PERTH AIRPORT ANNOUNCES ITS VISION FOR THE FUTURE

Perth Airport has announced a $1 billion vision for the future of air travel in Western Australia.

Over the next five to seven years a phased redevelopment will transform Perth Airport into one of the best airports in the Asia Pacific region.

Under the vision announced today, Phase 1 will be a new terminal dedicated to internal Western Australian air services and some interstate flights. Phases 2 and 3 will deliver new international and domestic terminal facilities. All the facilities will be collocated around the site of the existing international terminal. It is anticipated that Phase 1 will be completed within the next two years. The new terminal facilities will be supported by an airport hotel, multi-storey car park and a new administration centre for airlines and government agencies.

A high growth market

Perth Airport CEO Brad Geatches said the launch of the future vision for Perth Airport came at a time when Perth Airport was experiencing record growth.

“Over the past five years domestic passenger movements at Perth Airport have increased by more than 85 per cent and in 2007 Perth Airport achieved its passenger traffic forecasts for 2016. This is rate of growth is unprecedented for large airports in Australia. This growth is set to continue with low fare carriers Jetstar and Tiger now making an impression on the Western Australian market.”

In the international sector Perth Airport is now seeing very strong growth, with passenger numbers increasing by nearly 10 per cent during 2006-07 and likely to exceed 12 per cent during 2007-08. Future international passenger growth was likely to be buoyed by Perth Airport's proximity to emerging high growth markets in Asia and the Middle East.

“It is this growth across domestic, international and regional sectors which creates the right environment for Perth Airport to bring forward its vision for expansion and redevelopment”, Mr Geatches said.

Terminal WA – serving our regions

A new terminal dedicated to regional Western Australian air services – “Terminal WA” – was likely to be delivered within the next two years.

Mr Geatches said the commitment to Terminal WA during Phase 1 of the new Perth Airport project reflected the massive growth in this sector in recent years and the importance of Perth Airport in the supply chain of the resources sector.

“Regional services are our fastest growing market segment in terms of aircraft movements. In 2005-06 the volume of regional traffic increased by 42 per cent, and increased by a further 48 per cent in 2006-07”.
“Perth Airport is a vital element in Western Australia’s resources sector, providing a commuter hub for the many thousands of fly-in fly-out workers who are employed on resources projects in remote locations throughout the State. The new terminal for flights within Western Australia will provide these workers with a superior travel experience, with a good retail offering and easy access to price effective long term car parking.”

Mr Geatches said that Terminal WA would also have sufficient capacity to handle larger aircraft used on interstate services.

“This will be a substantial building, larger than Terminal 3 which is currently used by Virgin Blue, Skywest, Alliance and Tiger. It will be able to handle a range of aircraft types, from medium sized turboprops up to Boeing 737 and Airbus A320 services.”

**New domestic and international facilities**

New domestic and international terminal facilities delivered during phases 2 and 3 would form the centrepiece of the new Perth Airport. Concept designs are still being developed, but it was likely that these would see major redevelopment of the existing international terminal and the construction of new terminal space. It is possible that the existing international terminal building structure could form the basis of new domestic terminal facilities.

For international travellers Phases 2 and 3 will deliver superior terminal facilities.

“New airport technology, better baggage handling facilities and more space will enable the fast, efficient and safe processing of departing and arriving passengers. Border control government agencies will be consulted in detail to ensure that the new airport layout provides them the area they need to perform their roles as effectively as possible”, Mr Geatches said.

Domestic services will gradually be relocated to the new terminal facilities during a phased transition from the existing domestic terminals. Mr Geatches said that domestic travellers to and from Perth experience journey lengths far greater than elsewhere in Australia and the new domestic facilities needed to ensure there is a high level of comfort and amenity.

The number of aircraft stands with aerobridges will increase substantially to cater for long term growth forecasts and new generation jet aircraft.

“Our initial plans show around 40 gates catering for narrow bodied jets and the new generation Boeing 787 Dreamliner and Airbus A380 aircraft, which will gradually become a feature at Perth Airport in the coming years.”

