

# Chapter A2

## Need for the Project



### Summary of key findings:

Melbourne Airport needs a parallel runway system by 2026 to meet aviation growth demands, support passenger choices, promote competition, improve reliability, reduce delays and airline costs, and boost economic growth for Victoria and Australia.

As detailed in *Chapter A1: Introduction*, although COVID-19 has enormously impacted the aviation industry, Melbourne Airport is confident demand will recover and grow, and that the additional capacity afforded by Melbourne Airport's Third Runway (M3R) therefore remains essential.

The lengthy timeframes associated with securing approvals and the detailed design and construction for this important infrastructure project are likely to last longer than the temporary impacts of COVID-19.

Melbourne Airport is therefore progressing approval of the project to secure the airport's future as a key asset for Melbourne, Victoria and Australia.

### The importance of Melbourne Airport

- Melbourne Airport is both a major international gateway to Australia and Victoria's primary domestic airport
- Between 2000 and 2019, the number of passengers passing through Melbourne Airport more than doubled, from 16 million to over 37 million
- Melbourne Airport plays an important role in the Australian aviation network by being part of six of the 10 busiest flight routes
- 60 per cent of all aircraft operating domestic and narrow-body short-haul international flights typically cycle through Melbourne Airport each and every weekday

### Current capacity, reliability and resilience: impacts on passengers and airlines

- Melbourne Airport was already reaching capacity in 2019 and will have exceeded it by 2026. Flight cancellations, delays and schedule restrictions will become increasingly frequent, and recovery from delays will be problematic
- The existing two-runway system is not resilient in coping with Melbourne's wind patterns. This results in severe crosswind induced capacity constraints for an average 30 per cent of the time, and in some months for up to 50 per cent of the time
- Melbourne Airport's on-time performance deteriorated to 74.9 per cent in 2019, the second-worst of Australia's five major airports
- On busy days before COVID-19, morning delays did not recover until midday, and progressively impacted the performance of the Australian aviation network over the whole day. On busy days, average evening-service delays were longer than 15 minutes
- Melbourne Airport is one of the busiest airports in the world without a parallel runway system – despite being forecast to handle 47 million passengers by 2026.