

6 February 2009

**EXPANSION PLANS APPROVED**

Darwin International Airport has welcomed planning approval of its terminal expansion project by the Federal Minister for Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government Anthony Albanese.

Chief Executive Officer Ian Kew said the airport planned to expand its passenger terminal to meet growing air traffic through Darwin and support the proposed Jetstar hub.

The \$60 million investment will:

- Expand the passenger terminal floor space by 65 per cent in a modern, three-storey building to the east of the current terminal;
- Build a new apron with five new aircraft parking bays;
- Relocate staff car parking facilities.

“This is the first major capital investment in the passenger terminal since it opened in 1991 and probably the biggest private sector capital works project on the horizon in Darwin,” said Mr Kew.

The airport submitted a Major Development Plan in July last year outlining benefits the new terminal would provide for passengers, airlines, the airport’s commercial areas, security, baggage handling and goods delivery.

The expansion was intended to cater for increased demand until 2015. However, the timing of the project is now uncertain because the world economic crisis has impacted on the airport’s ability to raise funds and the difficulty in securing a new long term airline pricing agreement.

“We are ready to award tenders and could start construction later this year,” Mr Kew said. “However, given the economic uncertainty, we have halted design until we are confident the project can proceed.”

“We have yet to reach agreement with our airline customers in relation to the increase in airport charges necessary to underpin this major investment.”

The airport has applied to Infrastructure Australia’s Building Australia Fund for \$30 million.

**Media contacts**

Ian Kew, Chief Executive Officer, Darwin International Airport 8920 1811  
Jane Munday, Michels Warren Munday on 8981 6445 or 0427 880 083

6/02/2009

## **Background**

“In the past 10 years, the Airport Development Group has spent more than \$100 million on capital investment on the airport, most of it on aviation related projects” Ian Kew said.

“We have modernised the exterior, refurbished the terminal, improved traffic flow, provided covered walkways and refurbished lounges, however there has been no improvement on the size and layout of the terminal, leading to sub-standard service,” he said.

The expansion project will allow for projected growth to 2015, providing an extra 11,000 square metres of floor space and a new goods delivery area.

The expanded terminal facilities will include better security screening, an improved retail precinct, separate baggage reclaim and arrivals areas for domestic and international passengers, more boarding gates to allow for simultaneous boarding and disembarking of passengers and a dedicated goods delivery precinct from Cecil Cook Avenue.

Until 1991, civil aviation facilities at the airport were shared with the Department of Defence on the other side of the runway.

In 1998, as part of the privatisation of Australia’s airports, the Airport Development Group took over the operations of Darwin, Tennant Creek and Alice Springs International Airports.

In the years since privatisation, passenger numbers have grown from about 1.1 million to 1.8 million at Darwin International Airport with strong growth of 12 per cent a year experienced in the past three years.

### **Aircraft Parking Upgrade**

2004 saw reconstruction of two aircraft parking positions to accommodate larger aircraft. This project also saw the completion of the Ground Service Equipment Area and led the way for further expansion of aircraft parking in 2005 by relocating airline equipment essential for the servicing of aircraft.

### **Aircraft Parking Expansion**

In July 2005, Darwin International Airport completed a \$1.4m project to expand aircraft parking facilities. The upgrade included two new parking positions (Bay 11 and 12) for Boeing 737 size aircraft. Included in this project was the installation of upgraded apron floodlighting along the entire apron area. This project greatly increased the peak capacity of the airport allowing Darwin International Airport to attract a wider range of services to Darwin.

### **Covered Walkways**

In May 2005, Darwin International Airport constructed an undercover walk way to aircraft parking positions that are not serviced by aerobridges. This allowed passengers to keep dry when boarding and disembarking from aircraft that were previously exposed to the elements.

### **Checked Bag Screening**

On 11 October 2005 Darwin International Airport commissioned the \$11 million Checked Bag Screening system for both international and domestic travellers.

Darwin International Airport became the first airport in Australia to deliver checked baggage screening for both domestic and international departures, well in advance of regulatory requirements.

The Checked Bag Screening project also included the upgrade of check in counter facilities at the airport, allowing improved processing times for passengers.

### **Retheming Project**

2006 saw the completion of the retheming of the Darwin International Airport terminal building, including locally inspired design carpets and redesign of the front of terminal building. In 2007 the project continued

with the replacement of all seating throughout the terminal building. This project worked towards developing the airport into the gateway to the Top End experience while providing the public with a relaxing environment when visiting the airport either before boarding a flight or when meeting friends and relatives at the airport.

#### **Car parking**

2006 also saw the completion of a \$2.4 million Stage 2 expansion of the public car park and improvements to the entrance roads of the terminal. The expansion of the car park provided additional space which met the projected demand requirements at the time. Darwin International Airport will provide another 160 parking position in the latter half of 2008.

#### **Smoke Spill Project**

In 2007, Darwin International Airport undertook a major upgrade of the smoke spill system of the terminal. The smoke spill project cost \$1.2 M and improved fire safety of the terminal building through the upgrade of system that extracts and compartmentalizes smoke in the event of a fire.

#### **Bay 1 Aerobridge**

Late 2007 saw the official opening of the \$4 million expansion of the Bay 1 aircraft parking facility. A pavement was constructed to accommodate the Airbus A380, which started services to Australia in October 2007. The project also saw the installation of a new Apron Drive Aerobridge to Bay 1 that provided passengers with further amenities and improved processing of passengers at the Airport for domestic and international flights. This was the first additional aerobridge facility since the terminal opened in 1991.

#### **Refurbishment of Aerobridge**

The construction of the terminal in 1991 included the provision of three fixed aerobridges. In 2007 \$0.8M was spent on refurbishing the interior and exterior of the bridges as well as the control systems modernised to current industry standards.

#### **Runway Resurfacing Project**

In a joint venture with the Department of Defence, Darwin International Airport spent \$12m to surface the main runway to extend its life by 15 years.

#### **Terminal Refurbishment**

Recent work at the terminal includes:

- \$1.3M refurbishment of existing toilets and the installation of new toilets on the Ground and First floors.
- Improved retail offerings including a new Duty Free Store and refurbished Ground Floor Café
- A \$2M project to install two new paralleled 1.6MVA 11KV generators next to the existing High Voltage intake sub-station to provide backup supplies to whole airport in the event of a complete supply failure. This is an important part of the Airport's contingency planning Wet Season cyclones.