

# Freight at Melbourne Airport

The majority of air freight is carried on passenger aircraft, enabled by Melbourne Airport's extensive airline network.

Melbourne Airport's 24-hour operation and the frequency of international services means extensive and timely opportunities for exporters in southeast Australia to access more international markets. Being close to major industrial areas also means employment opportunities for thousands of residents in nearby suburban growth corridors.

Melbourne Airport leads the nation for Australian exports, with almost 40% of the country's air freight exports passing through the airport. According to the Federal Government's 2022 Population Statement, Melbourne will become

Australia's largest city in 2031-32 with just over six million people, resulting in increased freight demand.

Around 85% of all international air freight travels in the cargo hold of passenger aircraft. Meeting demand for air travel and freight to and from Melbourne is vital to the Victorian and Australian economies, and the rise of the digital economy and online shopping is fuelling demand for faster deliveries.

Melbourne Airport's third runway will increase the airport's ability to meet passenger and freight demand, presenting an opportunity to grow Victoria's economy.

## Air freight volume (tonnes)



Source: Forecast at 3% z by BITRE, Ernest & Young Melbourne Airport 2023 Economic and Social Impact Report



**MELBOURNE IS THE HUB FOR AGRICULTURAL EXPORTS**  
from Victoria, South Australia and Tasmania



**267,000 TONNES OF FREIGHT**  
through Melbourne Airport,  
worth **\$26 billion**  
(FY25)



**TOP 3 EXPORT CATEGORIES**  
By volume: meat, seafood and fruit and nuts  
By value: Medical products, meat, seafood and crustaceans

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## Melbourne Airport freight movement

### Exports by tonnes - top 10

	Tonnes				As a percentage of total exports			
	2019	2020	2021	2022	2019	2020	2021	2022
Meat	40,535	29,230	23,128	23,266	19%	26%	21%	23%
Seafood	14,055	15,642	21,179	18,871	7%	14%	19%	18%
Fruit and nuts	22,237	15,179	10,105	11,239	11%	14%	9%	11%
Dairy, honey	10,837	6,472	6,792	6,569	5%	6%	6%	6%
Vegetables	10,281	6,335	6,992	5,973	5%	6%	6%	6%
Machinery and mechanical appliances	4,547	2,908	3,944	4,391	2%	3%	4%	4%
Pharmaceutical products	8,518	4,877	2,324	2,306	4%	4%	2%	2%
Electronics	2,406	1,683	2,123	2,243	1%	2%	2%	2%
Miscellaneous edibles	8,546	3,824	3,460	2,160	4%	3%	3%	2%
Essential oils and cosmetics	3,023	1,771	1,541	1,878	1%	2%	1%	2%
Other	87,297	22,982	27,413	24,027	41%	21%	25%	23%
Total	212,371	110,904	109,001	102,923	100%	100%	100%	100%

### Imports by tonnes - top 10

	Tonnes				As a percentage of total exports			
	2019	2020	2021	2022	2019	2020	2021	2022
Machinery and mechanical appliances	17,252	12,675	15,513	14,179	14%	13%	14%	13%
Electronics	11,280	8,885	10,447	10,699	9%	9%	10%	10%
Clothing	10,727	8,513	8,471	8,989	6%	8%	9%	9%
Chemical products	1,481	1,830	2,519	7,155	1%	2%	2%	7%
Vehicles, parts and accessories	4,678	2,903	4,702	4,618	4%	3%	4%	4%
Seafood	3,790	3,456	4,098	3,590	3%	4%	4%	3%
Medical/optical/visual instruments	5,386	3,704	3,572	3,542	4%	4%	3%	3%
Pharmaceutical products	2,692	2,708	2,689	3,263	2%	3%	2%	3%
Live plants	4,009	3,129	3,247	3,008	3%	3%	3%	3%
Plastics and articles thereof (b)	5,125	3,424	3,067	2,811	4%	4%	3%	3%
Other	53,302	42,686	49,278	46,730	45%	45%	46%	43%
Total	119,722	93,911	107,605	108,581	100%	100%	100%	100%

Source: 2023 INTERNATIONAL AIRFREIGHT INDICATOR, Infrastructure Partnerships Australia

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