

## Media | Release

Tuesday, 6 May 2014

### **Christchurch the fastest growing point of entry for Chinese visitors**

New statistics reveal Christchurch Airport to be New Zealand's fastest growing point of entry for Chinese visitors.

The figures from Statistics New Zealand show Christchurch to have had a 60% increase in Chinese passengers in the past six months.

General Manager of Aeronautical Business Development, Matthew Findlay, says the statistics underline the fascination Chinese travellers have discovered for the South Island.

"At these growth rates, modelling indicates that more Chinese will travel via international hubs than domestic ones to travel to and from the South Island," he says.

"The new Chinese government travel regulations of last October discourage the low-value very short stay products which fuelled early growth from China. Visitors to the South Island spend more and stay longer on average – the average South Island stay is 25 days versus 13 days in the North Island. This highlights the enduring value the South Island offers New Zealand's tourism outcomes."

Mr Findlay says the increase in Chinese tourism expenditure in the South Island benefits more than just tourism.

"These new figures clearly show the South Island as the site of the fastest growing Chinese expenditure in the country, up 74% year on year. There is no doubt Christchurch Airport's growth means the gains from Chinese tourism will be widely spread across all regions in the South Island, which is great news for regional economies and employment."

Mr Findlay says as well as tourism, many other South Island industry sectors will benefit from improving visitor volumes and increasing air networks.

"Increased passenger numbers drive increased aircraft sizes and frequencies," he says. "Because Christchurch Airport can accommodate all aircraft types, visitor growth will open up export and economic growth opportunities for South Island producers to export high value product to fast growing Asian markets."

“A recent PWC report estimated South Island businesses and regional economies are missing out on exporting as much as 17,000 tonnes of premium value products annually, because the air capacity doesn’t yet exist to export it.

“There is a symbiotic relationship between growing visitor numbers to Christchurch and unlocking what appears to be a large amount of untapped economic export potential across the South Island’s many regions. Unlocking that potential is great news for the New Zealand economy.”

<b>Chinese Visitor Passenger Movement Volumes</b>					
<b>Source: Stats NZ Purpose of Visit / Stats NZ Permanent Residence</b>					
	<b>Christchurch</b>	<b>Auckland</b>	<b>Wellington</b>	<b>Queenstown</b>	<b>New Zealand</b>
% Increase / Decrease (-) 6 Months to	<b>60%</b>	<b>-1%</b>	<b>-1%</b>	<b>26%</b>	<b>3%</b>

  

<b>Christchurch</b>	
Oct 12 to Mar 13	13,342
Oct 13 to Mar 14	21,285
% Increase / Decrease (-)	<b>60%</b>
Apr 13 to Mar 14	30,774

Approximately 18%<sup>1</sup> of Chinese visitors spend time in the South Island when visiting New Zealand. Christchurch's effective catchment population is approximately 85,000 passenger movements.

<sup>1</sup> [http://www.christchurchnz.com/media/203872/chinese\\_visitors\\_to\\_the\\_south\\_island.pdf](http://www.christchurchnz.com/media/203872/chinese_visitors_to_the_south_island.pdf)

For further comment, please contact:

Yvonne Densem

Manager Communications

Christchurch International Airport Limited

Phone: 03 353 7807 / 021 450 202

### **Christchurch Airport – bringing the world South**

Christchurch Airport welcomed 5.5 million passengers last 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. 81% 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 6000 people.

Government policy currently offers 'Open Skies' over Christchurch until 2017, giving favourable consideration to airlines offering new services to and from the city.

Christchurch 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 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](http://christchurchairport.co.nz) for more information.