



Keith Mason
01/05/2006 02:45 pm

To: Anya Zohrab/minserv
cc:
Fax to:
Subject: Air New Zealand/Qantas

Keith Mason
Senior Private Secretary to the Hon Pete Hodgson, MP
Minister of Health; Minister for Land Information; MP for Dunedin North;
Acting Minister of Transport; Acting Minister Responsible for Climate Change Issues
Tel: +64 4 471-9857 | Fax: +64 4 495-8449
Cell: +64 21 241-0008 | MobileFax +64 21 219-6640
Website: <http://www.beehive.govt.nz>

DISCLAIMER: The views expressed or interpreted in this email and/or any attachments contained are not necessarily the views of the New Zealand Government or any agencies, departments or offices representing the New Zealand Government. This email may contain full or partial information that is SENSITIVE and may be subject to LEGAL PRIVILEGE. If you are not the intended recipient, you must not peruse, use, disseminate, distribute or copy this email or attachments. If you have received this in error, please notify me immediately by return email, facsimile or telephone (call me collect) and delete this email. Thank you for your assistance in this matter.
----- Forwarded hv Keith Mason/minserv on 01/05/2006 14:45 -----



9(7)(a)

01/05/2006 14:36

To: phodgson@ministers.govt.nz
cc:
Subject: Air New Zealand/Qantas

Having yet again been on a 97% full flight from Wellington to Brisbane, I am very disturbed to learn that Air New Zealand and Qantas are keen to reduce seat numbers on this route, and indeed across the Tasman generally.

I fly the Tasman 5 - 6 times a year and have NEVER been on a 56% full plane! They are ALL 90 - 95% full. In deed on one recent flight I was upgraded to Business because Economy was totally full. So either there are some mystery planes flying empty across the Tasman or there is another explanation for the low load figures we are given.

During the recent flight from Brisbane I commented to a steward that Air New Zealand was making a profit on this flight (there were 3 empty seats). He said no. The Tasman is where many people use up air dollars earned on long flights and this did not count as full seats.

So as I read the comment the losses across the Tasman are an accounting fiction. Air Dollars are, in fact, a discount given to frequent travellers. They amount to about 10% of the listed fare. They are then put into an account to be used or cancelled. In a sane world this would be seen as a cost against the paying fare. Cancelled air dollars (and there are a lot of these each year) are a credit to the airline bottom line and used Air Dollars are simply a person using funds from an account held with Air New Zealand to pay for travel.

When I see photos of these 57% full aircraft flying out of Wellington I may believe they exist. I do not see them in Air New Zealand advertisements for reduced travel to Australia! In the meantime I totally object to being forced to fly out of Auckland (it has already happened to me once late last year) to get across the Tasman owing to a lack of capacity from Wellington. Not only will Wellington tourism be hurt but also Australian - and they are suffering at the moment.

Please intervene on this issue.