

Media Release | 28 September 2015

Auckland Airport welcomes inaugural China Eastern Airlines year-round flight

Auckland Airport has welcomed the inaugural year-round China Eastern Airlines flight between Auckland and Shanghai.

The year-round service started on Saturday, 26 September 2015 with four flights per week and from January 2016 it will increase to daily flights. In total, the new year-round service adds 175,000 permanent seats on the route and contributes an estimated \$212 million to the New Zealand economy.

Norris Carter, Auckland Airport's general manager aeronautical commercial, says, "The commencement of China Eastern Airlines' year-round service is great news and evidence of the strong growth in air connectivity between New Zealand and China in recent years. China Eastern Airlines operated a seasonal service, of between four and seven flights per week, for the first time on the Auckland to Shanghai route from December 2014 to March 2015. That seasonal service was so successful that the airline has now expanded to year-round."

"China Eastern Airlines' service expansion will deliver new travel market opportunities from mainland China, via Shanghai, especially for tourists seeking premium travel experiences in New Zealand," says Mr Carter.

Mr Liuwen Tian, Senior Vice President of China Eastern Airlines, says, "The reinstatement of China Eastern Airlines' Shanghai-Auckland flights has been strongly supported by the New Zealand Government and by Auckland Airport. The launch of year-round flights on this route both enriches and improves our network in the Oceania region. The connection and convenience of our air network is further enhanced by

China Eastern Airlines' Shanghai hub, which brings even more travel choices for passengers.”

“The launch of regular China Eastern flights to New Zealand will further promote trade between China and New Zealand and improve the friendship of our people. It delivers greater cooperation and a more connected and dynamic relationship,” says Mr Tian.

The inaugural year-round China Eastern Airlines flight landed at Auckland Airport at approximately 4.30pm on Saturday, 26 September and was welcomed with a water-arch by two of the airport's Rosenbauer Panther firefighting vehicles and a powhiri by local iwi.

Ends

For further information, please contact:

Simon Lambourne

+64 27 477 6120

simon.lambourne@aucklandairport.co.nz