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Virgin Australia today announced details of its plans to rollout inflight wireless internet to the majority of its domestic and international aircraft¹, becoming the only Australian airline to offer wi-fi internationally.

Following the successful trial on a Boeing 737 (registration VH-YIG), the airline is now rolling out inflight wi-fi to its Boeing 737 aircraft, with Boeing 777 aircraft to commence in October. By the end of 2018, Virgin Australia expects to have inflight wi-fi on all Boeing 777 aircraft and the majority of Boeing 737 aircraft, with the Airbus A330 aircraft due for completion by the second half of 2019.

Virgin Australia Group CEO John Borghetti said: “We want to provide the world’s most rewarding travel experience and we know that enabling our guests to remain connected while flying is central to that.

“Therefore we’re pleased to announce our rollout plans for inflight wi-fi today, which will see more than 90 per cent of Virgin Australia’s fleet fitted with this technology. Virgin Australia will offer a base level of free wi-fi to all of our guests on domestic flights and become the only Australian airline to offer wi-fi on international flights.

“We’ve chosen to partner with leading inflight connectivity provider Gogo, who deliver inflight wi-fi to airlines around the world including Delta Air Lines, Virgin Atlantic, and British Airways. Through our partnership with Gogo and Optus Satellite, we will have access to the largest fleet of satellites servicing Australia and New Zealand, providing our guests with a fast and reliable wi-fi experience on board,” Mr Borghetti said.

Gogo President and CEO Michael Small said: “We are delighted to work with Virgin Australia to bring the leading global in-flight connectivity solution to their passengers.

“Gogo’s 2Ku technology allows passengers to stay connected anywhere these aircraft fly – gate-to-gate – with an internet experience they’re used to experiencing on the ground, including the ability to stream videos.”

The three-month Boeing 737 aircraft trial saw 77 per cent of guests report a high level of satisfaction with the inflight wi-fi. The trial found the following insights on passengers’ wi-fi usage:

- ? 49% checked email
- ? 43% checked social media
- ? 31% read the news
- ? 27% sent text messages
- ? 19% watched Netflix

Additional Information:

- Gogo’s 2Ku technology uses a streamlined dual-antenna (one for forward link, one for return link) to deliver simultaneous transmissions. Gogo already successfully provides inflight connectivity for a number of airlines including Virgin Australia’s alliance partner Delta Air Lines.
- Virgin Australia and Gogo will partner with Optus Satellite, the largest fleet of satellites servicing Australia and New Zealand, with five satellites currently in geostationary orbit to service domestic flights.
- Virgin Australia’s inflight wi-fi service will be available alongside and integrated with Virgin Australia’s existing popular wireless entertainment system.
- Virgin Australia currently has two wi-fi enabled aircraft, registration VH-YIG and VH-YIF.
- Virgin Australia will offer guests who travel on the wi-fi-enabled aircraft with three months’ access to Netflix and Stan until the end of 2017. Guests with existing accounts for those services will be given the opportunity to apply the offer to their Netflix and Stan accounts. Guests who do not have existing accounts for Netflix or Stan will have the opportunity to sign up to enjoy three months of access. Terms and conditions apply.

¹The roll-out does not include Embraer E190s, ATRs and Virgin Australia Regional Airlines aircraft.

²Source: Respondents to modified Guest Satisfaction Track deployed to guests on aircraft VH-YIG.

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