

# Are you worried about the future of Katoomba Airfield, Medlow Bath?

## Where is Katoomba Airfield?

Katoomba Airfield is located on Grand Canyon Road, Medlow Bath. The airfield is public (Crown) Land and is managed by the NSW Government through the Department of Industry–Crown Lands. It is completely surrounded by the Blue Mountains National Park.

## A new commercial lease?

The Department of Industry is currently considering negotiating a new long-term commercial lease over Katoomba Airfield to a private commercial operator. The previous lessee's rights over the airfield were forfeited in 2017. In Sept 2017 the Department of Industry called for Expressions-of-Interest (EOI) from parties interested in leasing the site.

As a result of the EOI process, in February 2018, an interim license was issued to a private commercial operator. The Department of Industry has advised that the licensee was invited to submit a business plan setting out their commercial plans for the site, in preparation to the Department issuing a long-term lease.

The Department of Industry has also advised that once a decision has been made to enter into negotiations to issue a commercial lease, a community consultation process will occur. No community consultation on all options for the future of the airfield occurred prior to the EOI being released or the interim license being issued.

## Can Katoomba Airfield be incorporated into the national park?

The NSW Government's Crown Lands division has previously carried out many studies of the site, culminating in a recommendation in 2000 that the area be added to the Blue Mountains National Park, with the airfield being used for emergency purposes only.

Blue Mountains City Council have previously opposed the continuation of a commercial lease over the Airfield, requesting that the land be incorporated into the Blue Mountains National Park in 1999, 2000 and 2008. Likewise the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) has previously supported the Katoomba Airfield being incorporated into the National Park, with the airfield managed for emergency and bushfire fire-fighting purposes.

The National Parks and Wildlife Service manages a number of airfields within national parks for management and emergency purposes. Specific funding to repair and restore the airfield could be allocated to National Parks from the Bushfire Risk Mitigation and Resilience Program managed by NSW Treasury.

## What you can do - urgent action required by the end of March

The Department of Industry will be deciding whether or not to proceed with the process of negotiating a commercial lease during March and April **2019**, and holding a Community Engagement process. The community needs to urgently make their views known.

Write to Scott Mullen [scott.mullen@crowland.nsw.gov.au](mailto:scott.mullen@crowland.nsw.gov.au), Crown Property Services, Department of Industry - Crown Lands and Water, PO Box 2185 DANGAR NSW 2309. Also to [mark.maloney@crowland.nsw.gov.au](mailto:mark.maloney@crowland.nsw.gov.au).

- **Ask** that the process of issuing a lease be stopped until after some meaningful community consultation over the future of the airfield is undertaken, considering all options.
- **Ask** that you be considered a key stakeholder in any upcoming community consultation process.
- **Object** to the lack of community consultation prior to entering into commercial lease negotiations.
- **Object** to the issuing of a long term commercial lease over Katoomba Airfield.
- **Support** the inclusion of Katoomba Airfield into the Blue Mountains National Park, to be managed as an emergency airfield, with specific funding provided to the NPWS for management.

Send copies to all candidates for the up coming March State election including:

- Trish Doyle (Labor) MP, Member for Blue Mountains  
[bluemountains@parliament.nsw.gov.au](mailto:bluemountains@parliament.nsw.gov.au) ph 4751 3298
- Greg Keightley (Animal Justice Party) at email [gregk56@gmail.com](mailto:gregk56@gmail.com)
- Owen Laffin (Liberal) at [bluemountains@nswliberal.org.au](mailto:bluemountains@nswliberal.org.au) ph 0474 174 428
- Kingsley Liu (The Greens) at [kingsleyliu3@hotmail.com](mailto:kingsleyliu3@hotmail.com) ph 0414 580428

