

# Media Release



**Zoe Bettison MP**  
Minister for Tourism

**Joe Szakacs MP**  
Minister for Trade and Investment  
Minister for Industry, Innovation and Science

Thursday, 29 January 2026

## Direct flights to global city now on sale

South Australia will be directly connected to the world's third-largest city from June this year following the launch of ticket sales for China Eastern Airlines' Shanghai-Adelaide route.

The first service out of Shanghai will touch down at 7:30am on Sunday, 21 June before departing at 9:30am the same morning.

China Eastern will operate the connection with an Airbus A350-900. The wide-bodied aircraft offers 286 seats across economy and business classes, and about 15-tonnes of freight capacity on each flight.

MU782 will depart Adelaide Airport three times each week until Sunday, 2 August, with the airline set to return in early 2027 to complete its first season.

China Eastern will be the thirteenth carrier running an international service out of Adelaide.

By connecting our state with one of the most important economies globally, the direct Shanghai flight will meet a strategic objective of the Malinauskas Government.

Shanghai is the financial and economic capital of China – our largest trading partner and crucial market for in-bound visitation.

Latest ABS data showing more than \$3.4 billion worth of goods was exported from our state to the country over the past 12 months.

### Quotes attributable to Zoe Bettison

*China is South Australia's most valuable international visitor market, and the launch of direct flights to Shanghai is a major boost for our visitor economy.*

Media contact: Conor Bignell 0400 554 412

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*Latest data shows that in the year to September 2025, China was worth \$305 million to the State's visitor economy, making it our largest international market for expenditure, with 51,000 visitors travelling to South Australia over that period.*

*This new direct connection makes it easier for Chinese travellers to experience our world-class food and wine, premium events and regional destinations, while also supporting local jobs and businesses across the state.*

*South Australia is having a moment on the global stage, with major events, new experiences, and international attention driving strong demand to visit our state.*

### **Quotes attributable to Joe Szakacs**

*Tickets are now on sale for the first direct flight between Adelaide and Shanghai.*

*This is a monumental moment for South Australia, and speaks to the huge momentum we're building.*

*Shanghai is home to nearly 30 million people.*

*It's one of the most important cities globally for the future of our state's economy, and Chinese and South Australian business leaders and government officials alike, can now be on the ground in less than 11 hours.*

*So too can our world-class products like southern rock lobster, which has achieved export records since the Chinese market opened back up less than 12 months ago.*

*Off the back of four years of hard work, we're now more connected globally than ever before.*

*We'll keep working to capitalise on this momentum and deliver for South Australia's economy.*

### **Quotes attributable to Brenton Cox, Managing Director, Adelaide Airport**

*This service will see one of China's largest carriers connecting Adelaide with China's largest city and one of the biggest cities in the world, and opens up business and tourism opportunities between China and South Australia.*

*It will be our second direct connection with mainland China and Adelaide's 13th international carrier flying to 12 destinations, on the back of a 21 per cent increase in international passenger numbers in 2025.*