

# Media Release

**The Hon Natalie Hutchins MP**  
Minister for Jobs and Industry  
Minister for Treaty and First Peoples  
Minister for Women



Thursday, 18 April 2024

## NEW SOUTH KOREA FLIGHTS TAKE OFF FROM VICTORIA

In a boost for state-wide tourism and trade, new non-stop flights from South Korea to Melbourne Airport will soon be available on Asiana Airlines – backed by the Allan Labor Government.

Minister for Jobs and Industry Natalie Hutchins today welcomed Asiana Airlines' new seasonal flights between Melbourne Airport and Seoul Incheon International Airport, starting with four services per week from July until September 2024.

The flights will secure better connections with one of Victoria's leading markets in tourism, investment and international students – generating a \$3.8 million boost to the state's economy.

Asiana Airlines is the largest airline in South Korea and in 2023 more than 40,000 people travelled between South Korea and Victoria. These numbers are expected to grow with the addition of these non-stop flights – which are the only direct flights between the two airports.

The flights will also enable investors and international students to travel to Melbourne with much greater ease and will support air freight trade, which was worth \$150 million in 2023.

South Korea's increasing demand for Victoria's high-quality goods and services will provide significant export opportunities across a range of industries including meat and aluminum – with the chosen Airbus A350 providing an increase of 360 tonnes in freight capacity.

Victoria's visitor economy continues to thrive with Melbourne becoming Australia's first capital city airport to exceed pre-pandemic international capacity in December 2023. Global travelers generated \$6.4 billion in tourism expenditure across the state last year.

The Labor Government has recently supported a number of airlines to add new flights into the state, including new Air India flights between Mumbai Airport and Melbourne Airport, Turkish Airlines flights between Türkiye and Melbourne Airport and Jetstar flights between Brisbane and Avalon Airport.

### Quote attributable to Minister for Jobs and Industry Natalie Hutchins

*"South Korea is an important trading partner for Victoria and these flights will make the connection even stronger – boosting investment, economic growth and creating more jobs for Victorians."*

*"Our international aviation sector continues to grow, creating a ripple effect of opportunity across the whole state."*

### Quote attributable to Melbourne Airport Chief Executive Officer Lorie Argus

*"This increase in seasonal flying highlights Asiana's confidence in both Melbourne and Victoria and we look forward to working with them to eventually grow this service into a year-round offering."*

### Quote attributable to Asiana Airlines Senior Vice President Seon Jin Lim

*"With our latest A350 aircraft and the best safety and service, we will do our best to ensure a comfortable journey for our passengers on the Melbourne to Seoul direct flights."*

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