FIJI AIRWAYS TAKES DELIVERY OF NEW AIRBUS A350-900 XWB

News / Airlines, Manufacturer

Fiji Airways has taken delivery of its newest Airbus A350-900XWB as part of a journey to modernise the National Carrier fleet. Named the *Island of Beqa*, the brand new aircraft, is the third A350 to join the Fiji Airways fleet. It is considered the world leader in long-range flights. The *Island of Beqa* will add more capacity to Fiji Airways' leading source markets of Australia and New Zealand, as well as increase capacity for long haul flights to San Francisco and Vancouver, and Hong Kong which is the airline's current gateway to China.

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Company Managing Director and CEO Mr Andre Viljoen says one of the airline's 5 'Game Changer' Strategies they have relentlessly pursued since 2017 has been the modernization of its fleet, with 'new generation' aircraft such as the Airbus A350: "The A350 with its superior cabin, significant fuel savings and substantial cargo capacity has fast become the pride of our airline and the joy of our passengers. The **Island of Beqa** is brand new, having been put into storage immediately after manufacturing. We were able to negotiate a lucrative deal to acquire it. It combines the very latest aerodynamics, new generation engines and use of lightweight materials, to bring a 25% advantage in fuel burn, CO_2 emissions and operating costs compared to previous generation aircraft."

Mr Viljoen adds the airline is now in a stronger position to explore new destinations: "Fiji Airways brings in 70 percent of all visitors to Fiji. We are crucial to the long term sustainable growth of the tourism industry which is 45 percent of our Gross Domestic Product and the largest employer in the country. As the National Airline we recognize our role is not just to be the bridge to and from the world but to support the growth of tourism, one of the ways we can do this is by introducing new destinations with potential for high tourism opportunities."

These modern, state-of-the-art aircraft also enables Fiji Airways to explore new destinations much further than its current network. For example, the A350 XWBs are capable of flying much deeper into the United States or Canada.

Some possibilities the airline is continually exploring for the future include Dallas, Seattle, Beijing, Shanghai, Seoul and also Noumea, Wallis, Rarotonga, Port Moresby and several additional destinations in Australia.

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