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AIRLINE INTRODUCES ITS FIRST EMBRAER E-JET TO AUSTRALIAN SKIES & ANNOUNCES CANBERRA-SYDNEY "CAPITAL JET" SERVICES AS ITS FIRST NEW ROUTE

Virgin Blue has announced Canberra-Sydney as the first of a plethora of new Australian air routes it will operate with its 20 brand new Embraer jets, the first of which arrived this week.

The first EMBRAER 170 aircraft landed in the country from Brazil this week and was unveiled last night at a joy flight and Gala Black tie dinner for some of the country's political, diplomatic and corporate leaders. The event coincided with the official opening of Virgin Blue's new corporate The Lounge facility at Canberra Airport.

The 20 Embraer aircraft will join Virgin Blue's existing fleet of 55 Boeing 737 aircraft, marking a carefully considered move away from the single fleet strategy for the first time in the airline's seven year history. The deal is worth more than A\$850-million and is the largest single trade deal Australia has ever struck with Brazil.

The inclusion of the 78-seat EMBRAER 170 and the 104-seat EMBRAER 190 will provide Virgin Blue with additional capacity, the ability to fly to new regional destinations and the flexibility to tailor aircraft to suit specific routes in terms of frequency and capacity requirements in peaks and troughs. It will also provide travellers with one of the most technologically advanced, efficient and comfortable jet aircraft in the world.

Virgin Blue Chief Executive, Brett Godfrey, has heralded the arrival of the E-Jet as a new and exciting era for Virgin Blue and its Guests.

"We have spent the past four years investigating aircraft options to give us maximum efficiency, economies of scale and the ability to venture in to new markets currently serviced by turbo-props. We are confident the E-Jet is the perfect aircraft to deliver on all fronts both now and in to the future."

He continued, "The E-Jet is particularly ideal for markets that require high frequency for corporate and Government Guests which is why I am pleased to announce that Virgin Blue has made the Canberra-Sydney route a priority and will re-enter the market with 108 flights a week, 8 direct daily flights on weekdays. The Virgin Blue flights will operate under the name "Capital Jet".

The new Canberra-Sydney "Capital Jet" flights will begin on 4 February 2008 to coincide with the return of corporate and Government travellers back from Christmas break. Fares start from \$99* one-way on the Internet and are now on sale. The additional E-Jet flights boost Virgin Blue's number of weekly departures from Canberra from 58 to 120, a 107% increase in frequency. (* for fare terms and conditions see www.virginblue.com.au)

Virgin Blue is also set to announce other new regional destinations within the next few weeks following visits by validation teams over the recent months to ascertain airport suitability and capability to support potential Virgin Blue services.

Orlando Neto, Managing Director of Embraer Asia Pacific, was equally thrilled by the arrival of the E-Jet in Australia.

“Virgin Blue is a world-class airline and Australia is a very sophisticated aviation market. Virgin Blue is known for setting new standards and we are very excited to be making this first delivery to the airline. The mixed fleet of EMBRAER 170 and EMBRAER 190 E-Jets provides a perfect match for Virgin Blue’s supply and demand by extending their reach in the region and providing flexibility on seat densities.”

He added, “Embraer is committed to supplying comprehensive support to ensure the smooth operation of the new fleet. This includes spare parts logistics and special programs support, as well as initial training for the airline’s pilots at the newly-launched, state-of-the-art simulator training facilities in Singapore.”

The Embraer jet aircraft have a seating capacity of 78 (EMBRAER 170) and 104 (EMBRAER 190) and boasts state of the art fly-by-wire cockpit technology, leather seats with generous width and seat pitch, sleek cabin designs and a quiet, smooth ride.

Two more E-Jets will be delivered to Virgin Blue before the end of the year, with the entire 20 scheduled for delivery by second quarter 2009. The mix of the firm order is for 6 EMBRAER 170 and 14 EMBRAER 190 E-Jets.

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