

# Media release

## JOINT STATEMENT

Premier and Minister for the Arts

The Honourable Anastacia Palaszczuk

Minister for Education and Minister for Tourism, Major Events, Small Business and the Commonwealth Games

The Honourable Kate Jones



## Premier welcomes direct flights from Shanghai to Brisbane

Queensland has become the first Australian state to sign a Memorandum of Understanding with China Eastern Airlines in a landmark agreement set to deliver a \$22 million tourism boost for the State, Premier Anastacia Palaszczuk announced today.

Ms Palaszczuk said the agreement came off the back of a meeting she had with China Eastern during her trade trip in China last month.

Minister for Tourism and Major Events, Kate Jones, signed the MOU in China overnight.

Ms Palaszczuk said the agreement secured a new, year-round Shanghai-Brisbane direct service which will commence in November 2016 with three flights each week.

"This new service is a win for tourism, bringing approximately 36,500 additional travellers and generating more than \$22 million for the economy each year," she said.

"It comes in addition to a seasonal China Eastern service between Shanghai and Cairns providing access for up to 13,000 visitors each year to Tropical North Queensland, the state's northern gateway to the Great Barrier Reef."

Minister Jones said the development underlined the Palaszczuk Government's commitment to growing the Asian visitor market.

"Chinese travellers represent Queensland's largest international visitor market by expenditure, spending more than \$833 million in the year to June 2015, an increase of 43% on the last financial year," she said.

"Queensland attracted 360,000 visitors from mainland China in 2014-15 and Tourism Research Australia forecasts China will overtake New Zealand as Australia's dominant tourism market within five years.

"We are determined to position Queensland to capitalise on this growth.

"Working with airline partners to increase access into Queensland will inspire more visitors to come to the best address on earth, providing a boost to the economy and supporting local jobs.

"The Government and China Eastern are committed to growing this valuable partnership and developing a strong framework which supports growth in Queensland's tourism industry.

"This historic agreement forges an even closer bond between the Government, China Eastern and our sister-state Shanghai."

China Eastern Airlines senior executive, Executive Vice President Commercials Mr Tian Liuwen said China Eastern Airlines had been focusing on the development of key international markets.

“The MOU that was signed between China Eastern Airlines and the Queensland Government recognises the importance of bilateral relationships between Shanghai and Queensland.

“It will assist in further developing the Chinese tourism market to Queensland, and enhance China Eastern’s presence in the Australian market,” Mr Tian said.

“Both China Eastern and the Queensland Government has pledged today to leverage on each other’s resources to develop and sustain the existing route to Cairns and the new route to Brisbane. We would also explore the opportunities of seasonal services to holiday destinations in Queensland.”

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