

Jetstar lands in Newcastle

In 2005, Jetstar (Qantas' budget airline) selected Newcastle as the location for its Airbus A320 maintenance facility. Newcastle was selected ahead of strong competition from interstate and overseas sites. The expertise and commitment of local aircraft maintenance staff was a key determinant in the decision.

The new maintenance facility will employ over 130 people, including 25 apprentices. The expansion of the jet base brought with it investment of \$29 million for hangar extensions, aircraft spares and tooling. An additional 50 jobs will be created at the facility to accommodate the maintenance needs of Jetstar's new narrow body fleet.

Jetstar's maintenance facility will service the airline's fleet of 23 new Airbus A320 aircraft. These aircraft, configured for 177 passengers, have now replaced the carrier's start-up fleet of Boeing 717 aircraft, which were previously maintained at Newcastle Airport.

The upgraded maintenance base is expected to provide enough capacity to allow Jetstar to bid over time for maintenance work on behalf of other Asia Pacific carriers. This is part of Jetstar's strategy to establish its Newcastle heavy maintenance base as a service location for international aircraft.

Newcastle Airport is the fastest growing regional airport in Australia. Jetstar has clearly been a major contributor to this rapid growth and is the largest jet operator.

The Jetstar A320 maintenance facility was secured with the support of the NSW Department of State and Regional Development, through the Hunter Advantage Fund and the BHP Trust.

Jetstar Chief Executive Officer Alan Joyce said "The growth of Jetstar at Newcastle Airport means the Qantas Group now delivers more jet services and a greater number of seats to the Hunter Region market".

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