

Media Release

The Hon Ben Carroll MP

Minister for Industry and Innovation
Minister for Manufacturing Sovereignty
Minister for Employment
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MORE FLIGHTS FROM CHINA TO BOOST TOURISM, TRADE AND JOBS

One of China's largest airlines will add 10 more flights each week to Melbourne, bringing more visitors, enabling more exports and creating more jobs, thanks to support from the Andrews Labor Government.

Minister for Industry and Innovation Ben Carroll today announced that China Southern Airlines will operate 17 non-stop flights per week to Melbourne from Guangzhou and potentially Shenzhen by the end of 2024.

Backed by the Labor Government and Melbourne Airport, the extra 10 flights per week will add almost 154,000 seats to Melbourne and contribute more than \$308 million to the Victorian economy annually, while creating an estimated 1,700 jobs in the aviation and tourism sectors.

China Southern currently operates a daily flight to Melbourne Airport from Guangzhou, one of China's largest cities and a key trading and transport hub. The airline will increase to two daily flights by November and then add three more flights per week from either Guangzhou or nearby Shenzhen by December 2024.

The additional flights will help accelerate the return of visitors from China, which was Victoria's largest international tourism market in 2019 with more than 675,000 visitors contributing \$3.4 billion to the local economy.

There are more than 33,000 international students from China in Victoria, making up 23 per cent of international students in the state.

With more than 6,000 tonnes of air freight capacity annually, these extra flights will enable more exports to China, Victoria's largest trading partner. In 2022, two-way trade with China was worth almost \$40 billion.

China Southern adds to a growing list of major international airlines the Government has supported to expand flights to Melbourne including Qantas, Cathay Pacific, Qatar Airways, Singapore Airlines, United Airlines, Emirates, Etihad Airways, Bamboo Airways, Scoot, VietJet and LATAM Airlines.

Quote attributable to Minister for Industry and Innovation Ben Carroll

"We're helping secure more international flights into Victoria because they deliver significant economic benefits for our state – boosting tourism, trade, international education, business connections and local jobs."

Quote attributable to Melbourne Airport Chief Executive Officer Lorie Argus

"Thanks to our partnership with the Victorian Government, Melbourne has been one of the fastest markets in the world to recover non-stop capacity from China, which delivers a boost to tourism, education and primary producers."

Quote attributable to China Southern Airlines Vice Chairman and President Han Wensheng

"China Southern Airlines is fully committed to providing exceptional service and fostering strong ties between China and Australia. Together, we can continue to build an air bridge between our two nations and promote prosperity for both Victoria and China."