wagga Wagga City Council serves more than 68,000 residents across an area of 4825 square kilometres with an overall budget of \$240 million.

The organisation manages more than \$2.48 billion in assets, including a 2300km road network, Wagga Wagga Airport, Livestock Marketing Centre, and the Oasis Aquatic Centre.

Council also provides important community facilities such as Wagga Wagga Art Gallery, Wagga Wagga City Library, Museum of the Riverina, and Civic Theatre, as well as maintaining countless parks, playgrounds, and sporting facilities to ensure Wagga maintains its reputation as 'the City of Good Sports'.

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