FROM REGIONAL RELIABILITY TO GLOBAL FLEXIBILITY: SMARTLYNX AUSTRALIA'S GROWTH PATH

News / Airlines

When SmartLynx Australia started providing services between Sydney and Lord Howe Island on behalf of Qantas in April 2025, it marked more than just a new operation for SmartLynx Australia. It represents a commitment to regional connectivity that defines its mission – providing capacity to regional communities, to continuously improving operational performance, to building the flexibility that Australian aviation increasingly needs.

In October 2024, Transport for New South Wales (TfNSW) awarded SmartLynx Australia the Sydney to Lord Howe Island route license. This route, operated by Qantas for over 30 years, will transition to SmartLynx Australia in the coming months.

Licensed to operate the route for five years, SmartLynx Australia (previously known as Skytrans) brings extensive operating experience in regional and remote aviation, along with deep expertise with the Dash 8 aircraft that have been synonymous with the connection to the island.

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SmartLynx Australia remains firmly committed to regional aviation and turboprop operations. The company continues to invest in its Dash 8 fleet and capabilities, ensuring long-term reliability for regional communities. At the same time, SmartLynx's growing expertise allows it to support other regional airlines facing capacity gaps or ageing fleet challenges — helping maintain essential air connectivity across the region

Operating regional flights in Australia presents its own unique set of challenges. The business is dynamic, with better and worse weeks in terms of on-time performance and cancellations. Weather, technical requirements, and the remoteness of certain destinations mean that consistency requires constant effort and focus.

Gytis Gumuliauskas, CEO and Managing Director of SmartLynx Australia commented: "The SmartLynx Australia team has been working hard to improve performance across all metrics, and over the last six months, the results are starting to show the impact of that dedication. We see these results as a reassurance not just to passengers but also to airlines looking at options for extending their capacity. The rebrand from Skytrans to SmartLynx Australia and expanding our service offering with ACMI is about strengthening our current RPT and charter services, not replacing them. We are here to support the entire Australian and Asia-Pacific markets when capacity is needed. That is exactly what being part of the Avia Solutions Group enables us to do."

Recent operational data reflects this commitment to improvement. In August 2025, SmartLynx Australia's OTP reached 89.7% for arrivals and 92.9% for departures on its scheduled service network. The company's cancellation rates remained below 2% during the same period.

Under a wet lease, also known as ACMI, airlines can quickly access fully serviced aircraft complete with trained crews. This flexible model allows carriers to increase capacity during peak seasons, test new routes without long-term commitments, and cover for aircraft undergoing maintenance – all without investing in permanent fleet expansion.

SmartLynx Australia can leverage global expertise and resources to serve these diverse needs. The company's fleet can serve both needs – operating scheduled routes and providing ACMI capacity when carriers face fleet constraints or maintenance schedules.

The carrier recently added Airbus A319 aircraft to its fleet, which, alongside the existing fleet comprising 10 Dash 8 aircraft, is key to further developing ACMI services in Australia and the Asia-Pacific region. For Gumuliauskas, this expansion reinforces rather than replaces the company's core mission.

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