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## **Virgin Australia pilots commence training in Western Australia's first-ever Boeing 737NG full flight simulator** <sup>[2]</sup>



- Virgin Australia has secured access to a Boeing 737NG full-flight simulator in Perth in partnership with global aviation training leader, CAE.
- This will reinforce the airline's commitment to Western Australia, with Perth being its fourth largest port by capacity and frequency.
- Training for 200 Western Australian-based Virgin Australia pilots started earlier this month with the simulator in use 16 hours a day.
- This comes as Virgin Australia prepares to welcome eight Boeing 737-8 aircraft, with the first to arrive in June.

**Friday, 23 June 2023:** Training has started for Virgin Australia pilots in a Boeing 737NG full-flight simulator, the first of its kind in Western Australia. The simulator means the airline will increase its domestic training capacity by 25 per cent providing for the first time, a local training facility for more than 200 pilots based in Western Australia.

This simulator will also play an integral role in Virgin Australia's training program for VARA flight crew as they transition from F100 aircraft to operate a 737NG fleet. This comes as the airline continues to grow its Western Australian resources sector and contract flying business.

The simulator is available through a long-term partnership with global aviation training leader

CAE and is located in CAE's training facility in Jandakot. Until now, Virgin Australia has been using its east-coast-based simulators approximately 20 hours a day, and flying pilots as far away as London to undertake training in order to meet simulator demand.

**Virgin Australia Chief Operations Officer, Stuart Aggs** said Virgin Australia's investment to strengthen its training capacity in Western Australia presents significant benefits to both the airline and the state, with more opportunities for local pilots to undertake essential flight training closer to home.

"This is another important milestone for Virgin Australia that underscores our ongoing commitment to our people, fleet and infrastructure as we continue to build and position the business for sustainable growth into the future," he said.

"Our operation in Western Australia is a fundamental part of our success, not only is it home to our regional airline, VARA, Perth is also our fourth largest port by capacity and frequency with up to 17 routes operating in and out of Perth across the country throughout the year.

"The establishment of this training base reflects a major investment in building our training capability in the state, while also contributing to the development of aviation talent across the country.

"The simulator has the potential to support more than 5,000 hours of flight crew training in its first operational year, delivering greater efficiency and yielding significant cost savings in our training program with less travel required of Perth-based pilots completing their initial and recurrent training.

"We are delighted to be partnered with CAE who share our commitment to upholding the highest standards of aviation safety and operational excellence," Mr Aggs said.

**Western Australian Deputy Premier and Transport and Tourism Minister Rita Saffioti** said, "I want to congratulate Virgin Australia for this initiative and helping more pilots train locally. We all know there is a great need for more pilots, and having a new training operation within Western Australia will help to encourage more people enter the industry. Our government is focussed on supporting the aviation industry with key initiatives like our Regional Airfare Zone Cap scheme making flying cheaper than ever before for regional residents, while we continue to drive new international connections through our Aviation Recovery Fund within the \$195 million Reconnect WA package."

**CAE's Group President, Civil Aviation, Nick Leontidis** said, "We are happy to expand our partnership with Virgin Australia with access to the latest technology B737NG full flight simulator to train their pilots. An important part of setting up optimal learning conditions for pilots is being close to where they work and opening this capacity at our Jandakot training centre will do just that for the 200 Virgin Australia flight crew based in Western Australia."

This comes as Virgin Australia prepares to welcome eight additional Boeing 737-8 aircraft to its fleet, taking delivery of the first aircraft later this month.

The new Boeing 737-8 will support capacity increases in-line with Virgin Australia's broader growth strategy bringing the total Boeing 737 fleet to 92 (consisting of 737-700s, 737-800s and Boeing 737-8s) an increase of nearly 60 per cent since relaunching the airline in November 2020.

DOWNLOAD IMAGES [3].

## NOTES TO THE EDITOR

- More than 50 percent of all Virgin Australia simulator training is located in Brisbane, Queensland, where Virgin Australia is headquartered.
- Virgin Australia also has simulator training facilities in Victoria.
- CAE's full-flight simulators provide a highly realistic and immersive flight experience with precise instruments, control, and scenarios that enable pilots to practice complex manoeuvres and emergency scenarios without putting the aircraft, crew, and passengers at risk during training.
- Simulation training enhances pilot safety and performance by giving them the knowledge, skill, and confidence to perform at their best in real-world conditions when it counts most.

## FOOTNOTES

\*Compared with 737NG aircraft

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