

ROBBIE KATTER

Member for Traeger



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BATTLE WON IN WAR ON OUTBACK AIRFARES

State KAP Leader and Traeger MP Robbie Katter has welcomed the news the Palaszczuk Government is finally addressing the state's rural airfares crisis, which for years has crippled the liveability of regional communities on unregulated routes such as Mount Isa.

Mr Katter said, after many years of lobbying, the State Government had finally responded and is now investigating the use of price-tracking software to monitor the flight costs being forced onto isolated residents and travellers to regional areas.

"It's been very concerning that the government has never had the ability to track and therefore properly question the shockingly high prices being charged on routes like Mount Isa," he said.

"Time and time again I have pushed back on this issue and on the government's spiel that 'the market' would sort out the impossibly high prices – it is encouraging now to see there has been some acknowledgement that this is not, and never will be, the case.

"The use of such software is first step in reining in price gouging, or other elements of market failure – technology to do this has been available for a long time and up until now we have been left for dead crying out for it.

"I would like to thank the Minister and his department for their efforts so far - for the regions this is certainly a battle that has been won in the war against regional airfares."

Mr Katter said it was also promising that Minister for Transport and Main Roads Mark Bailey's was seeking to meet with the heads of Qantas, REX and Virgin on the airfares issue, as was reported in the *Sunday Mail* on January 19, 2020.

The airfares dilemma is one that has long plagued regional and rural communities on unregulated routes across Australia.

Residents and travellers to towns such as Mount Isa have long been slogged high ticket prices, with one way flights from Mount Isa to Brisbane known to cost \$1,000 in peak periods.

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