



*Farzian Zainal*

Administrator of Christmas Island  
Administrator of the Cocos (Keeling) Islands



## Community Bulletin

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### New air services partnership for the IOT taking off

I welcome the Australian Government's announcement that Qantas will be the new long-term air services delivery partner for the Indian Ocean Territories (IOT).

I am pleased that the benefits the new partnership will bring to our islands align with the community feedback gathered through the air services survey, which many of you contributed to in 2023. The survey results were part of the Request for Tender documents, clarifying the key community priorities including airfare and pricing, service reliability, seat availability, baggage limits and speed of recovery services. The IOT RDO 2030 Strategic Regional Plan puts freight and supply chains front and centre of the agenda for our region, and the Supply Chain Review recommended that community priorities informed the tender documents.

The additional capacity and benefits delivered by this new arrangement will address one of my key priorities in supporting economic diversity and development in the Indian Ocean Territories and also support our remote communities in maintaining access to services and social connection to the mainland.

I note Qantas' proposal represented best value-for-money, while also aligning with community preferences.

I wish to express my gratitude to the Virgin Australia staff who have provided professional service over the past years, supporting our remote region during sometimes challenging circumstances.

I acknowledge this is a significant change and I know you will have a lot of questions – I can assure you the Government and its service partners are focused on providing you with answers and guidance as arrangements are finalised and information becomes available. Detailed transitional planning can be progressed now the announcement has been made.

The Australian Government is committed to supporting regular and reliable air services that best meet the current and future needs of IOT residents, tourists and businesses. I look forward to working with Qantas on this new phase of service delivery for Christmas and Cocos Islands.

Thanks to the IOT communities, businesses and travellers for understanding and working with the Government and its service providers during this transition period.

I will keep you informed as we move forward, with fortnightly updates on the transition arrangements.

[Farzian Zainal, Administrator of Christmas Island and the Cocos \(Keeling\) Islands](#)