



Media Release

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ACCC highlights urgent need for increased oversight of airports

The Board of Airline Representatives of Australia (BARA), representing over 40 international airlines, says new ACCC data highlights the need for the Australian Government to reform the economic regulatory framework for the nation's major airports as part of a required future Productivity Commission review.

The [ACCC's latest airport monitoring report](#) details that Australia's four major international airports collectively generated \$1.2 billion in aeronautical operating profits in 2024–25. This level of return reinforces BARAs long-standing concern about the limited regulatory constraints on monopoly airport charges in Australia.

"BARA's airline members support targeted investment in Australia's airports that enables growth, is efficient, and enhances the passengers travel experience, however it is the customer who ultimately pays for these costs in higher airfares, and the ACCC's report again demonstrates that the current framework allows airports with significant market power to generate excessive returns," said BARA Executive Director Stephen Pearse.

"Sydney recorded \$584 million in aeronautical operating profit, Melbourne \$236 million, Brisbane \$215 million, and Perth \$131 million last year alone. The profit margins these represent, which exclude additional returns from retail, duty free and other commercial activities, underlines why it is timely for the Productivity Commission to now examine whether the current monitoring regime remains fit for purpose," Mr Pearse said.

"The major airports are all planning significant expansion projects totalling over \$20 billion in the coming decade. Whilst BARA supports appropriate infrastructure spend, without effective economic oversight these investment costs and the increased airport returns they generate are reflected in higher airport charges to airlines, which ultimately pass through as higher airfares to travellers.

"BARA continues to engage the Australian Government on behalf of its members about the need for a more balanced approach to ensure that global international aviation market remains competitive into Australia. Every wide-body aircraft that lands at an Australian airport delivers around \$150-190m in economic added value to the nation*, which is why it is critical airfares remain competitive to stimulate continued growth of international services to Australia.

"This ACCC report highlights that the time is right to ask the Productivity Commission to undertake a fresh airport inquiry as a matter of priority. Sensible reforms include the consideration of an independently determined cost-of-capital model set by the ACCC, and the introduction of an accessible and independent negotiate-arbitrate process that can be triggered if airlines and airports cannot reach appropriate commercial agreements on price.

"Ultimately, in a global aviation market, Australia competes to attract the international airline traveller versus other destinations in an increasingly competitive market."

** Internal BARA data regarding economic added value (EVA) of a typical wide body service to the Australian economy*