

Hon Steven Marshall MP

Premier

Hon Stephen Patterson MP

Minister for Trade and Investment

Friday 7 May 2021

Jobs boost as Qantas announce new aircraft base will be established in SA

In a huge vote of confidence in South Australia, Qantas has today announced the establishment of an Embraer E190s aircraft base in South Australia.

Working in partnership with the Marshall Liberal Government and Adelaide Airport Ltd, the base will create up to 200 jobs when fully operational.

Together at Adelaide Airport for the announcement, Premier Steven Marshall and Qantas CEO Alan Joyce welcomed the partnership that will expand both Qantas and South Australia's aviation networks and capabilities.

"The establishment of an Embraer E190 aircraft base is a shot in the arm for the South Australian aviation industry," Premier Marshall said.

"The base will create aviation and maintenance jobs, increase tourism and position Adelaide as Australia's regional aviation hub.

"These are important priorities for our state's economic development and represent a strong step forward in creating direct regional and international aviation connectivity."

Minister for Trade and Investment Stephen Patterson said the investment in South Australia by Qantas highlights the state's capability to provide skilled workers across the aviation industry and is a great investment in the state's ability to grow its national connectivity and tourism industry.

"We have a number of significant tourism investment projects underway in South Australia and the news that Qantas will establish an aircraft base to increase direct flights from Adelaide will support that investment growth," Minister Patterson said.

"Bringing tourists into our state will further build our economy, fill our hotels at night, support our tourism businesses and drive further investment into South Australia as we look to expand our tourism facilities and experiences."

Qantas Group CEO Alan Joyce, who was at Adelaide Airport with South Australian Premier Steve Marshall and Alliance Airlines Managing Scott McMillan, said the E190s were well suited to linking capital cities and regional centres.

"Basing these aircraft in Adelaide means we can service South Australia better and help bring more visitors to the State," Mr Joyce said.

“The E190 is a great aircraft for the Adelaide market, with its size, range and economics opening up a number of new destinations that wouldn’t be viable with the larger 737 aircraft,” Mr Joyce said.

“Instead of one or two flights a day with a larger aircraft, we can offer three or four flights a day on the E190, which gives customers a lot more choice about when they travel.

“We’re continuing to see really positive signs of sustained recovery, with strong travel demand and forward bookings expected to see our domestic capacity back above 100 per cent of pre-COVID levels in the coming months. That’s great progress when you consider we were as low as 20 per cent of our normal flying levels at the height of lockdown.

“The return to flying has huge flow on benefits, helping to boost tourism which is so vital to local economies and businesses around the country,” added Mr Joyce.

Mark Young, Managing Director of Adelaide Airport, has welcomed today’s announcement, which will drive an additional 750,000 passengers through its doors each year.

“We’re excited by Qantas’ decision to base the E190 Embraer aircraft at Adelaide Airport,” Mr Young said.

“These aircraft are perfectly suited for the economics of emerging markets and off-peak services. Basing them in Adelaide gives us more capacity and greater flexibility including the option to work with Qantas to open up new short to medium haul destinations, which ultimately benefits all South Australian travellers.”

Qantas initially anticipates three Embraer E190 aircraft, operated by Alliance Airlines on behalf of Qantas, to begin flights mid-2021, with two initial routes – Adelaide to Alice Springs and Adelaide to Darwin.

Qantas intends to expand the base in the coming years as available aircraft and new domestic route opportunities arise. This will see the base accommodate up to five E190 aircraft at Adelaide Airport, creating up to 200 jobs across roles such as pilots, cabin crew, on-airport personnel and engineering.

The five aircraft will increase inbound visitors to South Australia by 560,000 passengers a year, with an additional 190,000 passengers transiting in Adelaide.