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## News

# No input on Vic airport cash: minister

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**A \$1 million grant for an airport where Victoria's aviation minister parks his plane was approved without his input, he says.**

GORDON Rich-Phillips says he declared his membership of Tyabb Airport to his department, and the grant process was done independently.

"That application was handled entirely by the department, by departmental officers within the department, without reference to me," he told reporters on Wednesday.

Mr Rich-Phillips parks his plane at the privately-owned Tyabb Airport, 68km from Melbourne, on the edge of the city's growing south-eastern fringe.

Shadow Attorney-General Martin Pakula said Mr Rich-Phillips' explanation about how the facility got \$1 million was insufficient, given the fund was intended for public-use regional airports.

"The revelations today that a \$1 million has been given to an urban fringe airport which is fundamentally for private use, I think is a very concerning revelation," Mr Pakula told reporters.

"It seems very curious that a large amount of money has been given to a facility which doesn't seem to fit the criteria for that money."

Mr Rich-Phillips said the fund was set up to stop airports in regional and outer-fringe communities closing, after a number of airports closed before 2011.

He said about 20 airports got funding from the program, with Warrnambool, Hamilton and Lethbridge also getting \$1 million or more.

"The guidelines were established to provide infrastructure upgrade support to public use airports," he said.

"The focus is on the way in which the airports are used, not in the way in which they are owned."

Extracted from:

<http://www.couriermail.com.au/news/breaking-news/no-input-on-vic-airport-cash-minister/story-fnihsfrf-1227083936238>

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