

Basin chief quits
Mike Taylor delivers parting shot at Government announcing his resignation from Murray-Darling Basin Authority.

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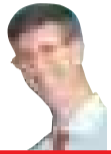
AGRIBUSINESS

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Aviation's shining light

Rex profits from diverse bush flying experience

By ANDREW MARSHALL



Rex At A Glance

- Regional Express (Rex) flies regular services to 35 destinations in NSW, Victoria, Tasmania, South Australia and Queensland
- Country airports on Rex flight paths range from Ceduna, Coober Pedy and Kangaroo Island in SA, to Longreach and Mt Isa in Queensland, and King Island and Burnie in Tasmania
- The Rex group also includes air freight and charter operator, Pel-Air Aviation, Dubbo-based regional airline, Air Link, and the Australian Airline Pilot Academy at Wagga Wagga
- Net profit after tax in 2009-10 was \$24.6 million

20pc lower fuel bill than 2008-09.

Early this year Rex established a new Queensland base in Townsville, beginning regular services direct to Mt Isa and State Government-subsidised routes to Winton and Longreach and Hughenden, Richmond, Julia Creek and Mt Isa.

The year ahead was likely to see consolidation of Rex's current commercial services rather than more new routes established, accord-

Focus on pilot training

HAVING helped save Regional Express from a serious pilot drought during the past two years, the Wagga Wagga-based Australian Airline Pilot Academy (AAPA) is preparing to focus greater training efforts on recruits for other airlines.

The AAPA recently signed a contract to train up to 80 pilots a year for Boeing subsidiary, Jeppesen, and expects several other overseas airlines to send cadets to the newly completed \$20 million training facility in the near future.

"We initially planned to lift our intake in stepped stages of 40 students a year, but while it's

ing to managing director, Jim Davis.

The company's resilience in a tight trading environment has also been significantly bolstered by a big reduction in its pilot attrition rate to other airlines, thanks largely to Rex opening its own pilot training school.

still early days, our numbers look like growing much faster," said general manager of flying operations, Geoff Cook.

Mr Cook (pictured) said surging overseas demand for pilots, particularly in China, India and the Middle East, was putting strain on existing pilot numbers worldwide, driving strong inquiry for the AAPA's services to supply new blood to the industry.

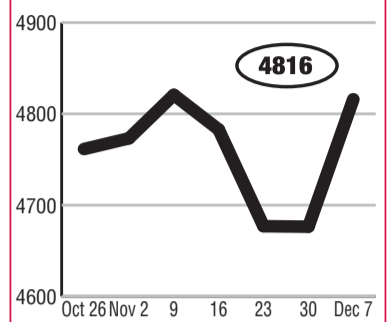
The AAPA expects to train about 30 Rex cadets this financial year, many of whom come from the company's regional heartland, including farms.

— ANDREW MARSHALL

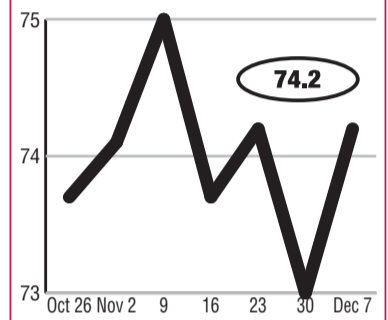
The Australian Airline Pilot Academy, started in Melbourne in 2007, opened its newly built Wagga Wagga campus in April and is already poised to double its on-site accommodation facilities to handle up to 200 students.

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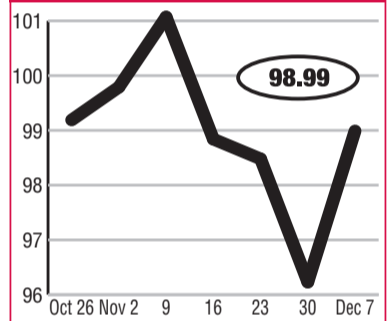
All Ordinaries



Trade Weighted Index



Aussie Dollar (US cents)



Making News

John Holland wins tender: Railway asset management company, John Holland, a subsidiary of Leighton, has won the tender for the 10-year, \$1.5 billion NSW Government Country Regional Network (CRN) upgrade.

The contract involves the operation, management, maintenance and upgrade of country railway lines across the State, including 2700 kilometres of operational freight and passenger lines and 3100 kilometres of non-operational lines.

Work is expected to start in late 2011 and will run through 2021.

The company is Australia's largest rail construction contractor and the CRN contract now establishes John Holland as Australia's largest private railway asset management company.

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