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Wagga Wagga Airport to get ILS

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In a major technology upgrade, Wagga Wagga Airport will start operating an Instrument Landing System (ILS) by later this year.

Airservices Australia, Wagga Wagga City Council, and Regional Express (Rex) have entered a collaborative agreement to purchase, install and operate the ILS at Wagga Wagga Airport with the assistance of Federal Government funding. The ILS is a precision approach radio navigation aid and the current international standard for providing ground based approach guidance to an airport's runways.

Yesterday Minister for Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government, Anthony Albanese, confirmed that almost \$1.1 million will be provided to Wagga Wagga City Council as part of the Regional and Local Community Infrastructure Program for the installation of an ILS. The total investment in the ILS is expected to be approximately \$1.6 million.

An ILS installed at Wagga will pave the way for further growth and development of Wagga Wagga as a pilot training and aviation technical training regional hub. The joint investment will foster the development of the airport as a national centre of aviation, particularly in education and training. Rex Managing Director Jim Davis said the ILS would significantly strengthen the airport's pilot training capability.

"It will allow us to conduct ILS training in Wagga Wagga rather than flying to other airports," Davis said. "It will considerably enhance the pilot training capability of Wagga Wagga Airport and will be a key ingredient to the planned expansion of the [Rex-owned AAPA] pilot academy."

"Airservices has made a major commitment to aviation in regional Australia through the establishment of our technical training school at TAFE NSW's Riverina Institute," Airservices CEO Greg Russell said. "With an active ILS at the airport, our technical trainees will be able to receive hands-on experience without leaving Wagga Wagga, enhancing the value of their training."

Airservices Chairman David Forsyth said the ILS is expected to be operational around September/October, pending approvals and successful testing.