

SHIRE OF WYNDHAM EAST KIMBERLEY

East Kimberley Regional Airport Committee Agenda

Wednesday 7 October 2026



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SHIRE OF WYNDHAM EAST KIMBERLEY
EAST KIMBERLEY REGIONAL AIRPORT COMMITTEE
AGENDA
KUNUNURRA COUNCIL CHAMBERS
TO BE HELD ON WEDNESDAY 7 OCTOBER 2026 AT 5:00 PM

- 1. DECLARATION OF OPENING**
- 2. RECORD OF ATTENDANCE / APOLOGIES**
- 3. DECLARATION OF INTEREST**
- 4. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES**
- 5. REPORTS**

5.1. OPERATIONAL REPORT

AUTHOR:	Gary Wright Executive Manager Airports
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:	Vernon Lawrence, Chief Executive Officer
FILE NO:	TBA
DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS:	Nil
COUNCIL'S ROLE IN THE MATTER:	Provider - provide physical infrastructure and essential services
VOTING REQUIREMENT:	Simple Majority

OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATION

That the Committee recommends to Council:

That Council notes the passenger and aircraft information in Attachment 1 and the EKRA Quarterly analysis in attachment 2.

PURPOSE

To provide the Airport Committee with year-to-date data to 30th September 2026 for passenger and aircraft movements. This data informs financial, operational and risk performance as well as the future strategic direction of the business unit including infrastructure requirements.

BACKGROUND / PREVIOUS CONSIDERATIONS BY COUNCIL OR COMMITTEE

This item was considered at the 25 March 2026 Airport Committee Meeting.

OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATION

Minute Number: 25/03/2026 - AC700

Moved: Cr B Robinson

Seconded: Cr D Menzel

That the East Kimberley Regional Airport Committee recommend to Council that it notes the passenger and aircraft information in Attachment 1.

Carried: 2/0

For: Cr D Menzel, Cr B Robinson

Against: Nil

COMMENTS

EKRA passenger and aircraft movements are monitored as indicators of airport activity, regional connectivity and demand. Activity is seasonal, with higher movements generally occurring through the East Kimberley dry season. Accordingly, early financial-year results should be considered in the context of seasonal patterns and should not be extrapolated across the full year without further data.

EKRA remains fundamentally stable from a longer-term passenger demand perspective, with annual passenger throughput having remained within approximately 96,000–98,000 passengers for the past four completed financial years. However, the decline experienced in Q4 FY2025/26, followed by lower passenger and aircraft movements at the commencement of FY2026/27, indicates an emerging downward trend that warrants closer monitoring.

The key issue is whether this represents a temporary reduction in airline capacity and scheduling or the commencement of a sustained reduction in regional aviation demand. At this stage the results do not indicate a structural deterioration in EKRA's underlying passenger base, but continuation of the trend would have implications for aeronautical revenue, airline connectivity and future airport planning.

Management should continue to monitor passenger numbers, aircraft movements, airline capacity and revenue performance, with the September and October 2026 results providing an important indication of whether the decline is continuing through the traditionally strong Q1 period.

The attached statistical information indicates that the East Kimberley Regional Airport (EKRA) has commenced FY2026/27 below the corresponding period in FY2025/26 for both passenger numbers and aircraft movements. While the decline is material, the data suggests it is broadly consistent across passenger demand and aviation activity rather than representing a deterioration in passenger utilisation alone.

