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Victorian tourism flies high with announcement of increased domestic and regional flights

The Victoria Tourism Industry Council (VTIC) welcomes today's announcement that Qantas and Jetstar will increase domestic and regional flights for June and July, ensuring Australians can book their trips to, and within Victoria, in time for the winter school holidays.

The additional services will see capacity increase from five per cent of pre-Coronavirus levels, to 15 per cent by the end of June. This increase provides over 300 further return flights per week, with 92 of those flights for Melbourne and four additional return services allocated for Melbourne to Mildura.

VTIC Chief Executive Felicia Mariani said, "Unlike other states, Victoria's borders have remained open. With high demand and July school holidays approaching, today's announcement of additional services to Victoria provides greater capacity to visit Melbourne and its regions.

"The increase in intrastate flights to Mildura ensures the north western corner of the state and the Murray Region are easily accessible for the domestic travel market, and offers a fantastic nature-based holiday for many Australian families keen to experience the outdoors after several months of being cooped up inside.

"Our industry has been severely impacted by the bushfires and the rolling escalation of restrictions enforced during the COVID-19 pandemic.

"In our recent VTIC business impact survey, industry reported that two-thirds of tourism businesses have had to cease operating, resulting in a 40 per cent decrease in full-time employment in our sector, a 50 per cent decrease in part-time employment, and a staggering 88 per cent reduction in casual employees.

"Today's news of an increase in aviation capacity will boost visitation, buoy confidence of the sector and therefore help in the need to re-employ staff; which is why this announcement is such a critical step forward in restoring Victoria's previously thriving tourism industry," Ms Mariani concluded.

Media contact: Ellana Katos | 03 8662 5205 | 0400 976 889 ekatos@victorianschamber.com.au