

# Media release

## Passenger numbers soar

2009

Newcastle Airport has confirmed record passenger numbers for yet another year, evidencing the continuing love affair that Hunter, Central Coast, and Mid North Coast residents have for air travel.

In 2008, 1,145,607 passengers used Newcastle Airport—which is 139,979 more passengers, or a 14% increase, on the previous record of 2007.

This record achievement is commendable, considering that 2008 was a difficult year for the aviation industry. Airlines suffered in the first half of the year due to pilot shortages—which caused QantasLink to suspend its Newcastle operations for a number of months; the price of oil was at record highs, and consumers started to feel the effects of the international credit crunch.

Newcastle Airport CEO, Paul Hughes, said that the significant growth figure of 2008 displays the confidence that passengers flying to and from Newcastle Airport have, and shows that passengers are embracing air travel at a time when people are considered to be ‘tightening their belts’.

“In December, for the third month in a row, Newcastle Airport recorded more than 100,000 passenger movements.

“I am delighted that the current economic climate hasn’t scared passengers from embracing air travel; however the effects of the economic slowdown will flow into 2009 and Newcastle Airport may yet feel its sting. I am hopeful that Hunter residents will continue to embrace the culture of air travel as part of our everyday lives,” said Paul.

“Passenger numbers at Newcastle Airport continue to grow month-on-month and year-on-year. This year we have conducted extensive campaigns with both tourism and airlines to attract the Central Coast, south-east Queensland and Victorian markets; our statistics are showing that these campaigns have been successful and we are now welcoming more passengers from these regions.

“As we accommodate more passengers, and as airlines take delivery of more aircraft, our management team is working hard with our project partners to ensure that our facilities continue to meet the demands of the travelling public,” concluded Paul.

**Ends.**

### Further information

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