

Good morning

I'd like to strongly be involved in any inquiry regarding airfares to/from Mount Isa.

We have lived in Mount Isa for 6 years now and moved here from the Gold Coast (Mount Tamborine).

In the past I believed that the Government was always supportive of regional towns and encouraging people to move to rural/remote areas to relieve the pressure building in the main cities and create more long term sustainability for small towns.

Now having lived in Mount Isa for 6 years I can see that regional towns are not supported by government, when companies like Qantas can charge what they like for people to try and fly to these regions. The number of flights are extremely limited – and have reduced even further since we've lived here – and the cost is often \$400 + each way per person from Mount Isa to Brisbane.

Even when you book flights in advance – see the booking attached which was booked in April to fly in May and was \$418 one way. My husband attended a wedding, but due to the high cost I could not afford to fly down with him.

Whereas if we still lived on the coast we could buy cheap tickets any time – e.g. from Brisbane to Melbourne for \$99 each way. It seems that the regional towns are paying for the coastal hubs to be able to provide these cheap deals, which simply is not fair.

We both have professional careers in Mount Isa, but if people living here are not able to fly home to visit friends and relatives, they will eventually end up leaving town. I have seen this happen frequently in the past 6 years, including a work colleague who was unable to fly to Townsville when her father in law was dying because the airfares were going to be over \$1000 one way for her and 2 children to fly.

If Qantas reduced their airfares more people would fly down to the Coast on a regular basis and fill the planes, so it doesn't make sense to charge hundreds of dollars and make it so difficult for regular families to travel.

Now Qantas are also cancelling flights, so we're not even receiving the services that Qantas are supposed to provide. E.g. I am in Brisbane for work on Friday 19 January and was going to fly back on the 3.30pm flight BNE/ISA but for some reason that flight is not even operating on that day, so now I have to fly back Saturday morning, encroaching on my weekend time.

They are also contracting all their current flights to Alliance which are not of the same service standard as Qantas and yet we are still paying between \$400-\$600 for flights one way to Brisbane.

This whole monopoly has got to be investigated, or you can guarantee towns like Mount Isa will continue to lose really valuable community members, who will move back to the coast.

If you need further examples or would like to discuss this directly just let me know.

Regards
Victoria Corner