

TOURISM — FLIGHT AVAILABILITY

Statement by Minister for Tourism

MS R. SAFFIOTI (West Swan — Minister for Tourism) [9.01 am]: I rise to update the house on the government's efforts to secure more direct flights into Western Australia. Access to our state remains key to bringing in visitors, and filling our tourism and hospitality businesses and venues. Since the state's borders reopened to interstate and international travel on 3 March 2022, Tourism Western Australia has secured several aviation recovery and growth opportunities. The state government established the aviation recovery fund as part of the state's *Reconnect WA Strategy*, allocating up to \$75 million to support the recovery and growth of the state's aviation network.

As at June 2023, interstate flights into Western Australia reached 105 per cent of pre-COVID levels, indicating that interstate aviation capacity recovery has been achieved. Meanwhile, international aviation capacity had recovered to 86 per cent of pre-COVID levels. All Nippon Airways will commence a three times weekly direct service between Tokyo and Perth from 29 October 2023. Scheduling and the on-sale dates were announced in June. Prior to the pandemic, Japan was Western Australia's eighth-largest international market by number of visitors and tenth largest by visitor spend, with almost 40 000 visitors spending an estimated \$71 million in the state. Our government, through the aviation recovery fund, is helping to support Tokyo–Perth flights return to three weekly services and grow to up to seven weekly services over a three-year period.

As Western Australia's closest international neighbour, with a population of 273 million, Indonesia is an important tourism, trade, investment and education market for Western Australia. In 2019, Indonesia was Western Australia's seventh-largest international market by number of visitors, with 38 800 visitors spending an estimated \$81 million in the state. In October 2019, Citilink commenced flying Perth to Denpasar, but discontinued shortly after due to the pandemic. I am pleased to announce that Citilink relaunched the Perth–Denpasar daily services from 19 July 2023. The Perth–Jakarta route has been serviced three times a week since 29 July 2023. The Jakarta flights will provide an extra capacity of over 56 000 seats.

Nexus Airlines launched the Broome–Kununurra–Darwin service on 28 July 2023. The establishment of this new service will provide people with more choice of carriers for Northern Australia and place downward pressure on the cost of flights within the Kimberley and to the Northern Territory. The state government, through Tourism WA, has partnered with Nexus Airlines to deliver a cooperative marketing campaign designed to drive interstate visitation. The campaign offers a range of tactical offers for flights into Broome and Kununurra, and Kimberley travel packages of five to seven nights.

The state government sees aviation recovery as a top priority, and we are continuing to look for opportunities to grow aviation routes and cement Western Australia's reputation as the western gateway to the country.