

Media release

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New air traffic flow system introduced at Melbourne Airport

Airservices has introduced a new system that will reduce airborne delays, help to save fuel and associated emissions, enhance safety and reduce air traffic congestion at Melbourne Airport.

Already in use at Sydney, Brisbane and Perth airports, the 'Harmony' system will minimise airborne delays for passengers flying into Melbourne Airport.

The system uses weather and scheduling information to provide advice on the maximum arrival rates at airports. This information allows Airservices to work collaboratively with airlines to absorb any potential delays on the ground, prior to departure, rather than in the air.

Airservices Executive General Manager Air Traffic Control, Greg Hood, said that the introduction of the Harmony Traffic Flow tool provided by Metron, had already delivered significant benefits for airlines and the travelling public.

"Since its introduction into Sydney in March 2012, we have seen significant reductions in airborne holding and an average reduction of up to five minutes of flight time per flight on the Melbourne to Sydney city pair, which is one of the busiest flight routes in the world," Mr Hood said.

"Each year, this difference adds up to approximately 40 000 tonnes of CO₂, which is the equivalent of taking 10 000 cars off the road."

Meanwhile, airborne delays in Brisbane during morning and evening peak periods have dropped by 35 per cent since Airservices introduced the ground delay system in late 2012.

"This air traffic management tool provides our National Operations Centre in Canberra, and the wider aviation industry, an improved ability to strategically plan and manage the flow of air traffic within the constraints of weather, airspace and runway capacity," Mr Hood said.

"This means passengers will spend less time in the air waiting to land, while also saving fuel and reducing emissions."

The ground delay system is part of a new, industry-wide collaborative approach to air traffic management in Australia where Airservices, airlines and airports share data to maximise the use of available airspace and airport capacity, reduce fuel burn and environmental emissions, and enhance safety.

The project is a key initiative in enabling Airservices to deliver its vision of 'connecting the Australian aviation industry to deliver world class industry performance' for airlines, airports and the travelling public.

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