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Virgin Australia commits to change for the better for New Zealand communities [2]



Virgin Australia today announced a commitment to help bring about change for issues impacting New Zealand communities through new partnerships in the areas of disadvantaged youth, environmental conservation and mental health and wellbeing.

Organisations joining the stable of Virgin Australia community partners include:

- **Eat My Lunch**, which supports the one in four Kiwi kids who live in poverty by providing lunches for the thousands of school kids going to school hungry every day. The partnership will see Virgin Australia fill hungry bellies in NZ schools through the Eat My Lunch School Sponsorship program;
- **Conservation Volunteers New Zealand (CVNZ)**, a national organisation, working closely with government and the tangata whenua community, aiming to bring people together to care for New Zealand's cherished natural environment. The project's extensive conservation work protects and improves high biodiversity areas – which are traditionally popular tourism areas;
- **R U OK?** and **Black Dog Institute** as an extension of Virgin Australia's mental health partnerships in Australia and;
- **CARE Australia** who through an ongoing partnership with Virgin Australia support the wider Australia, New Zealand and Pacific region during humanitarian emergencies,

flying goods and aid workers to devastated areas or communities in crisis such as Vanuatu and Fiji.

Virgin Australia Group Executive Brand, Marketing and Public Affairs, Danielle Keighery said, “We’re thrilled to welcome Eat My Lunch and Conservation Volunteers New Zealand to the Virgin Australia family and to extend the leading work of RU OK?, Black Dog and CARE Australia to New Zealand through our people and our extensive network.

“We’re grateful that through these wonderful organisations we can play our part in supporting such important and worthwhile causes.

“Our Kiwi team members are very passionate about supporting local communities and making a difference and in fact, they played a significant part in helping to steer us towards the partners we have chosen to support,” said Danielle Keighery.

“Today’s announcement is yet another example of Virgin Australia continuing to drive change for the better for New Zealand and those travelling across the Tasman. We’ve recently added new routes, extra services and we are the only airline to offer WiFi on all of our Trans-Tasman flights,” she said.

Eat My Lunch CEO and Founder, Lisa King said, “We are delighted to be working together with Virgin Australia to increase our impact in reaching children who would otherwise go without lunch and helping maximise their full potential each day just by nutritiously filling them.

“Virgin’s School Sponsorship commitment means they can really make a difference at community level and not only positively improve the life of individual students, but also their schools, families and their futures. By also being involved in our volunteering, Virgin Australia provides a full circle contribution to Eat My Lunch,” she said.

CVNZ CEO, Phil Harrison said, “CVNZ is very excited to partner with Virgin Australia. The partnership is underpinned by a mutual commitment to improve the health of our natural environment while also improving the health and wellbeing of our people. Together we will connect more people to nature to help create lasting, positive changes for our environment.”

Virgin Australia’s support for its NZ community partners will include raising awareness and fundraising through initiatives such as:

- Flights to support knowledge and skill sharing between Australia and New Zealand with plans to help forge connections with Virgin Australia’s like-minded existing partners in Australia;
- Ongoing coverage on Virgin Australia’s social media channels, in the Virgin Australia in-flight magazine Voyeur, on Virgin Australia’s In-Flight Entertainment System and to more than nine million members of the airline’s loyalty program, Velocity Frequent Flyer; and
- ‘Hands on’ support from Virgin Australia team members through volunteering.

To donate or learn more, the public are encouraged to visit the partner websites.

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