

# Media Release

**The Hon Martin Pakula MP**

Minister for Industry Support and Recovery

Minister for Trade

Minister for Business Precincts

Minister for Tourism, Sport and Major Events

Minister for Racing



Sunday, 13 February 2022

## MORE INTERNATIONAL FLIGHTS MEANS MORE JOBS FOR VICTORIANS

A major international airline is increasing its services to Melbourne, creating 110 new jobs in the aviation and tourism sectors and delivering a \$17 million boost to the economy – thanks to support from the Andrews Labor Government.

Minister for Industry Support and Recovery and Minister for Trade Martin Pakula today announced Etihad Airways will increase air services from Abu Dhabi to Melbourne to establish a daily year-round service from 27 March 2022.

The additional two flights each week will expand international air services from the United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom and Europe – bolstering tourism, international student access and air freight capacity for exports.

The new services will allow 12,500 extra visitors to come to Victoria and drive the revitalisation of Victoria's international aviation sector which directly employs 6,700 people and supports thousands of other jobs.

The flights will help also strengthen Victoria's trade links with United Arab Emirates. Before the COVID-19 pandemic, the United Arab Emirates was Victoria's seventh largest export destination, with two-way trade activity estimated at around \$183 million in 2019.

In 2019, European tourists carried by Etihad contributed approximately \$63 million to Victoria's economy, with the airline uplifting almost \$176 million in air freight from Victoria to Europe and the UK.

The additional services by Etihad Airways follows the recently announced Bamboo Airways services from Vietnam to Melbourne that will commence later this year and Qantas' new passenger route from Melbourne to Delhi that commenced in December last year.

### Quotes attributable to Minister for Industry Support and Recovery and Minister for Trade Martin Pakula

*"We're backing the return of more international flights because they deliver more investment and jobs for Victoria."*

*"Supporting the aviation sector is another way we are investing in our state's economic recovery."*

### Quote attributable to Etihad Airways CEO Tony Douglas

*"Melbourne is a key destination for Etihad Airways and we look forward to serving the city with daily flights as business and leisure travel demand continues to rebound."*

### Quote Attributable to Melbourne Airport Chief of Aviation Lorie Argus

*"Etihad's decision to bring forward the return of daily flights is a huge vote of confidence in Melbourne."*