

Joint Standing Committee on the  
National Capital and External Territories

Submission No: .....9.....

28 June 2005

Date Received: .....22 July 2005.....

Secretary: .....*John Baker*.....

Mr J Baker  
Committee Secretariat  
National Capital and External Territories Committee  
Parliament House  
CANBERRA ACT 2600

PO Box 58  
MT LAWLEY WA 6050

Dear Mr Baker,

RE: **CURRENT AND FUTURE GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE  
INDIAN OCEAN TERRITORIES**

**SUBMISSION : SERVICING OF COCOLOS AND CHRISTMAS ISLANDS  
(INDIAN OCEAN TERRITORIES)**

I wish to submit that the current arrangements for air travel from Perth to Coc os and Christmas Islands are unsatisfactory on a number of matters.

The planes flown by National Jet the current service provider are BE146s. They carry approximately 70 people and only small amounts of freight and excess luggage.

Being a life line to the islands for every day transport as well as tourists they are basically too small to encourage the only remaining development possible on these islands ie. Tourism.

The peak time for tourism to these islands would be over the winter months. This is particularly so for the Coc os Islands where a large contingent of windsurfers and kitesurfers go for the trade winds over the months June, July, August and September.

Unless one books many months in advance one cannot get seats on flights and I know of many people who have not holidayed on the islands due to non availability of seats especially over the main peak period.

Further more the air fares are manifestly expensive. The cheapest air fare including costs is just a shade under \$1200.00 and a full economy fare is a shade under \$1800.00.

For a flight of this length which would be comparable to a flight from Perth to the Eastern States, where air fares can currently be obtained in the vicinity of \$400-500.00 booked several months in advance and not much more if booked one or two weeks ahead of departure.

Being the sole provider of the air services to the islands National Jet are able to charge high air fares.

Furthermore it is the case that often excessive luggage is not guaranteed to be accepted and if so is charged at \$10/kilo.

As these islands both attend to attract people who would like to play golf, cycle and wind and kite surf, they may have some luggage which can be bulky.

National Jet is not able to guarantee that this will accompany you on your flight and some times a trip can be completely wasted if ones gear does not arrive.

I wish you to compare this to the current situation in mainland Australia where both Qantas and Virgin Blue charge very little for excess weight especially sporting gear.

I feel a larger plane such as a long range Boeing 717 would be far more suitable.

I wonder whether tenders can be put out for other air lines (Virgin, Qantas etc) who may use such planes to provide this service.

Another problem which I have just become aware of with National Jet is their flights now (from 4 July 2005) leave late in the day just before lunch time which means the return flight from the island reaches Perth just after midnight. This means that one cannot connect with various midnight flights to the Eastern States.

People from the Eastern States wishing to go to Cocos Islands will have to stay overnight in Perth and not just hop on the next plane out to the Eastern States as could happen before the new schedule comes into place on 4 July 2005.

In summary my submission is:

1. Cost of the air fare – too expensive.
2. Cost of excessive sporting luggage if accepted – far too expensive.
3. Rescheduling from 4 July 2005. does not link up with the night flights from Perth to the Eastern States.

Tourism to the Indian Ocean islands could be promoted as being more attractive to everyday tourists and not be two to three times more expensive compared to the Eastern States or Bali.

With kind regards

Yours sincerely



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K Dallimore