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ACCC report confirms airport recovery remains strong but not pre-COVID levels

The Australian Airports Association (AAA) notes today's release of the annual Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) Airport Monitoring report for 2022-2023.

The report is released on the day Bonza has suspended services around the country.

"Airports worked to support Bonza to enter the Australian market and we are monitoring the emerging situation closely while we assist affected passengers at terminals across Australia," AAA Chief Executive James Goodwin said.

The ACCC report highlights the recovery is not yet complete. While passenger numbers have seen a year-on-year increase of 127.4 per cent, they are still well below the pre-pandemic levels.

"While domestic aviation has led the recovery 2022-23 passenger levels are still 10.4 per cent lower than 2018-19. International operations have been slower to recover, remaining at 31 per cent below pre-COVID levels," Mr Goodwin said.

"It is clear the main reason for the incomplete recovery is constrained airline capacity, particularly from the two main domestic carriers," he said.

"The rebound in airport revenues simply reflects the increased number of travellers, with the reporting period the first without COVID border or travel restrictions," he said.

"The report was during a period of high airfares but it is important to note airport charges remain a significantly and persistently low proportion of the airfares, only making up around 4.8% of the total cost of an airfare or less than \$20," Mr Goodwin said.

"Calls to mandate the Aeronautical Pricing Principles are unnecessary with the report showing that airports are operating fairly, not holding back aviation growth nor contributing to high passenger airfares." Mr Goodwin said.

"Despite the challenges of the pandemic, we are pleased to note the quality-of-service rating as 'good' which highlights traveller satisfaction with airports" Mr Goodwin said.

On car parking, Mr Goodwin noted "It is important to highlight the number of vehicles that used car parks increased significantly during the period but the actual price to park a car at the airport fell in real terms," he said.

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