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**11 March 2021:** Virgin Australia Chief Executive Officer Jayne Hrdlicka today welcomed the Federal Government’s announcement of an aviation industry support package, and highlighted the vital role the support will have in stimulating tourism, jobs and investment across Australia.

The Federal Government today announced a \$1.2 billion support package which includes hundreds of thousands of half-price airline tickets, cheap loans for businesses, direct support to keep planes in the air and airline workers in their jobs.

Virgin Australia CEO Jayne Hrdlicka said the announcement was excellent news for the aviation industry, the economy and all Australians, and thanked the Federal Government for its ongoing support.

“This isn’t just good news for us, this is good news for all Australians. The economic impact this will have cannot be underestimated. This is a once in a generation event that is going to give the entire tourism industry supply chain a significant boost, which it desperately needs,” Ms Hrdlicka said.

“We have so many amazing tourism destinations right here in Australia, and this program enables irresistible prices that will get Australians out exploring the multitude of historically

relevant, interesting and beautiful places we are lucky enough to have in our domestic backyard. There really has never been a better time to fly.

“The new domestic tourism support programs announced today are smart and well-targeted to deliver an economic boost where it is most needed. To be in the position where we can safely encourage and promote domestic travel puts us at the envy of the rest of the world.

“This package enables us to get more of our team members back to work more quickly than we would have been able to do before. As long as domestic borders remain open and travel demand continues to grow, we will accelerate our domestic expansion and also begin getting our international operations ready to open.

“On behalf of everyone at Virgin Australia – including all of our employees – I sincerely thank the Federal Government for the support provided to the aviation industry in the last 13 months. This ongoing support has been critical for our industry and recognises the vital role Australia’s airlines play in connecting Australia and fuelling economic growth across many sectors,” Ms Hrdlicka said.

While Virgin Australia can’t start flying internationally until borders open, the international capability fund will ensure that as soon as those borders do open and demand returns, Virgin Australia will be ready with a workforce that is trained and aircraft that are ready to take off. We are optimistic about international flights resuming later this year.

Virgin Australia can confirm that we are currently operating around 50 per cent of pre-pandemic capacity and expect to reach roughly 70 per cent of pre-COVID capacity by the Easter break.

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