

## News Release

### REX BRINGS COMPETITION TO THE ARMIDALE SKIES

**16 June 2004:** Armidale air travellers will benefit from more affordable fares and wider choice of flights when Australia's largest independent regional airline, Rex, starts services to the New England region on Thursday September 2<sup>nd</sup> 2004.

The airline today launched its new schedule with a fly-in to Armidale by one of its 34-seat SAAB 340 aircraft that will operate the new service.

Rex will fly 32 times a week between Armidale and Sydney, with all direct flights, including peak services at new times for the local market.

Fares will start from \$99 one-way available at [rex.com.au](http://rex.com.au) or through travel agents.

Rex's Executive General Manager Commercial, Hans van Pelt, said the airline expects its entry into the route to enable thousands more travellers to fly between Armidale and Sydney.

"The Armidale to Sydney market has been crying out for competition and the affordable fares many other regional communities have enjoyed," Mr van Pelt said.

"Without a second airline on the route passenger numbers have fallen to just over 50,000, down from almost 70,000 three years ago.

"Our aim is to rebuild this important regional market by making it more affordable to fly and offering services at times that are not catered for at the moment," Mr van Pelt said.

The Rex schedule provides a different option for Armidale customers doing business in Sydney, with a morning flight leaving Armidale on weekdays at 8.25am and a return service at 5.00pm.

Rex will have the first flight to Armidale from Sydney at 6.50am, allowing a full day for meetings before the return service at 6.35pm. This will be ideal for Sydney corporate customers.

In a change for weekend travellers, all Rex flights will be non-stop and offer convenient new times between Armidale and Sydney.

Mr van Pelt said Rex's pricing for Armidale was based on the same formula that had had been popular with travellers across the airline's network.

"Regional air travel is our core business so we are committed to doing what we can to ensure regional air services flourish.

"By offering more affordable fares we have seen many people return to air travel and significant growth in passenger numbers on many routes.

"Many Armidale travellers have told us it has been too expensive to fly so we are hoping our entry will be well received.

“I expect some of the most positive reactions will be from students studying at university in Armidale who will now be able to seriously consider flying to Sydney to visit family and friends.

“We are delighted to be able to make Armidale the 30<sup>th</sup> destination on the Rex network and look forward to a positive partnership with the local community.”

He said Rex passengers between would benefit from a range of services including:

- convenient through check of luggage to and from connecting Rex and Virgin Blue services and to Singapore Airlines and Air New Zealand flights
- Rex’s simple frequent flyer program – Rex Flyer – which offers a free flight for every nine flown on Rex
- Rex Lounge, Rex’s business lounge for members at Sydney and Canberra Airports

### Sydney to Armidale schedule

Flight	Depart Sydney	Arrive Armidale	Days available
ZL716	6.50am	8.05am	Monday-Friday
ZL722	8.00am	9.15am	Saturday
ZL728	1.10pm	2.25pm	Monday, Thursday, Friday
ZL736	5.00pm	6.15pm	Every day

### Armidale to Sydney schedule

Flight	Depart Armidale	Arrive Sydney	Days available
ZL717	8.25am	9.40am	Monday-Friday
ZL723	9.35am	10.50am	Saturday and Sunday
ZL729	2.45pm	4.00pm	Monday, Thursday, Friday
ZL737	6.35pm	7.50pm	Sunday-Friday

Travellers can book Rex flights at [rex.com.au](http://rex.com.au), by calling Rex’s customer contact centre in Orange on 13 17 13 or by visiting their local travel agent.

With the addition of Armidale to the network, Rex will fly more than 1000 flights every week to 30 metropolitan and regional centres across New South Wales, Victoria, Tasmania and South Australia as well as linking the national capital Canberra to Sydney with regular daily flights.

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