

Extra 22,000 reasons to travel to Hobart starts today

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Today marks the beginning of a new era at Hobart Airport with the first direct flight from Newcastle to Hobart touching down with 150-plus visitors this evening.

Hobart Airport COO Matt Cocker said the seasonal service would add 22,000-plus seats.

“The new direct flight to Newcastle unlocks the largest population area in Australia that we weren’t flying directly to previously,” Mr Cocker said.

“There’s well over one million new potential travellers across the greater Newcastle Hunter region and that’s a great opportunity for our tourism and hospitality industries.

“Travellers can save time and money by flying direct between Hobart and Newcastle, rather than from Sydney or via Melbourne, and that’s going to really appeal to a lot of holiday-makers.

“It’s been more than eight years since we’ve unlocked a new direct domestic route between Hobart and the mainland, so today is a great milestone. The last new direct domestic route was from Hobart to the Gold Coast in 2017.”

The Newcastle flights will run three times a week on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays, from December to April under an initial three year agreement.

The Chief Executive Officer of the Tourism Industry Council Tasmania (TICT), Amy Hills, said that the addition of new, direct flights is always a welcome signal of strength and confidence in Tasmania as a destination and will be music to the ears of operators.

“Visitors from greater Newcastle Hunter region will now more easily be able travel to Tassie, increasing the pool of potential visitors to the state and creating thousands more advocates to share their experiences with friends and family.

“As a tourism industry, we are all about making a positive impact to the lives of Tasmanians as well. So when a new direct service is made available, supported by visitation - it assists Tasmanians to travel more easily into those regions – making it a win-win for both our visitor economy and community.”

Ms Hills said with states and territories competing more aggressively than ever before for more air access and visitors into their states, Tasmania could simply not take its foot off the pedal when it comes to backing the visitor economy and keeping pace.

Mr Cocker said the service was designed to strengthen Tasmania’s connectivity, and encouraged Tasmanians to enjoy and support the new service.

“We thank Jetstar for their confidence in the region and as a team we’re also really proud of the key



role we've played in securing these flights and many others," Mr Cocker said. "Unlocking this new route, together with boosting existing ones, was important for continuing to build Tasmania's connectedness.

"In recent months, Hobart Airport together with industry partners and State Government has secured the return of the Air New Zealand Auckland flight, Qantas direct flight to Perth, and a 50,000 passenger boost through increased capacity to Jetstar flights from Hobart to Melbourne.

"The addition of the entirely new route from Hobart to Newcastle is really the cherry on top for a stellar year at Hobart Airport.

"This is why Hobart Airport is investing \$200 million to double the size of our terminal."

Jetstar's Executive Manager Commercial, Lyle Brownscombe said Jetstar was thrilled to be making this route a reality.

"Hunter residents can now reach Tasmania's wilderness, food and wine experiences without the hassle of connecting through other cities - saving time and money," Lyle Brownscombe said.

"This service will also boost tourism across Newcastle and the Hunter, allowing more people than ever to experience this region's stunning beaches and world-class wineries.

"I want to extend my sincere thanks to the New South Wales and Tasmanian governments as well as Newcastle and Hobart airports for their strong support of low fares travel and tourism."

The new service will be marked at Hobart Airport with photo opportunities for travellers and a celebratory cake cutting, a long-standing aviation tradition for new routes.

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