QANTAS GROUP STRENGTHENS REGIONAL NETWORK WITH STRATEGIC TURBOPROP FLEET INVESTMENT

News / Airlines, Finance



Qantas has announced a major investment in its De Havilland Dash 8 turboprop fleet, reinforcing its long-term commitment to maintaining reliable air links across regional Australia. As part of the fleet renewal program, the airline will acquire 14 additional mid-life Dash 8-400 (Q400) aircraft while gradually retiring 19 smaller Q200 and Q300 turboprops. The first of the newly acquired aircraft is scheduled to enter service with QantasLink by the end of 2024.

The Q400 offers significant advantages over the older aircraft types, operating more than 30% faster and reducing travel times for passengers flying to and from regional destinations. The modernization initiative is also expected to enhance operational reliability and overall customer experience.

With these additions, QantasLink's Q400 fleet will grow to 45 aircraft. Consolidating three

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turboprop sub-fleets into a single aircraft type will deliver greater scale efficiencies, simplify maintenance, and lower operating costs. Despite the fleet transition, QantasLink's overall turboprop capacity will remain broadly unchanged.

Qantas Group CEO Vanessa Hudson said the fleet renewal program underscores the airline's continued investment in regional communities and its commitment to providing dependable air services across Australia: "As the national carrier, we are proud of the role we have played for more than 100 years keeping regional communities connected, and this investment ensures there will be ongoing reliable air services across many parts of regional Australia. QantasLink turboprops carry more than 3.5 million customers to more than 50 destinations around regional Australia every year, and these next-generation aircraft allow us to improve the travel experience with a faster and more comfortable experience. By consolidating our turboprops into a single fleet type, we'll be able to further improve our reliability and provide a better recovery for our customers during disruptions as well as reducing complexity and cost for our operation. We know sustainable travel is important?for our customers. These additional Q400s allow us to provide certainty to the regions over the next decade while we work with aircraft manufacturers and other suppliers on electric or battery powered aircraft that are the right size and range for our network."



This latest investment forms part of the Qantas Group's wider fleet renewal strategy, which also includes the continued introduction of Airbus A220 aircraft into the QantasLink network. The airline's third A220 is scheduled for delivery in the coming weeks, further modernising its regional operations.

The net investment associated with the turboprop renewal program will be largely allocated across FY25 and FY26, with the majority of expenditure occurring in FY25. Qantas confirmed that the FY25 investment will be accommodated within its existing net capital expenditure guidance of between $3.7 billion and $3.9 billion.

Beyond fleet investment, Qantas continues to support regional Australia through a number of community-focused initiatives. These include the Regional Grants Program, which is delivering

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$10 million in funding over five years to not-for-profit organisations and projects that directly benefit regional communities, as well as the Resident Fares Program, which provides year-round discounted travel for residents of 16 regional and remote towns, improving access to essential air services.

Q400 Fleet at a Glance

- QantasLink currently operates 31 Dash 8 Q400 aircraft, with the fleet set to expand to 45 aircraft following the latest acquisition.
- The 14 additional Q400s will feature 78 seats, offering significantly greater capacity than the 50-seat Q300 and 36-seat Q200 aircraft they will replace.
- The Q400 delivers improved environmental performance, generating lower carbon emissions per passenger compared with the Q300.
- The incoming aircraft are, on average, more than a decade younger than the turboprops being retired from service.
- The fleet consolidation will enhance operational efficiency while simplifying maintenance and reducing long-term operating costs.



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