

NORFOLK



ISLAND

THE GOVERNMENT OF NORFOLK ISLAND

MEDIA RELEASE

Major expansion to Norfolk air services from Australia

The Chief Minister, the Hon Geoff Gardner MLA, announced today that agreement had been reached with OzJet to operate air charter services between Australia and Norfolk Island for the next twelve months, with an option to renew for a longer term.

“This new service marks the next stage in growing the passenger and tourist market to Australia”, Mr Gardner said. “OzJet will fly services three times a week each from Brisbane and Sydney commencing on May 24th. Our contract also provides for further expansion in services to bring incoming passenger seats from Australia to around 43,000 per year, with another 13,000 a year from New Zealand”.

Mr Gardner said that OzJet would operate Boeing 737-200 aircraft with a seating capacity of 108 on each flight and the ability to carry a tonne of cargo. The airline currently had two such aircraft and also operated a fleet of planes in the Northern Hemisphere. “This exciting announcement means an immediate increase of 20% in passenger capacity and much better airfreight availability”, Mr Gardner said. “We are also delighted to be able to return to the use of Boeing 737 aircraft, which have been proven to be suitable for the Norfolk Island route”.

The Chief Minister thanked Air Nauru for its services since June 2005 in providing air charters. He said that these had worked well for several months, but that since December 2005 Air Nauru had not been able to secure its own aircraft and there had been consequent problems in maintaining regular services with planes adequate for the Norfolk Island route.

“The Norfolk Island Government is now confident that we have established a robust air service to Australia. We are already planning the next stage of improvements in marketing, and expect to make some significant announcements about these in coming weeks”.

Geoff Gardner
Chief Minister

12th May 2006