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



Community Bulletin

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Supporting continuity in travel and freight

The department continues to work closely with Qantas to support the transition for air services, with further details now confirmed for both passengers and freight ahead of service commencement on 3 November.

Qantas has confirmed that shared baggage allowances between family members travelling together will be available under the new arrangements. Checked baggage allowance is 30kg per person, and additional allowance of up to a total of 65kg per person, regardless of status tier, can be purchased. I am also pleased to confirm there is no heavy bag fee for items up to 30kg in weight. Qantas is implementing a priority bag system for the IOT routes and each passenger is required to identify their priority bag, with any excess bags uplifted on the next available service with capacity.

Any bags not uplifted on the final VARA flight on 31 October will be delivered on the next aircraft with capacity (not necessarily the next scheduled flight).

Qantas has also confirmed that check-in times for IOT flights will open three hours before departure and close one hour before departure. The Qantas web link contains further information:

<https://help.qantas.com/support/s/article/Travelling-to-Christmas-Island-and-Cocos-Keeling-Islands>

There will be a short pause in outgoing air freight from CI and CKI following Qantas' commencement of services. This pause is necessary to allow for essential training and systems implementation. I understand the importance of reliable freight access, and I want to reassure you that services will recommence promptly once this initial phase is complete. I anticipate its completion in the next few weeks and I will keep you updated.

During the transition period, interim freight arrangements will be in effect. Freight consignments will continue to be managed through Freightshop, and transitional freight rates will apply. Interim freight rates will broadly align with recommendations of the Indian Ocean Territories Supply Chain Review, with cheaper rates for medical goods, perishable and general cargo compared to other freight categories. It is intended to review freight rates in six months.

The Supply Chain Review was a community-informed process that aimed to improve affordability, reliability and equity across our freight systems. These transitional rates reflect the Australian Government's commitment to implementing those recommendations in a way that supports local needs and economic resilience. Any freight not moved on the final VARA freighter will be held securely and scheduled for upcoming Qantas freight flights. We are working to support continuity throughout this transition process. Additional details regarding freighter services to the IOT are available at <https://www.freightshop.com.au/>

I'll continue to keep you updated as further details are confirmed. Thank you again for your cooperation and understanding as we move into this new chapter of air services for the Indian Ocean Territories.

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