

Chinese travellers to Australia have welcomed visa changes that will make it easier for them to do business in the country.

Visitors can now apply for a three-year multiple-entry visa, instead of having to renew one every 12 months.

David Garnier, founder of corporate advisory firm New Wave Capitala in Beijing, says the changes to the Chinese business visas will streamline the visa process.

"So for example we are taking a delegation to Australia in March where the problems we've had is with their visas," he said.

"Some of them have been single-entry visas, some haven't been granted at all."

"But now we'll have some certainty in regards to having three-year visas (that are) multi-entry where we can have some consistent dialogue and plan for some of our negotiations."

Lu Dongmei, who works for Chinese investment company Taifeng and owns a vineyard in South Australia, has also welcomed the announcement.

"This saves us a lot of time and keeps the unnecessary costs down; It improves our efficiency," she said.

'Making business easier'

The Australian Government says more than 80,000 visa applications were approved within a month in China in the lead up to the Chinese New Year.

Australia's Trade Minister Andrew Robb says changes to Chinese business visas will benefit both visitors and the domestic tourism industry.

"If you had to renew your passport every year it's quite an inconvenience," Mr Robb told Australia Network.

"Now we've got literally many tens of thousands of Chinese business people coming - the easier we can make this the more they enjoy the experience.

"There are other things we're doing as well but this is symptomatic of making business easier. We want to be a destination where the ease of doing business is second to none."

Mr Robb says the changes support the Australian Government's ambitious trade and investment agenda.

"Since 2002, in 10 years, we've had an eight-fold increase in the amount of Chinese investment in Australia.

"We need another wave of investment for infrastructure in so many different areas - not just roads and rail and ports but infrastructure associated with lots of industries, with agriculture and agri-business, with resources and energy even with medical research and medical facilities, all of these sorts of areas. Tourism - we desperately need more capital to come in to support tourism initiatives.

"Now all of those things are prime opportunities from China and it is now a very significant source of capital and also expertise in certain areas."

The Government says the introduction of the three-year, multiple-entry visa for Chinese business travellers follows the decision to grant increased seating capacity to Chinese airlines to help cater for increased demand during the busy Chinese New Year period in Australia.

"We are just an overnight flight from China, we're in the same time zone. There's a lot there that is attractive from a business point of view. People can almost sleep overnight and get off the plane and do a full days' business. All of these things are going our way -- let's make it even easier again so that we are demonstrating to the Chinese that we value their investment and their business and the trade and that we want to grow it even further."

Mr Robb says the focus on Chinese business travellers is just the beginning.

"It's not just China, we are ultimately looking to attract business, the ease of business, from across the globe and we are looking for all those sorts of things that can add up to a good experience for people coming into Australia to do business."