QANTAS BOOSTS MELBOURNE-SINGAPORE SCHEDULE

News / Airlines



Qantas is adding further capacity to Asia from April 2016 with an extra three flights a week between **Melbourne** and **Singapore**.

The new services arise from Airbus A330s being freed up from the upgauging of three Melbourne-Hong Kong flights from the Airbus twin to Boeing 747s and continues Qantas's renewed push into Asia in recent times. It will give Qantas 10 flights a week between the Victorian capital and Singapore.

The three flights will operate on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays as an afternoon departure from Melbourne, with QF37 arriving into Singapore at just after 2200 local time. The reciprocal QF38 is scheduled to take off from the city-state at 2335, arriving into Melbourne at 0900 the next day.

The Flying Kangaroo is double-daily between Singapore and Sydney, while it flies daily from Brisbane and Perth to Singapore.

Qantas said in a statement on Thursday the changes were part of efforts to "adjust its network to meet growing demand from Asia".

The airline group – comprising Qantas and its low-cost unit Jetstar – said 43 per cent of its capacity was dedicated to Asia, compared with 31 per cent to North America, 14 per cent to

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Europe, the Middle East and Africa and 12 per cent to the Tasman, Pacific and South America.

Qantas's boost to Melbourne-Singapore comes as Virgin Australia alliance partner and major shareholder Singapore Airlines (SIA) contemplates boosting its offering between Australia and its home base.

SIA South West Pacific regional vice president Tiow Kor Tan said the airline was reviewing its schedules for 2016 with a view to boosting capacity.

"Despite the weakening of both the Australian and New Zealand dollar we have experienced good loads in 2015, which is why we are currently reviewing our services for 2016," Tan said in an emailed statement to Australian Aviation.

"This review is looking at the possibility of increasing capacity by seven per cent in to the South West Pacific region in 2016.

"The makeup of this capacity increase is also part of the review, however it is likely that the majority of the increase will be in the Australian market. It is too early to announce whether the increase will be in the form of additional services, larger aircraft or a mix of both."

Tan noted SIA has averaged load factors of about 86 per cent since April, up about five percentage points compared with the prior corresponding period.

This was achieved amid some capacity declines in 2015 due to aircraft type and frequency changes, as well as SIA's introduction of premium economy on some routes, Tan said.

SIA serves Adelaide, Brisbane, Melbourne, Perth and Sydney from its Singapore hub while its regional wing Silkair flies to Cairns and Darwin.

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