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59 Bonville Avenue | PO Box 3137 | Thornton NSW 2322  
P (02) 4978 4040 | F (02) 4966 0588

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## **MEDIA RELEASE**

### **NEWCASTLE AIRPORT RUNWAY A COLLABORATIVE WIN FOR HUNTER**

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The Federal Government announcement of an investment of \$66 million in next Tuesday's budget towards the upgrade of Newcastle Airport's runway has been a welcome acknowledgement of the Hunter Region's potential and a reward for years of advocacy by local government and industry across the Hunter. Local leadership and collaboration have been key in bringing about the runway upgrade for Newcastle Airport.

"We should congratulate the Board, CEO Peter Cock and the management team of Newcastle Airport for this important win as we still navigate the challenges of COVID-19," said Cr Bob Pynsent, Chair of the Hunter JO and Mayor of Cessnock.

"This upgrade will be an encouraging boost to the Hunter's existing and future industries at a time when they need it most."

The runway upgrade has been a key advocacy initiative of the Hunter JO since its inception in 2018 when a delegation of mayors went to Canberra to champion the project to ministers and shadow-ministers. It will allow the airport to cater for larger international aircraft, including Boeing 787s and Airbus A330s, enabling significant freight loads and the ability to increase passenger loads through long-haul flights. This will deliver a whole-of-region benefit and new jobs to the region.

"I'm excited to see the project come to fruition almost three years after the Hunter JO sought Federal Government support for this project in Canberra. I am also grateful for the leadership and initiative shown by my fellow mayors from and since that first delegation in supporting the Airport's plan," Cr Nuatali Nelmes, Chair of the Hunter JO's Greater Newcastle Metropolitan Plan Steering Committee, Mayor of City of Newcastle and Board Member of Newcastle Airport.

Collaborative partnerships have been critical to supporting the Newcastle Airport's own advocacy, with support coming from the local government members of the



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Hunter JO and the Greater Newcastle Metropolitan Plan Steering Committee and, more recently, through the Hunter JO working with the Committee for the Hunter on the Ready to Rebuild campaign.

Cr Ryan Palmer, Mayor of Port Stephens said of the announcement, “This outcome highlights the importance of partnership and perseverance in what has been a long campaign. As Mayor of Port Stephens, a member of the Newcastle Airport Board, and as a part of the Hunter JO, I can tell you it would not have been possible without acting together.”

### **Contact details**

Please direct media inquiries to Louisa Bulley, Executive Officer, Hunter Joint Organisation.

M: +61 413 891 320 or email [comms@hunterjo.com.au](mailto:comms@hunterjo.com.au)