



Media Release

QANTAS TO GIFT HISTORIC B747 TO AVIATION MUSEUM

Sydney, 22 January 2014: In a coup for New South Wales tourism Qantas will donate its first Boeing 747-400, known as City of Canberra, to the Historical Aircraft Restoration Society (HARS) in March.

It will be the first 747-400 in the world to be preserved for public display and the biggest aircraft by far to be on show at the HARS facility at Illawarra Regional Airport, south of Wollongong.

HARS is home to the largest collection of both flying and static heritage aircraft in Australia and run by more than 450 volunteers, including dozens of retired Qantas employees, who dedicate their time to the maintenance and restoration of some of aviation's most iconic aircraft.

The newly retired 747 represents a key part of both Australian aviation and Qantas history after it blazed its way in to the record books in 1989 for the longest non-stop commercial flight from London to Sydney in 20 hours, 9 minutes and 5 seconds. The record still stands.

Ironically, Qantas will deliver the aircraft, registration VH-OJA, in early March on what will be the airline's, and perhaps the world's, shortest ever delivery flight with an expected flying time of approximately ten minutes from Mascot in Sydney to Illawarra.

Qantas Chief Executive Officer Alan Joyce said it was important for such an iconic aircraft to be on display as a reminder of the role Qantas has played in aviation history.

"Qantas has been responsible for a lot of aviation firsts and many of them have centred on endurance and reliability. The record breaking flight of this Boeing aircraft was a technical and symbolic achievement because it showed what was possible with the latest generation of aircraft and that spirit of innovation still drives us today.

"We are excited that by gifting this newly retired aircraft to the HARS museum, we're helping create a local tourism attraction as well as preserving a bit of our past," added Mr Joyce.

Bob De La Hunty, President Historical Aircraft Restoration Society, said HARS is delighted to be part of preserving a remarkable piece of modern aviation history.

"All our volunteers, including many former Qantas employees, are overwhelmed by the opportunity to showcase such a historic aircraft. We expect it to attract lots of attention





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together with our Lockheed Super Constellation, both of which were integral in building Qantas' international reputation.”

NSW Deputy Premier and Minister for Tourism and Major Events, Troy Grant, thanked Qantas for the generous donation of this historic aircraft.

“This spectacular piece of aviation history is exciting for Illawarra locals and visitors.

“Regional tourism is taking off – Coffs Harbour has the big banana, Ballina has the big prawn and now thanks to Qantas the Illawarra has the big Boeing 747.”

Shellharbour Mayor, Marianne Saliba, said the addition of the 747 to HARS at Shellharbour's Airport will attract even greater numbers of visitors to our area.

“HARS and Council representatives have worked hard with Qantas to ensure the plane can have a permanent home here for the enjoyment of tourists and locals alike. It is important to preserve Australia's aviation history and HARS are doing a great job at that.”

The delivery flight from Sydney International Airport to Illawarra Regional Airport will be the first time a Boeing 747 has landed at the regional port. The Qantas pilots operating the final flight will undergo special simulator training to prepare for the delivery and the airline is working with the Civil Aviation Safety Authority (CASA) to finalise approvals for the special landing.

Over the past few years, Qantas has been gradually retiring its older B747s. Nine of its newest jumbos, the last of which was delivered in 2003, have been refurbished and will continue flying into the future. Since 2008, the Qantas Group has taken delivery of almost 150 new aircraft, lowering its fleet age to an average of just over seven years.

The aircraft will join an impressive lineup of famed aircraft including a Lockheed Super Constellation, Catalina, Douglas DC3 and DC4 and a Desert Storm US Army Cobra.

The official handover will take place on March 14 2015 to coincide with HARS monthly open days.

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Qantas Boeing 747-400 “VH-OJA” facts

- 25.3 years in service
- 13,833 flights
- 4,094,568 passengers carried
- This aircraft has flown nearly 85 million kilometres, which is equivalent to 110.2 return trips to the moon
- “VH-OJA” was Qantas’ first Boeing 747-400 aircraft and was named the *City of Canberra*
- It was delivered to Qantas on 11 August 1989 and made its debut flight on 16 August 1989 from London to Sydney
- On Thursday 17 August 1989, it set the record for having flown the longest non-stop flight (London-Sydney) of any commercial airline (flight number QF7441)
- The flight and subsequent media attention around the world at the time underlined Qantas’ role as the leader in long-range commercial aviation.
- All of Qantas’ B747-400 aircraft were named ‘Longreach’ as a tribute to our place of origin and to demonstrate the long-range of the aircraft.