**More parking and new airport hotels**

The construction of a new multi-storey car park with links to each of the terminal buildings will remove once and for all concerns about parking at Perth Airport. This new facility is expected to be delivered in conjunction with the new terminal facilities during Phases 2 and 3. Discussions would continue with the Western Australian Government over a possible rail link to the airport and necessary improvement to roads around the airport, especially Tonkin Highway.

“The road network around Perth Airport is under serious pressure from general suburban traffic, reflecting Perth’s population growth in recent years. The announcement of clear plans and timing for
a new Perth Airport should now enable the Western Australian Government to prioritise improvements to Tonkin Highway before the project is completed,” Mr Geatches said.

Perth Airport’s support for a new airport hotel will also provide much needed additional hotel capacity to the Perth market.

“The lack of hotel rooms in Perth is a serious constraint for the tourism industry and business generally. Transiting passengers need accommodation near to the airport and business travellers are demanding accommodation and meeting facilities at the airport to minimise travelling time to and from east coast cities.”

**Improving existing domestic facilities**

Mr Geatches acknowledged that the five to seven year timeframe to complete the new Perth Airport project would mean that appropriate investments in improved customer service will continue to be required in the current Domestic Precinct over the next 5 years.

“Perth Airport is responding by rapidly delivering improvements at the domestic terminals to improve the customer experience until the new Perth Airport is built”, Mr Geatches said.

“Work has started on a new road network to improve the flow of traffic around the terminals and to separate taxis, buses and private vehicles. A new public link road is also being built to connect the domestic and international terminals, removing the need to use the Great Eastern and Tonkin Highways when travelling between the two precincts. This will be a major improvement, halving the time and distance to travel between the two precincts during the 5 to 7 years during which consolidation is taking place”

“Throughout 2008 and 2009 approximately 2,000 new long term parking bays will be constructed at the domestic terminals, with another 2,000 to be built before the end of 2010. Passengers using the long term car parks will be able to use a free high quality shuttle bus service to the terminals which will operate every 10 minutes. Before boarding the bus passengers will be able to collect their boarding passes using check-in kiosks inside air conditioned bus shelters.”

“These changes – and a $50 million terminal upgrade by Qantas - are happening now. Customers using the Qantas domestic terminal are already experiencing the improvements delivered in the first stage of the Qantas upgrade,” Mr Geatches said.

**Creating a sense of Western Australia**

Mr Geatches said that the detailed design of each of the new facilities at the new Perth Airport would reflect the character of Western Australia. Themes associated with the landscape, history and economy of the State would be incorporated. The indigenous community as the traditional owners of the land where Perth Airport sits would be consulted on appropriate forms of recognition in the design of buildings and public art.

“We want Perth Airport to be a place which Western Australians are proud to call their own. That is why our plans will produce more than an airport. As well as new terminal buildings, we are looking at building at a range of facilities and features that will make Perth Airport a destination in its own right. It will be a place which showcases the talent of local artists and commemorates the historic contribution of aviation in the growth of Western Australia. It will be a place which recognises the traditional Noongar owners of our land and the spiritual connection which still remains today.”
Next steps

The concept design of the new Perth airport will continue without delay and consultation with Perth Airport’s airline partners.

“What we build at Perth Airport has an impact on the airlines and their passengers. It is only natural that we must reach consensus with our airlines on the nature and timing of developments. We also need to make sure that what we build is prudent and not over-engineered as ultimately the cost of new airport infrastructure is reflected in our airport charges and fares paid by consumers.

The final vision for Perth Airport will be confirmed in a Master Plan which Perth Airport is required to submit to the Commonwealth Government in 2009. Before the Master Plan can be completed, a wide ranging process of community consultation will be conducted by Perth Airport.

Before construction can commence on each stage Perth Airport is required under Commonwealth law to submit a Major Development Plan to the Federal Minister for Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government, the Hon. Anthony Albanese MP. Perth Airport has already commenced a wide consultation process throughout regional Western Australia to ensure that the Phase 1 development has strong community support. The final layout of the new Perth Airport will be confirmed in a Master Plan which Perth Airport is required to submit to the Commonwealth Government in 2009.

Mr Geatches said he expected to be able to publicly release concept designs for Phases 2 and 3 of the new Perth Airport by the end of 2008

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