HYDROGEN FLIGHT ALLIANCE LAUNCHES IN BRISBANE

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Key players in the Australian aviation and green hydrogen industries have officially launched the Hydrogen Flight Alliance at Brisbane Airport. The aim of the alliance is to ensure Australia plays a leading role in the aviation industry's transition towards net-zero by 2050. The initial focus will be on enabling Australia's first commercial emission free hydrogen powered flight between Brisbane Airport and Gladstone Airport in 2026. This route will be operated by Skytrans Airlines using a 15 seat Stralis B1900D-HE aircraft, designed and built in Brisbane. The only emissions from the tailpipe of this aircraft will be water vapour. Both cities already have significant green hydrogen developments underway, making them ideal locations to launch the first hydrogen electric aircraft routes in Australia.

Stralis Aircraft will begin flight testing their hydrogen electric powered 6 seat Beechcraft Bonanza demonstrator aircraft in early 2024. These flights will occur in South East Queensland, allowing the alliance to gain real world experience operating and refueling hydrogen aircraft.

The newly formed alliance brings together leading Australian organisations to develop the hydrogen flight ecosystem required to enable operation of new Australian made emission free aircraft. HFA members include:

- Stralis Aircraft
- Skytrans Airlines

- Brisbane Airport
- Gladstone Airpor
- Aviation Australia
- BOC, a Linde Company
- H2 Energy Company (h2ec)
- Griffith University
- Central Queensland University

Brisbane is planning for the 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games to be a climate positive event. The HFA is working to enable the vision of athletes being flown around Queensland during the games on locally built emission free aircraft. Green hydrogen has the potential to contribute significantly to the decarbonisation of air travel. However, challenges around the fuel's availability at scale, future cost and airport supply infrastructure need to be solved. Consortiums like the HFA bring together the diverse mix of expertise required to make progress in these areas.

Formation of this alliance will establish a clean technology innovation hub in Queensland, generating world class jobs, training programs and emission free aircraft manufacturing. Australia is an ideal location to trial hydrogen flight, due to its abundance of renewable energy and developing green hydrogen industry. Commercial hydrogen electric aircraft will be designed, tested and certified with the Civil Aviation Safety Authority to the same level of safety as conventional aircraft.

Strong government incentives around the globe, such as the Inflation Reduction Act in the USA, are helping countries build strong emission reduction technology industries. Similar incentives are needed for Australia to remain competitive in the race to decarbonise.

Honourable Mick de Brenni MP, Queensland Minister for Energy, Renewables and Hydrogen, commented: "Queensland's green hydrogen industry is the next frontier in a world hungry for renewables and is our greatest climate, jobs, and economic opportunity in a generation. Green hydrogen will be a game changer in decarbonising heavy haulage, shipping, manufacturing, and aviation, while also slashing emissions, helping tackle climate change and safeguarding natural tourism wonders for generations to come. As the nation's most decentralised state, this new alliance has an incredible opportunity to put Queensland in the cockpit to pilot the nation's aviation clean energy revolution."

Honourable Glenn Butcher MP, Member for Gladstone and Queensland Minister for Regional Development and Manufacturing, said: "Gladstone will play a key role in developing Queensland's renewable hydrogen industry, and this new aviation alliance puts our local airport on the international map. This application of renewable energy is a game changer, creating good local jobs and economic benefits for the region for years to come."

Bob Criner, Co-Founder & CEO of Stralis Aircraft stated: “The HFA allows us to answer the most common question we hear from airline customers, which is how they will access affordable green hydrogen at airports in future. This is not a problem we can solve on our own, it requires industry collaboration.”

Skytrans – which is part-owned by Former Queensland and Cowboys star Johnathan Thurston**,** is proud to be part of an Australian collaboration pioneering hydrogen propulsion technology for commercial aircraft. Chief Executive Officer Alan Milne said: “We are proud to be leading the nation in developing its hydrogen industry and we want to play a leading role in showing that this technology can work in aviation.”

Raechel Paris, Executive General Manager, Governance & Sustainability at Brisbane Airport Corporation says: “Brisbane Airport supports the ambition of a zero emissions aviation future with aircraft that are cleaner, cheaper and quieter to run. With Queensland home to the largest number of regional flights in Australia, Brisbane is the perfect testing ground for zero emissions aircraft.”

Mark Cachia, CEO of Gladstone Airport Corporation said: “Another great milestone in aviation with the first emission free electric aircraft, operating between Brisbane and Gladstone, by Skytrans. Gladstone is destined to become the world's leading hydrogen hub, so what better place to fly to.”

Talal Yusaf, Executive Dean of Higher Education and Emerging Technologies at Aviation Australia says: “We’re thrilled to bring our world class aviation industry and technology training expertise to this alliance and look forward being a part of this adventure.”

Vesna Olles, Director Strategy and Clean Energy at BOC stated: “As we transition to greener energy production and consumption, hydrogen is set to play an increasingly important role. It is an ideal way to store energy generated from renewable sources. And when generated from regenerative sources, it creates zero-emissions.”

Aaron Smith, CEO of h2ec said: “H2 Energy Company is very excited to be playing a key role in

the advancement of hydrogen electric flight technology in Australia, as the aviation industry faces a projected increase in carbon emissions. Renewable green hydrogen supplied from our strategically located production facilities, in combination with hydrogen aviation technologies, has the potential to reduce emissions from aircraft by 100%."

Dr. Emma Whittlesea, Executive Director of The Climate Ready Initiative at Griffith University says: "Griffith University through its multidisciplinary Climate Ready Initiative, Griffith Aviation, and Centre for Applied Energy Economics and Policy Research brings teaching, research and policy capability and expertise to the alliance, and are particularly interested in progressing the action learning and applied research opportunity in collaboration with project partners and other stakeholders.

Steve Hall, Dean of the School of Engineering and Technology at CQU stated: "It's great to be part of the team showing this to our maintenance engineers, pilots and aviation industry managers of the future".

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