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Qantas signs Codeshare arrangement with Air China

Qantas has signed a codeshare arrangement with Air China, which will be effective from September 15. Qantas group general manager sales and distribution Rob Gurney said the arrangement would see Air China codeshare on three weekly return Qantas services between Sydney and Beijing.

"We are very pleased to welcome Air China to the Qantas family of codeshare partners," he said. "China is an extremely important market to the Qantas Group. In the lead-up to the 2008 Olympic Games, we expect to offer daily services between Australia and Beijing to better cater for growing trade and leisure travel. "Travel between China and Australia has increased more than 40 per cent in the past three years and is expected to grow a further 20 per cent in the coming year. "This codeshare agreement with Air China is an extension of the Qantas Group's commitment to the region."

Gurney said the Airbus A330 services would offer Air China customers authentic Chinese cuisine and Qantas' award winning inflight entertainment, with personal television screens offering digital picture and sound quality in the Economy cabin. "These services feature Audio and Video on Demand, with a choice of 60 movies, 120 TV selections, a library of 120 CDs, 20 radio channels and 10 interactive games," he said. Gurney said Qantas had developed codeshare arrangements with many other leading airlines, offering customers an extended network that provided seamless access to a wide variety of destinations around the world. Qantas currently operates seven weekly services to mainland China – four to Shanghai and three to Beijing.

(Source: *TravelMole News* 24/08/2006)



New PNG to Australia Air Service begins

The Chief Executive Officer of Papua New Guinea's newest international airline says the introduction of its Boeing B737 service between Australia and PNG is the start of a positive choice for the travelling public as well as the private sector. The Airlines PNG Boeing B737 plane being leased from Oz Jet Australia began its flights between Brisbane and Port Moresby last week. PNG's national airline Air Niugini which operates on a code-share arrangement with Qantas currently dominates the route between Australia and Papua New Guinea, however Airlines PNG will now tap into that market with its new jet. Airlines PNG chief executive officer, Simon Wild says it's an exciting era for both the airline and passengers. For more information on the news item, visit the following link:

<http://www.abc.net.au/ra/pacbeat/stories/s1726022.htm>

(Source: *Pacific Beat News* 28/08/2006)



Update on Tourism situation in Solomon Islands

During the period (June to August), Solomon Airlines has reported an increase in its passenger's loadings on its Brisbane to Honiara route. Air Niugini flights to Honiara has also reported an increase in its passenger loadings during the period which is why it is considering a third service to its current twice weekly services to Honiara. The five major hotels in Honiara and Gizo have reported an increase in occupancy rate during the period. Uepi Resort in Marovo Lagoon and Sanbis Resort off Gizo has also experienced full bookings during the period.

(Source: *SPTO Weekly Newsletter Update*)

New Zealand to Niue Air Service update

Air New Zealand's weekly flight between Auckland and Niue is proving successful. It departs 10 PM (2200 hrs) every Friday night ex Auckland, crossing the date line to land in Niue at 1.40 AM (0140 hrs) the same day. The return flight departs Niue at 2.40 AM (0240 hrs) and arrives back in Auckland at 6.40 AM (0640 hrs) on Saturday, having crossed the dateline again. There are



126 seats available per flight so the frequent wait-listing problems previously experienced are now history. Polynesian Airlines have cancelled their mid-week flight between Samoa and Niue, so the only air link to Niue is ex-Auckland via Air New Zealand.

(Source: Niue Now Newsletter Issue 2)

Australia's Tourism Industry praises Government decision to uphold 40-year pact

EThe Australian Tourism Export Council (ATEC) on Tuesday expressed its support and relief at news that Tourism Australia would remain a separate statutory authority reporting to a board.

Managing Director Matthew Hingerty said that the Australian government had made the correct decision for Tourism Australia to remain a statutory authority under the Commonwealth Authorities and Companies Act 1997, upholding a 40-year pact between the tourism industry and the Commonwealth government, according to an ATEC release. "In 1967, the tourism industry and the Commonwealth government agreed that as tourism was made up mostly of small businesses, it did not have the resources to market Australia off-shore," Hingerty said.

"The government of the day agreed that it was important to develop a tourism industry and agreed to take on the responsibility of funding a statutory authority reporting to a board of industry experts, to market Australia off-shore. Thus the Australian Tourist Commission, now Tourism Australia was born. "This decision has proved a spectacular success, building an industry that directly employs half a million Australians and earns \$18 billion in export income annually.

"...THE AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT HAD MADE THE CORRECT DECISION..."

"From time-to-time governments have seen fit to review this arrangement, the latest being through the Uhrig Review. On each occasion, the standing arrangements have been re-confirmed. "We welcome the fact that once again the Commonwealth has demonstrated that it understands the importance of funding our international marketing effort via a statutory authority.

"ATEC has full confidence in Tourism Australia and we look forward to continuing to work closely with them now that the air has been cleared in terms of their ongoing corporate governance." Hingerty said ATEC would like to place on record its gratitude to Tourism Minister Fran Bailey for allowing its strong views on the matter and the common views of this industry to be submitted formally to the government.

(Source: eTurbo News 16/08/2006)



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