

MEDIA RELEASE

26 February 2021

Travel with Confidence.

Canberra Airport was the first major Australian airport to introduce body temperature scanning in May 2020 as an additional safety measure against COVID-19. It was a key proactive step Canberra Airport took to restore confidence in passengers, ensuring they felt safe and secure to fly at a time when there was significant and unknown community transmission in Victoria, NSW and Queensland.

The temperature scanning occurs as passengers, airport employees, contractors and visitors pass through security screening. A camera takes an image and records a person's temperature three times in real-time, allowing people with fever like symptoms to be identified. If a passenger's temperature is higher than 37.7 degrees, the onsite nurse will be notified to assess the potential risk by immediately intercepting the passenger.

Since commencement of operation, only a handful of passengers (on average less than one day) have been detected as having a high temperature and in each case the onsite nurse has evaluated the passenger and retested the person's temperature (often after giving them two minutes to cool down after rushing or after removing headwear in winter). Every detected passenger has been cleared and deemed safe to travel and proceeded to catch their flight.

Head of Aviation, Michael Thomson said, "The low level of detection is no doubt due to the very low levels of general colds, flu and other viruses in the community (indeed only two Australians have passed away due to influenza since 22 April), the extremely low level of community cases of Covid 19 in Australia throughout the last few months even allowing for the recent small outbreaks from quarantine, and the responsible behavior of passengers choosing not to travel when having any cold symptoms such as having a temperature."

Given the number of days of zero cases in Western Australia, South Australia, Queensland, Tasmania, Victoria and New South Wales as well as the responsible behavior of passengers in not flying when they are unwell, Canberra Airport does not believe it is necessary to have a trained nurse on site for the occasional detection of high temperatures. Temperatures of departing passengers will continue to be monitored with the system continuing to operate with automatic notification of any high temperature and in each case, ACT Health and the airlines will be notified by Canberra Airport and the case will be risk assessed.



"Travel is an essential part of life, and the introduction of temperature screening has been a supportive step towards restoring air connectivity and customer confidence in air travel. It's great to see that travellers have been heeding the advice not to travel if they feel unwell," Michael Thomson said.

"We'd like our passengers to remain diligent and as they have been, not to travel if they feel unwell. If they need to defer their travel, they can talk to their airline and they will be able to defer their flight to another time without change or cancellation fees. These measures help keep our community safe and able to fly, which is essential for the travel industry and for getting back to business."

Canberra Airport is currently at 45% of its pre-COVID capacity with a significant increase in business travel over the last two weeks. There are approximately 240 flights operating each week to 11 domestic destinations – soon to be 12 with the recent announcement of Qantas Airlines flying direct from Canberra Airport to Ballina Byron Bay from April 2021.

For more information on how the Canberra Airport is working to keep passengers safe during and beyond COVID-19 go to <https://www.canberraairport.com.au/>

Media contact

Jemma Delamont– 0455 227 711