- Passenger movements: July and August 2026 recorded 20,124 passengers, compared with 23,167 for the same period in FY2025/26. This represents a reduction of 3,043 passengers or 13.1%.
- Monthly trend: July passenger movements decreased from 11,753 to 10,560 (-10.2%), while August decreased from 11,414 to 9,564 (-16.2%), indicating the decline accelerated in August.
- Aircraft movements: July-August aircraft landing movements totalled 2,019, compared with 2,355 for the equivalent period last year, a reduction of 336 movements or 14.3%.
- Passengers relative to movements: Passenger numbers declined slightly less than aircraft movements. This suggests that passenger utilisation per aircraft movement has been broadly maintained, with the primary issue appearing to be reduced overall aviation activity/capacity rather than a significant deterioration in load utilisation.
- Airline composition: Airnorth accounted for 13,667 passenger movements (67.9%) during July-August, while Virgin Australia accounted for 6,459 (32.1%). No Nexus passenger movements are recorded for the period.
- Longer-term position: FY2025/26 recorded 97,578 passenger movements, the highest annual total shown in the dataset and slightly above the previous high of 97,675 in FY2022/23. This means the current decline is occurring from a comparatively strong FY2025/26 base.

Strategic Assessment

The early FY2026/27 results warrant monitoring rather than immediate concern. The key issue for the Shire is whether the reduction reflects a short-term change in airline scheduling and seasonal capacity or the beginning of a sustained reduction in passenger demand and services.

Given the importance of EKRA to regional connectivity and the Shire's airport revenue base, management should monitor passenger movements, scheduled airline capacity, aircraft movements and aeronautical revenue monthly. If the current passenger reduction of approximately 13% persists through the September quarter, further engagement with airlines would be appropriate to understand the underlying drivers and potential implications for FY2026/27 airport revenue and regional air connectivity

Current Position

Passenger movements

July	11,753	10,560	(1,193)	-10.2%
August	11,414	9,564	(1,850)	-16.2%
YTD	23,167	20,124	(3,043)	-13.1%

A total of 20,124 passenger movements were recorded during July and August 2026, 3,043 fewer than the same period in 2025/26. The year-on-year variance increased from 10.2% in July to 16.2% in August.

Historical context

2021/22	18,581
2022/23	22,275
2023/24	20,998
2024/25	19,865
2025/26	23,167
2026/27	20,124

Although below 2025/26, the current year-to-date result remains broadly within the range experienced over recent years. It is 1.3% above 2024/25, 4.2% below 2023/24 and 9.7% below 2022/23 for the corresponding two-month period. On the available data, the result is better characterised as a softening in activity rather than evidence of a structural decline.

Airline passenger activity

Airnorth	7,076	6,591	13,667	67.9%
Virgin Australia	3,484	2,973*	6,457*	32.1%
Nexus	-	-	-	0.0%
Total	10,560	9,564	20,124	100.0%

Airnorth accounted for approximately 67.9% of reported passenger movements, with Virgin Australia accounting for approximately 32.1%. This concentration reinforces the importance of airline retention, capacity and route development to the airport's future growth.

* Data quality note: the source data reports Virgin Australia August arrivals of 1,485 and departures of 1,490, which sum to 2,975 rather than the reported monthly total of 2,973. The reported airport total of 20,124 reconciles to the published airline monthly totals and has therefore been used in this report. The two-passenger discrepancy should be corrected in the underlying dataset.

Aircraft movements

July	1,213	1,068	(145)	-12.0%
August	1,142	951	(191)	-16.7%
YTD	2,355	2,019	(336)	-14.3%

Aircraft movements reduced by 14.3% year-on-year, slightly more than the 13.1% reduction in passenger movements. As a broad activity indicator, passenger movements per aircraft movement were approximately 9.97 in 2026/27 compared with 9.84 in 2025/26. This suggests the decline in passenger numbers is associated substantially with fewer aircraft movements rather than a material deterioration in passenger utilisation. This measure should, however, be treated cautiously because total aircraft movements include activity other than scheduled passenger services.

The first two months of 2026/27 show a clear reduction in both passenger and aircraft movements compared with the strong opening months of 2025/26. The reduction is not presently considered sufficient to establish a sustained trend, particularly given the seasonal nature of aviation and tourism activity in the East Kimberley.

