BITRE STATS SHOW THE CHANGING FORTUNES OF QANTAS INTERNATIONAL

News / Airlines



Here's a stat that illustrates how Qantas International has turned the corner – for the month of October 2015, the number of passengers Qantas carried on its international operations to and from Australia grew by over five per cent, according to latest government data.

The Bureau of Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Economics (BITRE)'s latest monthly 'International Airline Activity' report released on Friday shows that Qantas carried over 486,00 passengers on its international operations during October last year, up 5.8 per cent from 460,000 in October 2014.

And as a result of its traffic growth Qantas's share of the total Australian international market has stopped its long-term decline. The entire market grew by 4.6 per cent in October, meaning Qantas's share of the total market held steady at 16.1 per cent.

Qantas's international passenger share fell to as low as 15.7 per cent in mid 2015.

The composition of the October traffic figures too show the changing face of the Qantas International operation, which for many years had struggled with unprofitability before posting an underlying profit of $297 million for the 2014/15 financial year.

Of Qantas's major markets, passenger numbers to/from the US fell by 0.6 per cent for the month

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(to 114,598 passengers), while other markets to suffer falls were Indonesia (-5.1 per cent), PNG (-17.7 per cent) and the Philippines (-2.2 per cent).

But those falls were more than offset by growth directly or indirectly related to the airline's alliance with Dubai-based Emirates. Traffic to Emirates' Dubai hub grew 5.1 per cent, while traffic to London (which has to stop over in Dubai en route to the UK) grew 3.5 per cent.

Indirectly too the Emirates alliance has led to traffic growth, as Qantas has focused on more passenger-friendly schedules and adding capacity to Asia without the restriction of needing to connect to onward flights to Europe. Traffic to Qantas's previous hub for servicing Europe, Singapore, grew 22.4 per cent for the period. Other Asian markets where Qantas saw growth included Thailand (12 per cent), Hong Kong (6.4 per cent) and mainland China (3.6 per cent).

But the standout market was Japan – Qantas carried 67 per cent more passengers to Japan in October 2015 as compared to a year earlier, as new Sydney-Haneda and Brisbane-Narita services came on line in August.

Another strong performer was Chile –in October 2015 Qantas carried 29.9 per cent more passengers on its Sydney-Santiago services than in October 2014.

The BITRE report contains further good news for the Qantas Group.

Low-cost carrier arm Jetstar flew 9.9 per cent of all Australian inbound and outbound international passengers in October, overtaking Emirates to become Australia's second biggest international airline by passengers carried.

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SOURCE: AUSTRALIAN AVIATION
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