

Media Release

The Hon Ben Carroll MP

Minister for Industry and Innovation
Minister for Manufacturing Sovereignty
Minister for Employment
Minister for Public Transport



Sunday, 2 April 2023

RETURN OF LATIN AMERICAN AIRLINE TO LAND MORE JOBS IN VICTORIA

The Andrews Labor Government is supporting LATAM, Latin America's largest airline, to return to Melbourne – boosting Victoria's economy, bringing more visitors and international students to the state, increasing trade opportunities and creating hundreds of local jobs.

Minister for Industry and Innovation Ben Carroll today welcomed the decision by LATAM Airlines to restart its direct services to Melbourne from Santiago, Chile after pausing them in March 2020 due to the pandemic.

Backed by the Labor Government and Melbourne Airport, LATAM's direct flights to Melbourne will begin from September with three flights a week – adding more than 38,500 seats to the state. The services will deliver a \$52.5 million boost to the Victorian economy each year and create an estimated 297 new jobs in aviation and tourism.

Santiago is a major hub in Latin America and serves as a gateway to key markets including Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, Mexico, and Peru. The region is home to almost 660 million people and offers growing opportunities for Victorian businesses in key industries such as agri-food, energy, and mining and minerals.

LATAM's flights will strengthen our export access to Latin America with its Boeing 787-8 aircraft able to carry up to 10 tonnes in air freight each way. Two-way goods trade between Victoria and the region was valued at \$2.8 billion in 2021-22.

Victoria is also a popular study destination for students from Latin America. In 2019, almost 20,000 international students from the region were enrolled in Victorian institutions.

Other airlines the Labor Government has supported recently to expand their international services to Melbourne include Qantas Airways, Cathay Pacific, Qatar Airways, Singapore Airlines, United Airlines, Emirates, Etihad, Bamboo Airways, Scoot, VietJet and EL AL.

Victoria's international aviation sector directly employs 6,700 people and supports thousands of other jobs.

Quote attributable to Minister for Industry and Innovation Ben Carroll

"We're backing the return of LATAM Airlines – it will help power our economy by boosting exports, creating jobs and welcoming more tourists and students from Latin America."

Quote attributable to Melbourne Airport Chief Executive Officer Lorie Argus

"The return of LATAM means Melbourne will once again have a direct link to South America, which is crucial for business, tourism and trade."

Quote attributable to LATAM Airlines Country Manager – Oceania Chris Ellis

"We are extremely excited to work with the Victorian Government and Melbourne Airport to resume LATAM's direct flights to South America. It's a pleasure to be taking up residence again in Melbourne as we expand our footprint in Australia."