

Media | Release

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Christchurch and Adelaide airports combine forces

The airports of Christchurch and sister city Adelaide have announced they will work together to secure a direct air service between the two cities.

A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) has been signed to link one of the largest un-serviced city pairs in Australasia, with the intention of benefitting business, freight and tourism of both cities.

Christchurch Airport CEO Jim Boulton says the initiative has been under discussion between the two airports for three or four months.

"Both airports have been keen to cement a formal agreement to investigate and encourage an airline to take up the route," says Mr Boulton.

"The recent new Open Skies policy over Christchurch until mid-2017 means any carrier can consider this opportunity, depending on its own air service agreements with Australia.

"The support package we'll offer the first airline to serve the route is valued at \$7.5m NZD, depending on the exchange rate at the time. It's based on a daily service, as well as other assumptions which we'll work our way through with the airline which takes up the opportunity."

The MoU allows both airports to jointly pursue stakeholder engagement and encourage an airline to start flying the route.

In the past year, approximately 38,910 people travelled between the South Island and South Australia. Research shows considerably more would travel between both points if they could fly direct, which supports the argument for a new service. This suggests a direct daily service would have considerable uptake and could be worth as much as \$30m NZD (\$23.75m AUD) to the regional and South Island economy.

Adelaide Airport Ltd Managing Director Mark Young says a direct air service is very appealing. He says there are many common attributes between the two cities, not least a sister city relationship of more than 40 years.

"A direct air service to Christchurch Airport will definitely be an attractive offer to South Australians. They know Christchurch is on the doorstep of a winter playground, as well as beaches and outdoor adventures in the summer," Mr Young says.

"The opportunity also exists for New Zealanders to experience Adelaide for its cosmopolitan atmosphere, great wineries, eco-tourism and gateway to the Outback."

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For further comment, please contact:

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Christchurch International Airport – New Zealand’s Tourism Gateway

Christchurch International Airport welcomes almost six million passengers a year, ranking as New Zealand’s second largest airport. The Airport occupies a unique position economically, as the South Island’s busiest and most strategic air connection to the world’s trade and tourism markets. 85% of international visitors to the South Island are welcomed and farewelled at Christchurch Airport.

In addition, the airport plays an important role as the South Island’s major domestic hub servicing all New Zealanders, enabling passengers to connect to a full spectrum of destinations throughout New Zealand. Christchurch International Airport is a major driver of the regional Canterbury economy, generating airport precinct related jobs for nearly 5000 people.

Christchurch International Airport is owned and operated by Christchurch International Airport Limited (CIAL). CIAL was established as a limited liability company in 1988, and ownership of CIAL is now shared by Christchurch City Holdings Limited with 75% and the New Zealand Government with 25%. The company’s vision is to be recognised as New Zealand’s leading tourist gateway.

Christchurch International Airport is a carbon neutral company and has received carboNZero certification from Landcare Research following a detailed measurement and analysis process. CIAL is the first airport company in the Southern Hemisphere to attain certified carbon neutral status and is the second carbon neutral certified airport company in the world.

Visit christchurchairport.co.nz for more information.