



MEDIA RELEASE

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Airport infrastructure supporting growth in aviation passengers and freight

The latest data on domestic aviation activity during 2016 highlights the critical importance of Australia's airports in supporting growth in the numbers of passengers and freight being moved by aviation.

AAA CEO, Caroline Wilkie said the ongoing program of investment in aeronautical infrastructure at metropolitan and regional airports was making a significant contribution to the Australian economy and the productivity of the aviation sector.

According to the Bureau of Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Economics (BITRE) latest report on domestic aviation activity for December 2016:

- There were 5.33 million passengers carried on Australian domestic commercial aviation during December 2016 which was a 1.1 per cent increase on December 2015.
- For the year ending December 2016, there were 58.93 million RPT (regular passenger transport) passengers which was a 2.5 per cent increase on the previous year.
- Melbourne-Sydney was Australia's busiest domestic air route in December 2016 with 731,536 passengers which was the equivalent of 23,791 passengers travelling on the route every day of the month.
- The second busiest route was Brisbane-Sydney with 406,843 passengers, followed by Brisbane-Melbourne with 311,657 passengers.
- The biggest percentage increase in RPT passenger numbers compared to December 2015 was on the Hamilton Island-Melbourne route which grew by 23.4 per cent. There were large increases on other routes, including Melbourne-Sunshine Coast (up 15.4 per cent), Ayers Rock (Uluru)-Sydney (up 15.3 per cent), Hamilton Island-Sydney (up 12.8 per cent) and Ballina-Sydney (up 12.1 per cent).

The vital role of regional airports was highlighted by the fact they accounted for almost 40 per cent of total domestic passenger movements in December 2016. There were 2.06 million domestic passenger movements through regional airports for the month, which was an increase of 1.3 per cent on December 2015.

Aviation and airports also make a significant contribution to the domestic freight task especially for the movement of high value, time sensitive goods. Total cargo movements at Australian airports on domestic RPT flights were 40.9 thousand tonnes which was a 22.2 per cent increase compared to December 2015.

Melbourne was the busiest airport for domestic RPT cargo in December 2016, accounting for 28.7 per cent of total cargo, followed by Sydney, Perth, Brisbane and Adelaide. More than 435,000 tonnes of cargo were carried on domestic RPT services during 2016, a 20 per cent increase on the previous year.

Fixed-wing charter operators carried 188.96 thousand passengers in December 2016 which was a decrease of 11.5 per cent on December 2015. Perth is Australia's busiest airport for charter activity, accounting for 39.4 per cent of all charter passengers in Australia.

About the Australian Airports Association:

The Australian Airports Association has been representing airports across the country for the past 30 years. It represents 260 airport members, including all the capital city airports through to the small regional aerodromes of rural Australia.
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