



Australian Government

International Air Services Commission

RESOLUTION

Resolution: [2022] IASC R03
Determination: [2021] IASC 117
The Route: Samoa
The Applicant: Virgin Australia International Airlines Pty Ltd
(ABN 63 125 580 823)
Public register file: IASC/APP/202222

On 18 October 2021, the International Air Services Commission (the Commission) issued Determination [2021] IASC 117 (the Determination) allocating to Virgin Australia International Airlines Pty Ltd (Virgin Australia) 880 seats per week of capacity in each direction on the Samoa route. The Determination is subject to certain conditions, including the requirement for the capacity to be utilised from no later than 31 December 2022, or such other date approved by the Commission.

On 23 June 2022, Virgin Australia wrote to the Commission seeking an extension of the date for utilisation of the capacity from 31 December 2022 to 30 June 2023. In its letter, Virgin Australia provided the Commission with its firm commercial plans to resume operating the Samoa route at the beginning of the Northern Summer 2023 season, having commenced marketing of these services from 14 June 2022.

The Commission notes that COVID-19 preventative measures and restrictions are still in effect in most countries within the Asia Pacific region, impacting airlines' international operations and consumer demand. Countries such as Samoa have travel restrictions in place to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Only citizens of Samoa, passengers with a residence permit issued by the Government of Samoa and approved contracted workers are allowed to enter Samoa at this time. All COVID-19 related travel requirements apply to crew as well as passengers.

The Commission notes Australian Government travel advice recommends travellers reconsider their need to travel to Samoa due to the impacts of COVID-19.

Virgin Australia indicated that while the Samoa border is expected to re-open to all international travel from 1 August 2022, the airline expects the return of commercial demand is unlikely to align with the planned re-opening date due to the likelihood of ongoing COVID-19 related entry requirements.

In light of these extraordinary circumstances, the Commission issues Resolution [2022] IASC R03 to provide that the capacity issued under Determination [2021] IASC 117 is to be utilised from no later than 26 March 2023 (the start of the Northern Summer 2023 season), or such other date approved by the Commission.

The Commission will continue to monitor the airline's ability to fully utilise the capacity on the route.

Dated: 08 July 2022

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Genevieve Butler". The script is cursive and fluid.

GENEVIEVE BUTLER
Chairperson

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jane Mckeon". The script is cursive and fluid.

JANE MCKEON
Commissioner