

Media Release **Embargoed until 12.01am Tuesday 20 August**

QANTAS INVESTS \$10 MILLION IN BIGGER DISCOUNTS FOR REGIONAL AUSTRALIA

- Bigger discounts for last minute fares for residents in 16 regional towns
- Maximum fares approximately \$400 per sector to capital cities (approx. \$800 return)
- Qantas calls on councils and airports to reduce airport fees

Mount Isa, 20 August 2019: Residents in regional and remote towns across Australia will benefit from a major expansion to Qantas' discounted fares program.

The national carrier will invest up to \$10 million each year in providing flight discounts for residents in 16 towns across Queensland, Northern Territory and Western Australia.

Currently, Qantas provides residents flying between their home town and the nearest capital city with discounts of at least 20-30 per cent – with discounted fares starting at \$175-\$325 per sector when booking return journeys. These discounts will remain.

Bigger discounts will now apply to fares booked during busy periods and at the last minute, so the maximum residents will pay will be approximately \$400 per sector when booking return journeys (approx. \$800 return)¹.

Fares vary between regional towns and fare levels will be reviewed periodically to consider inflation or other cost increases. Qantas will continue to offer residents sale fares below these levels from time to time.

Program Rollout

The discounted fares program applies in selected regional towns where residents compete with a very high proportion of corporate travel or are impacted by their remoteness.

The initial rollout of the program expansion will happen immediately in Mount Isa, Cloncurry, Longreach, Barcaldine, Blackall, Karratha and Kalgoorlie. Regional airports and councils in these towns have committed to reducing the fees they charge each passenger, which are built into airfares.

Qantas is consulting with local airports and councils in the other towns in the program: Moranbah, Roma, Charleville, Broome, Port Hedland, Newman, Paraburdoo, Alice Springs and Yulara (Ayers Rock).

Qantas is calling on these regional airports and councils to implement similar fee reductions for residents.

Comments from Qantas Domestic CEO Andrew David

Qantas Domestic CEO Andrew David said the national carrier was responding to direct feedback from residents in regional Australia about accessing more affordable air travel.

"We have been out to visit regional communities to listen to their concerns and those raised through the Senate Inquiry into regional airfares, and we are responding," Mr David said.

"The existing discount program is proving to be extremely popular but some residents have told us that when they need to travel during peak travel periods or at the last minute, for things like funerals or urgent medical appointments, they end up booking our highest fares and paying more or they don't travel. That's why we are introducing bigger discounts to these bookings.

"The maximum residents in these towns will pay is around \$400 per sector, or around \$800 return.

¹ Discounted maximum fares only available via Qantas' dedicated resident fares website. .

“There are some fundamental realities about the costs of operating regional services that we can’t change, particularly to remote parts of the country, but we are making this commitment and investment to assist residents in these towns.”

Mr David said more than 20,000 return trips had been booked using the resident fare discounts since 2017, but many locals were not using the dedicated resident fare website and wound up paying more than they should.

“We’d like to see more residents take advantage of the savings which apply to every seat on every flight to the nearest capital city. Booking through our dedicated resident fare website is the only way to get special fares for locals, including the extra savings we are now making available,” he said.

Ongoing support for regions

Qantas [recently removed the \\$99 flight change fee](#) for new bookings made through the resident fare website to provide residents with greater flexibility and additional savings if their travel plans change. Travel on these fares is for personal use and there is a limit of 12 return fares per person, per year.

The discounted fares program is part of a broader suite of initiatives designed to support regional Australia including through [drought relief](#), a [regional grants program](#) and the new [Qantas Group Pilot Academy](#) that is expected to drive local economic activity and support jobs when it opens in Toowoomba later this year.

Figures recently released show that Qantas contributed more than \$5 billion to the economy in regional Australia and supported more than 40,000 jobs.

HOW QANTAS’ RESIDENT FARES WORK

1. Go to the dedicated resident fare website - qantas.com/residentfares
2. Click on the “Book Now” button
3. Enter your Frequent Flyer details – If you are not a member it’s quick and free to join for residents
4. Search for return flights between your local airport and your nearest capital city. Lowest return fares available will be displayed with discounts automatically included.
5. Pick your fare and book.

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