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Business community welcomes first international flight

Business Hunter has congratulated Newcastle Airport on securing the first international destination for its upgraded airport, following this morning's news that Jetstar will begin flying to Denpasar from October.

"This is great news, coming off the back of last week's announcement that Qantas will begin flying between Newcastle and Perth," Business Hunter CEO Bob Hawes said.

"It means that our upgraded airport and its new capabilities are being noticed within the industry, and we expect this international flight announcement to be the first of many."

With the potential for connections to 40 other countries, Mr Hawes said the Denpasar flights would open up the Hunter to the world.

"It's not just about holiday trips to Bali, smart leisure travellers and business people will be looking for connections from Denpasar to other destinations for onward travel as well.

"It also opens opportunity for new freight connections, which will benefit our export businesses and encourage the flow of more outbound goods from other parts of the state through Newcastle.

"The flights will help the NSW Government deliver on its ambitious Visitor Economy Strategy, which aims to increase the contribution of regional NSW to the state's tourism economy.

"The strategy has a goal of \$91 billion in annual visitor economy expenditure by 2030, with nearly half of that to be generated in the regions."

Mr Hawes said the flow-on effect also extends to tourism infrastructure, where the region will need to consolidate existing assets and look to expand facilities and services that will be needed to cater for a growing regional visitor economy.

"We need to continue to work to attract the right investment to ensure our region is ready to cater for the increase in tourism that will flow from the airport expansion," Mr Hawes said.

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