Management will continue to monitor passenger demand, airline capacity, flight frequency and aircraft movements. Particular attention should be given to distinguishing whether the current variance is driven by changes in scheduled capacity, flight frequency, charter/general aviation activity or underlying passenger demand.

If the rolling year-to-date passenger variance remains worse than 10% at the end of October 2026, management should undertake a more detailed review of airline capacity and passenger demand and consider whether the full-year operational outlook requires adjustment.

Airport growth and regional connectivity: Sustained reductions in passenger or aircraft activity could affect route viability, airport revenues and regional connectivity. Airline engagement, service retention and route development remain important strategic priorities.

Financial sustainability: No direct financial adjustment is recommended on the basis of two months of activity. If the current trend persists, the impact on passenger-related and aviation revenue should be assessed against the 2026/27 budget.

Risk: The principal risks are prolonged reduction in airline capacity, dependence on a limited number of carriers, reduced regional connectivity and associated impacts on airport revenue and the visitor economy.

Workforce and service delivery: No immediate workforce or operational service change is proposed. Management should maintain sufficient operational capacity while monitoring activity trends.

Advocacy: The data provides an evidence base for continued engagement with airlines and Government regarding regional aviation connectivity, capacity, reliability and future investment at EKRA.

Strategic and Operational Implications

Airport growth and regional connectivity: Sustained reductions in passenger or aircraft activity could affect route viability, airport revenues and regional connectivity. Airline engagement, service retention and route development remain important strategic priorities.

Financial sustainability: No direct financial adjustment is recommended on the basis of two months of activity. If the current trend persists, the impact on passenger-related and aviation revenue should be assessed against the 2026/27 budget.

Risk: The principal risks are prolonged reduction in airline capacity, dependence on a limited number of carriers, reduced regional connectivity and associated impacts on airport revenue and the visitor economy.

Workforce and service delivery: No immediate workforce or operational service change is proposed. Management should maintain sufficient operational capacity while monitoring activity trends.

Advocacy: The data provides an evidence base for continued engagement with airlines and Government regarding regional aviation connectivity, capacity, reliability and future investment at EKRA.

Risk Implications

Financial	Medium	Monitor aviation and passenger-related revenue against budget if activity remains below prior-year levels.
Service / connectivity	Medium	Continue airline engagement and monitor capacity, frequency and route performance.
Strategic / economic	Medium	Maintain focus on airport growth, route development and regional connectivity.
Data integrity	Low	Correct the identified Virgin Australia August passenger discrepancy before external reuse.

STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

Nil

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

Nil

STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS

This matter relates to the following sections of the *Strategic Community Plan 2023-2033*:

Focus Area: CONNECTION

Goal 7: Connecting to the world - Creating access and turning our remoteness into a positive experience

Goal Outcome 7.1: Transport connections - People and goods are able to move freely in and out of the East Kimberley

Strategy 7.1: Advocate for the planning and funding of future transport infrastructure connecting to East Kimberley

RISK IMPLICATIONS

Risk: Failure to plan and resource a suitable airport facility which meets the long-term strategic goals and the region's economic development initiatives.

Control: Trend Analysis

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications arising from the preparation of this report.

The trend data underpins the financial performance of the airport. Financial data relevant to these trends will be included when relevant in future reports.

Current and Future Asset Considerations

No asset considerations arising from this report.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

No community engagement is required.

ATTACHMENTS

1. EKRA Statistics FY 26/27 to date
2. EKRA QTR by QTR Trend Analysis

5.2. FINANCIAL REPORT

AUTHOR:	Executive Manager Airports
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:	Vernon Lawrence, Chief Executive Officer
FILE NO:	FM.09.42
DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS:	Nil
COUNCIL'S ROLE IN THE MATTER:	Provider - provide physical infrastructure and essential services
VOTING REQUIREMENT:	Simple Majority

OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATION

That the Committee recommends to Council:

That Council notes the Interim Financial Report for the period ended 30 June 2026.

