MELBOURNE TAKES INCREASING SHARE OF ASIA TRAFFIC

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Melbourne Airport has increased its share of all Australia-Asia passenger traffic from 15 per cent in 2000 to 25 per cent in 2013, while Sydney Airport's share fell from 45 to 35 per cent over the same period, according to a research paper published in the University of Melbourne's *Journal of Transport Geography*.

'The fortunes of air transport gateways' research paper found that Melbourne-Asia traffic growth came more so from services to cities such as Kuala Lumpur, Bangkok and Hong Kong, and less so from the traditional gateway to Asia of Singapore.

"In addition, airlines have made increased use of mid-sized long-haul aircraft such as the Boeing 777 and Airbus 330 which are well suited to the Melbourne-Asia market," Emeritus Professor Kevin O'Connor, from the University of Melbourne's Department of Urban Planning, said in a statement.

"The research found that over 80 per cent of all long-haul movements at Melbourne are made by these mid-sized aircraft, compared to 70 per cent in Sydney."

The research also attributed Melbourne's comparatively stronger growth due to faster population growth, increasing business services employment and faster tourism growth.

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“Results show that secondary, and smaller, gateways in both Australia and Asia have played more important roles in passenger movements over this time,” the paper’s abstract reads.

“In Melbourne in particular, stronger growth in the demand for international travel in that city along with more use made of the smaller long-haul aircraft by airlines, has strengthened its role as a gateway city relative to Sydney.”

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