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Monday, 11 March 2024: For the first time in its history, Virgin Australia Regional Airlines (VARA) has topped a global list of regional airline operators to take out 2024 Best Regional Airline in the Airline Excellence Awards, presented annually by leading aviation ratings website, AirlineRatings.com.

The awards are judged by five editors with over 180 years' industry experience, bringing together major safety and government audits with 12 key criteria that includes fleet age, safety rating, passenger reviews, profitability, product offerings, and staff relations.

VARA Executive General Manager, Nathan Miller said he was delighted to see VARA recognised for an award that takes into consideration regional airlines globally.

"VARA has been a proud fixture in the Western Australian landscape for over six decades, playing an important role in connecting communities across our vast state," he said.

"Being awarded Regional Airline of the Year is an honour that underscores our commitment to exceptional customer service which is delivered by our incredible team each and every day.

"This award follows a number of exciting milestones for VARA as we continue to diversify our

charter portfolio and expand our reach in Western Australia.”

This month, VARA commenced a process of consultation on its intention to acquire at least four new generation aircraft to replace its aging F100 fleet, which if acquired would introduce new aircraft to the WA 100-seat charter market.

The potential replacement aircraft types would provide superior performance compared to the F100, lower fuel consumption and emissions through the employment of geared turbofan engines, enhanced customer product and improved operational performance.

VARA, formerly Skywest, joined Virgin Australia Group in 2013 and now employs over 450 team members, operating more than 250 services on F100, and A320 aircraft each week.

The regional airline holds the highest seven-star safety rating with AirlineRatings.com, which delivers expert safety ratings for airlines around the world.

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