

## Media release

### Collaboration and leadership: Newcastle Airport industry panel talks business

Friday, 1 December 2017

Newcastle Airport will bring together local leaders committed to delivering strong economic and social outcomes in a special business event this Friday 1 December at Merewether Surfhouse.

Experts from aviation technology, education, the visitor economy, and the NSW Government will highlight the role that business can, and should, play to drive collaboration and growth for the region.

Moderated by Professor Will Rifkin, Director of the Hunter Research Foundation Centre and Chair in Applied Regional Economics at the University of Newcastle the panel comprises:

- **Scot MacDonald MLC** - NSW Parliamentary Secretary for Planning, the Central Coast and the Hunter
- **Peter Gesling** - Chair, Newcastle Airport
- **Andrew Gresham** - Operations Support Director, BAE Systems Australia

Together they will share their thoughts on how to create greater connectivity, innovation and opportunity in the Hunter region and beyond.

Dr Peter Cock, Newcastle Airport CEO, said, "This year we want our annual business event to drive conversation, to ask some hard questions, and to celebrate success. There are people in our region doing great things. And there are people in our region who have much to share – opportunity abounds and we see our role as helping to pursue this."

"The Hunter is Australia's largest regional economy. I think we forget about the importance of our community, our businesses and our visitors. Friday is an opportunity for us to take stock, reflect and recognise that we are doing well and can do more."

Newcastle Airport is getting ready to launch its 20-year Master Plan next year, and we have recently discussed our plans to develop a defence and aerospace business precinct adjacent to the Airport.

"We have big plans for the future, and I am looking forward to hearing about other regional growth opportunities. Synergies can be found in curious places. The rapid pace at which the Hunter's economy is growing proves collaboration and cooperation across industries and communities has never been more important," he said.

The previous financial year was a year of significant growth for Newcastle Airport. A record 1.25 million passengers travelled through the Airport, a year on year increase of 6.6%. We also marked a 25% increase in passenger throughput in the past decade. These achievements are complemented by non-passenger growth triumphs.

“Our airport ranked as amongst the best in Australia and New Zealand in the international airport benchmarking program, ASQ; and we completed the \$1.6 million customs and immigration fit-out that has prepared our terminal for future international flights,” said Peter.

\*Media are welcome to attend this event.

**Ends.**

**Further information**

Stephen Crowe, Newcastle Airport Executive Manager Corporate Affairs  
02 4928 9813 or 0418 763 800

Kate Bennett, Newcastle Airport Marketing and Communications Manager  
02 4928 9856 or 0447 839 212

[www.newcastleairport.com.au](http://www.newcastleairport.com.au)

**Notes for the Editor:**

Newcastle Airport <https://www.newcastleairport.com.au/>

Newcastle Airport Facebook Page: <https://www.facebook.com/ntlairport/>

Newcastle Airport Twitter Feed: <https://twitter.com/NTLairport>

Newcastle Airport Master Plan: <https://www.newcastleairport.com.au/corporate/about/masterplan>

Astra Aerolab <https://astraerolab.com.au/>