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Australia's Lottery, Toll Roads and Perth Airport Dispute Shape Economy

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— Categories: Economics

Australia's economy is facing a mixed set of developments this week, with updates from the Lottery Corporation, toll operator Transurban, and industrial action at Perth Airport drawing investor and public attention.

The Lottery Corporation, which operates the nation's lottery and Keno brands, reported a fall in both revenue and profits for the 2024–25 financial year. Revenue dropped 6.2% to \$3.75 billion, while net profit fell 11.7% to \$365.5 million. The decline was attributed to what the company described as “below average” jackpot outcomes, leading to a 13% reduction in major prize offerings.

Despite the weaker results, chief executive Sue van der Merwe told investors that participation in core lottery games remained “healthy,” noting that Australians continue to buy tickets even under cost-of-living pressures. Investors appeared reassured, with the company's shares rising nearly 8% on the Australian Securities Exchange following the announcement.

Toll road operator Transurban also released its results, highlighting the impact of shifting commuter habits. Daily trips rose by 2.7% in Sydney, 1.2% in Melbourne, and 1.5% in Brisbane over the past year, with increased large vehicle traffic in Queensland linked to the state's economic growth. Revenue rose to \$3.7 billion, helped by higher toll prices and a 20% boost from its North American operations.

However, profits halved to \$178 million due to higher financing and operating expenses. Chief executive Michelle Jablko said the company expected to adapt as governments,

particularly in New South Wales, pursue toll reforms to ease commuter costs. She added that any changes would balance affordability with maintaining the value of contracts for investors.

Meanwhile, industrial tensions at Perth Airport threaten to disrupt international travel. Hundreds of ground and passenger service workers employed by Dubai National Air Travel Agency (dnata) will strike from Thursday evening after rejecting a pay offer. The proposal included staged increases from 4% in 2025 to 2.5% or CPI by 2028.

The Transport Workers Union argues that dnata staff in Perth are among the lowest paid in the country, earning up to 20% less than their counterparts interstate. The strike could affect flights from carriers including Emirates, Air New Zealand, Cathay Pacific, and Singapore Airlines. A dnata spokesperson said the company was negotiating in “good faith” and sought to balance wage increases with market conditions.

Together, these developments reflect the pressures and resilience in different parts of Australia’s economy — from household spending habits on lottery games, to infrastructure revenue from toll roads, and ongoing disputes over wages in the aviation sector.