

OFFICIAL

My name is Karen Stevens and yes I am going to be sounding like a Karen. Sorry.

I wish to express that I feel our area, (Coffs Harbour) is being totally ripped off by the prices of flights from Coffs Harbour to Sydney return and have been for sometime now. Especially since COVID 19 and June 2021 when the airport was privatised.

As you would be aware, most of the children from here in Coffs have to go to the cities for university and work when they finish high school. For most of them they only get one vacation a year that they can return home for and to catch flights from Sydney to Coffs Harbour is exorbitant/gouging due to a lack of competition in my opinion.

To me, there is no reasonable or plausible reason why it should be so much dearer to come to Coffs Harbour than Ballina or the Queensland airports except for the "Lack of Competition" and the fact that passengers are probably helping to pay for the Enterprise Park precinct which is very under-utilised at the moment. If this is the case it should be made clear to passengers what their fees are paying for.

I know this is not a new problem for you all to be hearing for the first time. If you truly want families to come to visit, tourist to come here as well, QantasLink needs to drop the prices. There are many other reasons people need to fly to Sydney from Coffs eg medical reasons, to visit loved ones (sick or not). We are entitled to a real reason and someone should be held responsible to explain why it costs so much more. Not just say they are putting on bigger planes like Qantaslink's CEO Rachel Yangoyan claims. This will only bring in more higher fares if seats are not filled and profit if they are filled. This has been going on for too many years now and before the bigger plane arrived. That one I believe is a Melbourne flight anyway. Everyone knows they have the monopoly on the airport and the amount of cancellations is becoming ridiculous as well. I think they think, " oh well just put them on a later plane, or an earlier one". Ridiculous.

As for overseas travel with international flights, we have no choice but to travel down on QantasLink or Rex (which is not that much cheaper) that leave very similar times to each other. That usually means/ involves overnight accommodation in the cities which is more costs to the users.

We have heard of the possibility of International flights coming to Coffs Harbour but I feel we should get the costing of flying to other cities more affordable before the International ones become a reality.

What I would ask, is if you can all put pressure on QantasLink and Rex to be more transparent to the costing of the flights. Also, please try and see if you can talks happening with at least one other airline (the more the merrier) to start up again flying into Coffs Harbour to force competition.

There are 5 airlines fly into Ballina Byron Gateway Airport: Qantas, Jetstar, Virgin Australia, Emirates, and Air New Zealand. These airlines offer domestic and international travel to the region.

- **[Qantas](#)**: Offers flights with [QantasLink](#) service.
- **[Jetstar](#)**: Provides flights to Ballina Byron Gateway Airport.
- **[Virgin Australia](#)**: Flies directly from Sydney to Ballina
- **[Emirates](#)**: Serves as an international option.
- **[Air New Zealand](#)**: Offers international flights.

Even Port Macquarie Airport (PQQ) has: QantasLink, Rex Regional Express, and Eastern Air Services. Additionally, Virgin Australia operates flights, though typically less frequently than the other airlines.

- **QantasLink**: Provides services to Sydney and Lord Howe Island.
- **[Rex Regional Express](#)**: Offers flights to Sydney.
- **[Eastern Air Services](#)**: Provides flights to various destinations
- **[Virgin Australia](#)**: Operates direct flights to Melbourne.

If anybody has taken this issue on board to date, could you kindly inform me and the constituents in our area as to what is happening, who is doing what and what stage it is up to?
If not, can someone take this matter up for us and let us know what can be done?

OFFICIAL

Aslo, on the subject of the airport, I believe the cost to drop someone off at the airport eg \$7 + for more than 15mins and up to one (1) hour to park is excessive for locals. Fifteen minutes free only allows a drop off and hug good bye. Not even a sit with loved ones that you may not get to see for another 12 months if they can afford to come up. Why can't we get a bit of grace as we pay enough high rates as it is.

I take this opportunity to thank you for your attention to this matter but please know there are thousands of us in this situation.

Kind regards,
Karen Stevens