PURPOSE

To present the Financial Report for the period ended 30 June 2026 in accordance with Regulation 34 of the *Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations 1996*.

BACKGROUND / PREVIOUS CONSIDERATIONS BY COUNCIL OR COMMITTEE

The Airport Committee previously received a financial report for the period ended 28 February 2026. The report covered the normal airport operations, and the capital works relevant to the airport. It provided the budget, year to date budget, actual year to date and variance information. The financial statement was prepared in accordance with Regulation 34 of the *Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations 1996* where applicable.

The report showed total revenue to date of \$4.1 million, total costs of \$1.7 million and capital expenditure of \$12 million. This data was ahead of budget expectations.

Council adopted materiality thresholds of 10% or \$50,000 for reporting variances at the Ordinary Council Meeting held on 22 October 2024 and this will be applied equally to the airport financial data.

COMMENTS

The Financial Report comprises normal airport trading activities and capital works information prepared in accordance with Regulation 34 of the *Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations 1996*, where applicable.

The financial information contained within the report remains interim, with the 2025/26 year-end processes still to be completed, including final accruals and adjustments for both revenue and

expenditure. Notwithstanding this, the interim result provides a strong indication of the Airport's financial performance for the year.

Total Airport revenue for 2025/26 was approximately \$5.9 million, \$655,000 above budget, while operating expenditure of approximately \$5.7 million was \$656,000 below budget. On the interim figures, this represents a combined favourable variance against budget of approximately \$1.31 million before final year-end adjustments.

The financial result should also be considered alongside the Airport's operational performance. Passenger movements reached 97,578 during 2025/26, an increase of 1.5% from 96,109 in 2024/25. Passenger numbers have now remained between approximately 96,000 and 98,000 for four consecutive financial years, indicating that passenger demand has stabilised at a materially higher level than the COVID-affected period.

Of particular note, this passenger result was achieved despite aircraft movements declining by 8.8%, from 10,452 movements in 2024/25 to 9,532 in 2025/26. The Airport consequently recorded approximately 10.24 passengers per aircraft movement, the highest ratio within the six-year dataset. While this measure should not be interpreted as an aircraft load factor, it demonstrates that passenger throughput was maintained despite lower overall aircraft activity.

There was, however, a change in the trend during the final quarter of 2025/26. Q4 passenger movements decreased by 9.1% year-on-year, while aircraft movements decreased by 20.7%. This contrasts with passenger growth recorded during the first three quarters of the financial year and warrants continued monitoring during 2026/27.

The capital works program was also substantial during 2025/26. The Airport Runway Extension and Laine Jones Drive Extension were delivered during the year. The Runway Extension had a total project cost of \$19.6 million, funded through \$15.1 million from the Commonwealth Government Growing Regions Program, \$2.5 million from the State Government and \$2 million from the Airport Reserve.

Three planned projects were deferred:

- Car park upgrade: deferred pending more comprehensive investigation, scoping and design to establish an appropriate project scope and budget.
- Flight data replacement: deferred to a future financial year as replacement is not currently considered critical.
- Checked baggage scanning: deferred for delivery in 2026/27.

These projects were proposed to be funded through the Airport Reserve. Their deferral preserves reserve capacity in the short term but represents future capital commitments that need to remain incorporated within the Airport's long-term capital and reserve planning.

Overall assessment

The 2025/26 interim result reflects a strong financial and operational year for EKRA. Revenue exceeded budget, operating costs remained below budget and annual passenger throughput increased despite a reduction in aircraft movements. The Airport also delivered significant strategic infrastructure during the year, most notably the Runway Extension.

The key management issue moving into 2026/27 is therefore not the Airport's 2025/26 financial performance, which was strong, but whether the reduction in aviation activity evident in Q4 develops into a sustained trend. The first two months of 2026/27 provide some reason for continued monitoring, with passenger movements of 20,124 compared with 23,167 for July-August 2025, a reduction of 13.1%, while aircraft movements declined by approximately 14.3%. Management would therefore recommend that future Airport Committee financial reports integrate four indicators:

1. Passenger movements against prior year;
2. Aircraft movements against prior year;
3. Actual aeronautical revenue against budget; and
4. Airport Reserve balance and forecast capital commitments.

STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

[Regulation 34 of the Local Government \(Financial Management\) Regulations 1996](#)

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

Nil

STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS

This matter relates to the following sections of the *Strategic Community Plan 2023-2033*:

Focus Area: Sustainability

Goal 10: Community-driven Leadership - Leaders work with the community to develop and implement change in delivering positive outcomes

Goal Outcome 10.4: Innovation - Embrace technology, creativity and innovation to solve complex problems

Strategy 10.4: Integrate all planning and resource management to drive continuous improvement and innovation

RISK IMPLICATIONS

Risk: Non-compliance with Regulation 34 of the *Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations 1996*.

Controls: Financial Report presented to the Committee on a quarterly basis.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Nil

Current and Future Asset Considerations

Nil

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

No community engagement is required in relation to this item.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Interim Financial Statement - June 2026

5.3. TERMS OF REFERENCE AND AGENDA

AUTHOR:	Governance Officer
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:	Vernon Lawrence, Chief Executive Officer
FILE NO:	GN.05.1
DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS:	Nil
COUNCIL'S ROLE IN THE MATTER:	Provider - provide physical infrastructure and essential services
VOTING REQUIREMENT:	Simple Majority

OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATION

That the Committee recommends to Council:

That Council:

1. Endorses the revised reporting framework for East Kimberley Regional Airports Committee agendas, comprising the following three reports: Airport Performance Report; Commercial Development and Strategic Initiatives; and Compliance, Safety and Key Risks; and
2. Notes that MOR-1011 East Kimberley Regional Airports Committee Terms of Reference is under separate review and will be updated to align with the endorsed reporting framework, where required.

PURPOSE

To seek Council endorsement of a revised standing reporting framework for the East Kimberley Regional Airports Committee agenda, structured around three high-level reports covering airport performance, commercial and strategic initiatives, and compliance, safety and key risks.

BACKGROUND / PREVIOUS CONSIDERATIONS BY COUNCIL OR COMMITTEE

Council established the Airport Committee as a formal committee under section 5.8 of the Local Government Act 1995. The current MOR-1011 East Kimberley Regional Airports Committee Terms of Reference was endorsed by Council on 25 November 2025. It provides for the Committee to oversee and provide guidance on operational performance, strategic development, compliance, economic and community outcomes, connectivity, risk management and business continuity.

The Committee has operated with a range of individual agenda reports addressing these matters. Administration has reviewed the agenda structure to provide a clearer, more consistent and strategic reporting approach. The Terms of Reference is also currently under review and will be considered separately to ensure it remains aligned with the Committee's intended role and reporting arrangements.

COMMENTS

The proposed agenda framework consolidates recurring Committee reporting into three standing reports.

1. Airport Performance Report - provides a clear picture of current airport performance and outlook, including passenger numbers and trends, aircraft movements, seasonal trends, charter and general aviation activity, and significant economic activity or developments.
2. Commercial Development and Strategic Initiatives - provides visibility of initiatives intended to grow aviation activity, attract investment and improve the airports' long-term contribution to the region. This includes airline and operator opportunities, commercial development, strategic projects, grant and funding opportunities, government and industry engagement, capital works, planned investment, major event planning, airport expenditure and external funding.
3. Compliance, Safety and Key Risks - provides assurance that regulatory, safety and operational obligations are being managed and that material risks are understood. This includes regulatory compliance, safety performance, significant operational risks, operational preparedness, infrastructure and strategic risks, biosecurity and environmental risk, and emergency planning and exercises.

