US DOT NEARING DECISION ON QANTAS-AMERICAN ALLIANCE

News / Airlines



The US Department of Transportation looks to be nearing a decision on Qantas and American Airlines' application to expand their existing alliance on trans-Pacific routes.

While the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) and New Zealand government have both given the tie-up the green light, the US DOT is still reviewing the application and in November 2015 asked the two carriers to supply more information regarding city-pairs, market shares and other data.

The US DOT said in a regulatory filing the extra information was received on December 18 2015.

"We have finished our initial review of the application and all supporting materials submitted by the joint applicants," the DOT's regulatory filing dated February 1 said.

"The record is now substantially complete."

The DOT said the deadline for public comments was 21 days after the February 1 notice was filed.

In December, Qantas resumed service to San Francisco while American launched flights between Sydney and Los Angeles with Boeing 777-300ERs.

The US flag carrier is also starting flights between Auckland and Los Angeles with Boeing 787-8

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Dreamliners from June.

Qantas chief executive Alan Joyce has also flagged more new new routes as part of the deepened alliance that includes a revenue-sharing component, such as Qantas operating Melbourne-Dallas/Fort Worth with its forthcoming Boeing 787-9s.

“That’s a few years away, 2017 is when the first [787-9] is coming. And if Dallas keeps on growing and the partnership keeps on enhancing we’ll be looking at those opportunities,” Joyce told reporters in Sydney in November.

“We also said today the aircraft can do Sydney to Chicago, again that’s a huge American hub in Chicago as well. So there’s lots of opportunities this partnership opens up potentially.”

Aviation analysts expected the DOT to approve the expanded partnership between the two oneworld alliance members.

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