

10 February 2014

Office of the Mayor  
Reference File: 14/16110

The Hon Barry O'Farrell M.P.  
Premier of New South Wales  
Level 40, Governor Macquarie Tower  
1 Farrer Place  
SYDNEY NSW 2000

Dear Premier,

**SUBJECT**                    **Future use of Katoomba Airfield as a Rural Fire Service aerial fire fighting and training centre**

Recent bushfire events across the Blue Mountains have demonstrated the important role that aerial fire fighting plays in modern bushfire response. Although bushfires of this magnitude are rare, there have been many fires during the past two decades that have necessitated significant mobilisation of aviation resources, and these operations demand substantial infrastructure and support to work efficiently. Throughout this time, Katoomba Airfield has played a pivotal role in those aviation support activities.

Blue Mountains City Council understands that Katoomba Airfield is Crown Land that is leased to a private operator. Whilst the emergency services have worked well with the lessee during past operations, Council considers that this facility is of such importance that it necessitates government control and management to ensure that the facility meets minimum standards and remains accessible at all times.

At the ordinary meeting of 12 November 2013 the Council resolved (minute no. 494):

*"That the Council write to the Member for the Blue Mountains Roza Sage, the Minister for Emergency Services Michael Gallacher and the Premier Barry O'Farrell requesting that the State Government assign funding and a portion of the crown land at Katoomba Airport to be owned and operated by the State Government as a regional facility for airborne fire fighting and training facility."*

I therefore ask that you give favourable consideration to this proposal.

Should you wish to discuss this matter please feel free to contact Council on 4780 5000.

Yours faithfully,



MARK GREENHILL  
Mayor

Cc Mrs Rosa Sage M.P.  
Cc The Hon Michael Gallacher M.L.C.