



9th March 2021

Mr Ricki Bruhn
Chief Executive Officer
Winton Shire Council
75 Vindex Street
Winton, QLD, 4735

AOPA Australia Opposed to Privatisation of Winton Airport, Queensland

Mr Bruhn,

Further to our telephone discussion and thank you for your time, it is appreciated.

As discussed with you, the Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association of Australia is genuinely concerned and opposed to the proposal submitted to council by Outside the Box Group Pty Ltd. This proposal seeks to privatise the Winton Airport asset by removing it from community control and placing it into the management of a private company with a focus on drones and autonomous aviation.

A background review of Outside the Box Group Pty Ltd (<https://www.otbspacial.com/>) indicates the business to be involved in a range of information technology activities, with little to no manned aviation experience visible.

As you are aware, Winton Airport is a vital community gateway for regional Queensland and Australia, used by the Flying Doctors, emergency services, commercial, general and recreational aviation. These services will be placed at risk, should they become exposed to uncontrollable fees and charges at the hands of a privatised operator that is undercapitalised and inexperienced in managing aviation assets.

Airport privatisation over the past 25 years in Australia has proven that wherever regional and community airports are handed over to private companies to manage, that local aviation access and community benefit declines. Private companies are motivated by profits not community needs.

AOPA Australia would like to meet with you and your team to better understand the challenges you are facing at Winton Airport and also to better understand your community goals. I am certain that by working together, the Winton Shire Council and AOPA Australia can build a strong partnership to enhance the use and amenity of this vital community asset.

Thank you for your time and I look forward to meeting with you again soon.

Yours Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Benjamin Morgan', is written over a circular stamp or watermark.

BENJAMIN MORGAN
Chief Executive Officer

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