

# News

**NEW AAPA  
CAMPUS**  
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**AIRLINE  
CADETS**  
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*Regional Airlines (Rex) has opened the new Wagga Wagga campus of the Australian Airline Pilot Academy (AAPA). Justin Grey reports.*

REX established the AAPA (a wholly owned subsidiary of Regional Express Holdings Limited) as an in-house training school in late 2007 in the wake of the widespread pilot shortage that swept through the airline industry. The AAPA was based at Mangalore, Victoria until April 2009, when it moved to already existing facilities at Wagga Wagga.

## Rex opens new AAPA campus

The new Wagga \$12 million AAPA campus is a state of the art facility featuring an academic centre, flight training centre, on-campus accommodation, dining and recreational facilities.

The new campus was unveiled in a lavish ceremony on May 27 that was attended by the Minister for Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government, Anthony Albanese, local and state government representatives, and representatives from CASA, Airservices Australia, and Piper Aircraft, Inc..



ABOVE: Rex's Jim Davis presents Minister Albanese with a model Seminole at the opening ceremony.

RIGHT: The view of the swimming pool from one of the classrooms.

TOP: This Rex Saab greets visitors at the new AAPA campus.



From the new campus AAPA expects to train up to 200 pilots annually.

"The buildings are the realisation of a dream that began about two and a half years ago," Managing Director of Rex and Chairman of the AAPA, Jim Davis, said while opening the new campus. "It was only in July of last year that we started working on this facility, and already by February of this year we had cadets living in the accommodation. We think this will become the best facility of its type in this part of the world."

Officially opening the campus, Minister Albanese said the new AAPA campus fills a great void in the Australian pilot training market.

"This facility embodies what we're talking about in the Aviation White Paper – released in December last year – in terms of the skills and training agenda that's so vital for the aviation industry," Albanese said. "It is a facility that is extraordinary.

"When you're talking about uplifting people's skills, the environment in which they learn is absolutely critical. I know that every single student that comes through these facilities will be more than satisfied that they're working with state of the art equipment."

Minister Albanese used his speech at the opening ceremony to announce a \$1.05 million Federal Government grant to Wagga Wagga Council to install an instrument landing system (ILS) at Wagga Wagga Airport.

"ILSs are critical for airports and for training – they make sure that you're less dependent upon the weather," he said. "Installing the ILS at the airport will help the academy develop as a world-class training facility."

Coupled with its new training facilities and three ELITE s623 iGate simulators, the AAPA boasts an impressive fleet of new Piper aircraft, including 16 Warriors and four twin engine Seminole

– all replete with Avidyne glass cockpits. Piper Aircraft, Inc. President and CEO Kevin Gould, as well as the entire Piper Board of Directors and Piper Aircraft Asia's Managing Director Mary Messuti, were on hand for the ceremony, where both AAPA's operational Pipers and those still being assembled were on show.

"The AAPA will provide the most modern training resources available including full glass cockpit training aircraft and cutting edge flight simulators to fully immerse student pilots in the total aviation environment," NSW Gov't Parliamentary Secretary for Regional Development Noreen Hay said. "It's reassuring that future pilots will be provided with the most modern and holistic training possible through these facilities."

The AAPA has earmarked more than \$25 million for ongoing investment initiatives into equipment and facilities at its new Wagga campus through to 2014.