START-UP DIGITAL DISRUPTER, AIRLY, SAYS IT'S FOUND A BIG HOLE IN THE AVIATION INDUSTRY

News / Business aviation



There's a new way to fly Australia's busiest air routes without standing in long lines to check in.

A company called Airly is offering unlimited private flights between Melbourne, Canberra and Sydney for members who pay a monthly fee.

But aviation experts say the start-up is doomed to fail because it's never been a better time to fly regular commercial domestic jets around Australia.

David Taylor has the story.

DAVID TAYLOR: How about this for a 21st century travel experience?

Book an Uber car to take you to the airport, take an Airly plane interstate, and then back into an Uber vehicle to an Air Bnb apartment rental.

LUKE HAMPSHIRE: Welcome To 2016.

DAVID TAYLOR: It's called digital disruption start-up companies using 21st century technology

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shake-up industry of all shapes and sizes.

Airly co-founder Luke Hampshire hopes to launch the private jet service later this year.

LUKE HAMPSHIRE: We are giving our members access to eight seat private planes flying between Australia's busiest air routes for a flat monthly fee.

DAVID TAYLOR: It's effectively a flying club and it's not cheap.

The idea is that several hundred members will pay a one thousand dollar joining fee and then $2550 on top of that for unlimited flights between Sydney's Bankstown Airport and Melbourne's Essendon airport.

Canberra's also in the mix.

Travellers will take a seat on an eight seater King Air 350 turboprop.

LUKE HAMPSHIRE: We are giving everyone the convenience, we are going to save them two hours per round trip time usually spent in transit looking for a car park in a security line holding, trying to get into Sydney or waiting to depart Sydney as well with all the congestion.

We really think we are going to turn air travel on its head for the regular commuters.

NEIL HANSFORD: I can't see it getting off the ground.

DAVID TAYLOR: Strategic Aviation Solutions chairman, Neil Hansford.

NEIL HANSFORD: The only airports that they will get into will be the second airports like Bankstown, Essendon and Archerfield and if these airports were so popular someone would have tried to get a successful regular public transport operation going into these airports.

DAVID TAYLOR: Airly's Luke Hampshire says the company's already got CEOs, managing directors, and entrepreneurs on its books high flyers who are keen to network in the air.

He says Airly's not looking for once-a-year travellers.

LUKE HAMPSHIRE: We think it's a perfect time to turn air travel on its head. Yes the fuel price is getting better, that benefits us, the Aussie dollar is improving which also benefits us but those who are looking for a really personalised service, a very efficient and streamline way to commute on a regular basis we think we are the perfect fit.

DAVID TAYLOR: Aviation expert Neil Hansford disagrees.

NEIL HANSFORD: Qantas have drawn the line in the sand that the Qantas Group are not going to have less than 65 per cent of those that are travelling and whilst that line is in the sand and Qantas' credit record is getting better it will keep a very competitive market.

Yes you will pay high fares if you aren't organised and you're planning what you're doing.

I have to say to places like Perth it's never been so good.

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BRENDAN TREMBATH: Aviation expert, Neil Hansford, ending David Taylor's report.

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