AIR NZ ESTABLISHES NEW REGIONAL GENERAL MANAGER AUSTRALIA ROLE

News / Airlines

Air New Zealand plans to boost its sales presence in Australia with a new **regional general manager role** as the airline seeks to carry more long-haul passengers from this side on the Tasman through its Auckland hub.

The Star Alliance member plans to grow its international capacity 14-15 per cent in 2015/16 – the bulk of which will be on two new routes to Buenos Aires and Houston, respectively – while domestic capacity was forecast to increase by about eight per cent.

In recent times, the airline has focused heavily on boosting international transfer passengers at Auckland, with a particular emphasis on capturing a larger share of Australians heading to the Americas.

Air NZ chief sales and commercial officer Cam Wallace says it has been a “key priority” for the airline to “substantially reposition our presence in the Australia market as a core part of our revenue base”.

“We have ambitious growth targets through to FY20, including the need to achieve significant long-haul growth from this region in the face of some strong competition,” Wallace told staff in an internal email dated December 8.

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“To achieve this growth we will be adopting a state by state strategy and investing significantly in Victoria, South Australia, Queensland, New South Wales and Western Australia.”

Part of that investment included establishing a new Regional General Manager Australia role to “reflect our elevated presence in this market and the drive to establish Auckland as an Australasian hub for long haul traffic”, Wallace said.

Competition on trans-Pacific routes is heating up, with a host of new services either started or due to begin in the period ahead.

Air NZ commenced its Buenos Aires service on December 1, while its flights to Houston were scheduled to take off from December 15.

Elsewhere American Airlines returns to Australia for the first time since the early 1990s when it launches a daily Sydney-Los Angeles rotation from December 17 and its alliance partner and fellow oneworld member Qantas returns to San Francisco on December 20.

There are also new flights planned in 2016, with United to operate Boeing 787 Dreamliners between San Francisco and Auckland from July and American headed to New Zealand with a new Auckland-Los Angeles service due to launch in June.

The new Australian-based role was among several changes to Air NZ’s global sales teams, with a new appointments as Regional General Manager Americas responsible for “defending our existing North American routes and building demand on our new Houston and Buenos Aires services”, as well as building Air NZ’s partnership with United.

Meanwhile, there is also a new Regional General Manager Asia role, which covers Air NZ’s operations in Japan, China, Hong Kong, Singapore and Vietnam.

08 DECEMBER 2015

SOURCE: AUSTRALIAN AVIATION
ARTICLE LINK:
https://50skyshades.com/index.php/news/airlines/air-nz-establishes-new-regional-general-manager-australia-role

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