



**Australian Government**

**Department of Infrastructure and Regional Development**

**MEETING BRIEF**

**PDR ID:** EC16-000246

**Subject:** Meeting with Qatar Airways

**Attendees:** Mr Akbar Al Baker, CEO, Qatar Airways  
Mr Mike Mrdak, Secretary  
Mr Andrew Wilson, Deputy Secretary,  
Ms Pip Spence, Executive Director, Aviation and Airports,  
Mr Stephen Borthwick, General Manager, Aviation Industry Policy

**Date and Time:** 4 March 2016, 11am

**Location:** Secretary's office

**Key Issues:**

Qatar continues to lobby for more access to Australia. It is expected Mr Al Baker will likely seek to push Qatar Airways' case for additional capacity and traffic rights, with the airline now fully utilising its capacity entitlements to Australia's major gateways.

Your meeting with Mr Al Baker will be an opportunity to emphasise that the outcome of future negotiations with Qatar will need to be mutually beneficial for both Australia and Qatar, and that any future talks are subject to the approval of the Minister for Infrastructure and Transport.

[REDACTED] Qatar Airways is one of the fastest growing airlines in the world and hopes to emulate the success of its neighbouring airlines, Emirates and Etihad, by expanding rapidly, including to Australia with flights connecting through its Doha hub to Europe and other destinations.

It is likely Qatar Airways will also publically lobby key stakeholders, particularly Australian tourism bodies and airports, for additional access to the Australian market.

Capacity was increased in September last year (by seven weekly frequencies) which preceded (and facilitated) the announcement of services to Sydney. In discussions at ICAN in Turkey in October last year, the Qatar aeronautical authorities made representations for additional capacity. Qatar Airways has committed to providing advice on its long term operational plans to Australia to enable consideration of requests for additional capacity. You may wish to enquire on the progress of this commitment.

**Sensitivities:**

The response from Australian stakeholders to the prospect of expanding air services arrangements with Qatar will be divided. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

**Contact Name:** [REDACTED]  
**Position:** A/g Director

**Contact Number:** [REDACTED]  
**Branch/Section:** Aviation Industry Policy/International Air Transport

**S e c u r i t y   C l a s s i f i c a t i o n**

**Background:**

The current air services arrangements with Qatar enables Qatar Airways to operate up to 21 frequencies per week into Australia's major (Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane and Perth) and unlimited frequencies into other Australian gateways. Qatar Airways now fully utilises these entitlements, operating a daily service to each of Melbourne and Perth, with daily services to Sydney commencing on 1 March 2016.

The airline has also announced the commencement of a daily service to Adelaide from 3 May 2016.

On 4 February 2016, the then Deputy Prime Minister approved these changes and the Department wrote to the Chairman of Qatar's Civil Aviation Authority on 15 February 2016 to propose the relevant changes to the air services arrangements, to be brought into effect from the date of Qatar's response. The Department is currently awaiting a formal response from Qatar's Civil Aviation Authority.

[Redacted text block]

## **S e c u r i t y   C l a s s i f i c a t i o n**

We are seeking a routine Last Port of Call assessment of DOH in June 2016 and have written to QCAA with this request. As per normal arrangements the assessment would also include observations of security procedures for Qatar Airways flights to Australia.

Stephen Borthwick  
General Manager  
Aviation Industry Policy

25 February 2016