

PNG flights will resume

Qantas to restore route in 2019

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QANTAS has reinstated flights between Papua New Guinea and Cairns, more than two years after dumping the route in favour of Bali.

The national carrier has announced that its regional arm, QantasLink, would resume daily flights between Cairns and Port Moresby from March 31, 2019.

The service, which is operated by a 74-seat Bombardier Q400 aircraft, will complement Qantas' existing services between Brisbane and Port Moresby.

The Cairns-PNG service was cut by the airline in August 2016, due to high demand for flights to Bali.

The decision, at the time, created outrage within the Far North's business community.

Qantas Domestic chief executive Andrew David said the return of direct Cairns-Port Moresby flights would offer more options for the



GOOD SIGN: Queensland Tourism Minister Kate Jones welcomed the announcement.

growing number of customers travelling between Queensland and PNG.

"We know there is strong demand for a direct flight to Port Moresby from the Cairns business community," he said.

"This is also great news for tourism, making it easier for travellers to enjoy a getaway in Cairns."

Qantas will also add 11 return flights each week between Brisbane and Cairns.

It will also extend the use of

larger Airbus A330s on selected flights from Cairns to Sydney and Melbourne, offering premium business seats.

Queensland's Tourism Minister, Kate Jones, said the reinstatement of the PNG route was a "great sign of confidence" in the state's tourism industry.

"We want to make it as easy as possible for visitors to access our key visitor destinations like Cairns, Townsville, the Sunshine Coast, and the outback," she said. "That's exactly what more direct flights help us to achieve."

Leichhardt MP Warren Entsch said direct Cairns-Port Moresby flights would enhance the Far North's reputation as a leading tourism destination.

"This is just the start of what I believe will be an aviation boom for our region," he said.

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