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Newsroom

Jetstar invests in technology to beat the weather

- \$6m Satellite-based navigation system to reduce weather delays
- Customers benefit from faster flight times, greater safety
- Technology brings fuel and CO2 emissions savings

Jetstar is equipping its fleet of A320 and A321 aircraft with the latest satellite-linked navigation system to improve safety and on-time performance.

Aircraft fitted with the system known as Required Navigation Performance (RNP) can safely navigate around cloud shrouded mountains, through valleys and over high terrain when low visibility would increase the chance of flight disruptions.

Unlike conventional satellite navigation systems, RNP keeps aircraft within a tight block of predetermined airspace, allowing pilots to track around ground-based obstacles in times of poor visibility or bad weather.

Year-long trials of the system at Coolangatta, Brisbane, and at New Zealand’s worst weather affected airport, Queenstown showed that aircraft equipped with RNP had maintained a high degree of accuracy during instrument assisted landings.

Before the Queenstown RNP trials the minimum conditions for instrument landings were 15 kilometres of visibility and 2700 feet of cloud.

Based on the trial findings and in consultation with the Civil Aviation Safety Authority and its New Zealand counterpart, the Civil Aviation Authority, the minimum for RNP assisted approaches at Queenstown has been reduced to 3 kilometres of visibility and 400 feet of cloud.

After earlier trials at Brisbane Airport involving Qantas aircraft, Air Services Australia reported that 4,200 minutes of flying time and 17,300 nautical miles was saved during 1,612 RNP assisted approaches. As a result more than 200,000 kg of jet fuel was saved and carbon emissions were reduced by 650,000 kg.

Jetstar Group CEO Bruce Buchanan said the technology made flight safer, faster and more efficient.

“Innovation is key at Jetstar, because it’s a smart way to deliver a better service and also keep costs down. This new navigation aid reduces the time spent circling due to bad weather, which helps passengers arrive on time and cuts our fuel use.

“The Queenstown trial proved the real worth of the system allowing, almost all flights during the winter peak season to operate,” Mr Buchanan said.

“It also puts us ahead of competitors in the Australian marketplace.”

The rollout of the new technology on Jetstar’s Australian and New Zealand fleet of A320s is estimated be complete by the end of 2012.

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About Jetstar

About Jetstar Group

Jetstar first took to the skies in 2004 and has since flown more than 350 million customers across an extensive international and domestic network. The Jetstar Group is made up of Jetstar Airways (subsidiary of the Qantas Group) in Australia and New Zealand, Jetstar Asia in Singapore, and Jetstar Japan in Japan. A leading low-fares airline, Jetstar is committed to offering everyday low fares to enable more people to fly to more places, more often. As one of Asia Pacific’s fastest-growing airline brands, Jetstar was voted Best Low-Cost Airline in Asia Pacific in 2021 and was recognized for its excellent flight safety records and services when listed on the “2022 World’s Top 10 LCC” released by Airline Ratings.

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