The revised structure is intended to reduce fragmented reporting and provide the Committee with a consistent view of performance, strategic activity and assurance matters at each meeting. It does not alter the Committee's advisory status or create delegated decision-making authority. Matters requiring a specific Committee recommendation or Council decision may continue to be presented as separate reports where appropriate. Sensitive security, regulatory or commercially confidential information will continue to be dealt with in accordance with applicable legislative requirements.

The current Terms of Reference is being reviewed in parallel. Any amendments required to align the Terms of Reference with the revised reporting framework will be presented through the appropriate approval process.

STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

The East Kimberley Regional Airports Committee is a committee established by Council under section 5.8 of the Local Government Act 1995. The Committee remains advisory and recommendations requiring Council determination are referred to Council.

The revised agenda reporting framework is administrative in nature and does not confer additional powers or duties on the Committee. Committee meetings and the consideration of confidential matters must continue to comply with the Local Government Act 1995, the *Local Government (Administration) Regulations 1996* and the Shire's Meeting Procedures Local Law 2016.

The current consolidated *Local Government Act 1995* is version 07-at0-01, current from 26 June 2026.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

MOR-1011 East Kimberley Regional Airports Committee Terms of Reference is directly relevant to this matter and is currently under review. No change to the Terms of Reference is proposed through this report; any required amendments will be presented separately for consideration.

No other specific policy implications have been identified.

STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS

This matter relates to the following sections of the *Strategic Community Plan 2023-2033*:

Focus Area: SUSTAINABILITY

Goal 10: Community-driven Leadership - Leaders work with the community to develop and implement change in delivering positive outcomes

Goal Outcome 10.3: Advocacy - Strong and consistent advocacy for local needs and priorities

Strategy 10.3: The Shire will influence decisions of others in a way that recognises and prioritises the needs of our local community

RISK IMPLICATIONS

Risk: Inadequate or inconsistent reporting to the Committee may result in material operational, strategic, compliance, safety or other risks not being identified, monitored or escalated in a timely manner.

Control: The proposed standing report structure provides a consistent governance control by ensuring operational performance, strategic initiatives, compliance, safety and material risks are routinely reported to the Committee. Matters outside the standing reports can continue to be separately reported where a specific recommendation or decision is required.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no direct financial implications arising from endorsement of the revised agenda reporting framework. Financial performance, expenditure, capital investment, grant funding and other material financial matters relating to the airports will continue to be reported through the appropriate standing report and the Shire's established budget and financial management processes.

Current and Future Asset Considerations

There are no direct asset implications arising from endorsement of the agenda framework. Airport capital works, planned investment and emerging infrastructure risks will be reported through the Commercial Development and Strategic Initiatives and Compliance, Safety and Key Risks reports as applicable.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

No community engagement is required.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Airport Committe New Agenda September [**5.3.1** - 1 page]
2. MOR-1011 East Kimberley Regional Airports Committee TOR V2.0 - Reviewed [**5.3.2** - 3 pages]
3. MOR-1011 East Kimberley Regional Airports Committee TOR V1.0 - Current [**5.3.3** - 3 pages]

6. MATTERS FOR WHICH THE MEETING MAY BE CLOSED TO THE PUBLIC

6.1. CISC NON COMPLIANCE NOTICES

AUTHOR:	Executive Manager Airports
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:	Vernon Lawrence, Chief Executive Officer
FILE NO:	GN.05.1
DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS:	Nil
COUNCIL'S ROLE IN THE MATTER:	Provider - provide physical infrastructure and essential services
VOTING REQUIREMENT:	Simple Majority

PURPOSE

To inform Council of aviation security compliance findings issued by the Critical Infrastructure Security Centre (CISC) following compliance activities undertaken at East Kimberley Regional Airport in September 2026, and to summarise the matters requiring corrective action or operational improvement.

MATTER IS BEING CONSIDERED BEHIND CLOSED DOORS

This item is to be considered behind closed doors as per the *Local Government Act 1995*:
[Section 5.23. \(4\) \(e\)](#)

7. CLOSURE