



**Australian Infrastructure Fund**

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AUSTRALIAN STOCK EXCHANGE



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**AUSTRALIAN INFRASTRUCTURE FUND (ASX CODE AIX)**

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**ANNOUNCEMENT HEADING:**

**NT AIRPORTS WELCOMES VIRGIN BLUE SERVICES**

Australian Infrastructure Fund (AIF) is pleased to announce that Virgin Blue will commence services into Alice Springs in June 2003.

Virgin Blue will operate a daily B737 service from Sydney-Alice Springs-Sydney from 5 June 2003. The service will connect at Sydney with other Virgin Blue services including to Brisbane, the Gold Coast and Melbourne.

Please see attached the announcement issued by NT Airports.

AIF holds a 25.4 percent interest in NT Airports, the holding company for Darwin, Alice Spring and Tennant Creek airports.

For further enquiries, please contact:

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**Jim Hallam**  
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**Australian Infrastructure Fund**



MEDIA RELEASE

March 20, 2003

**Virgin Blue arrival into Alice Springs welcomed.**

NT Airports, the operator of the Territory's largest aviation infrastructure has welcomed the commencement of services by Virgin Blue into Alice Springs, announced today by the Chief Minister, Clare Martin.

"This announcement is good news for all Territory businesses but is particularly important for the Central Australian tourism industry," Mr Ian Kew, CEO of NT Airports Pty Ltd, said.

Virgin Blue will commence a daily B737 service from Sydney-Alice Springs-Sydney from 5 June 2003. The service will operate in daylight hours connecting at Sydney with other Virgin Blue services including to Brisbane, the Gold Coast and Melbourne.

"This will add at least 1000 seats per week each way into Alice Springs and provide competition on this important route," Mr Kew said.

"The addition of Virgin Blue on the Sydney-Alice Springs route should increase the total passenger numbers at Alice Springs airport by at least 70,000 or 20% a year."

"Since the collapse of Ansett in September 2001, Qantas has been the sole operator on this route, presently delivering about 1000 seats a week each way," he said.

In particular it is expected that the number of backpackers visiting the Centre will increase and the additional capacity will assist the Convention Centre at Alice Springs.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be the initials "A" or "I", located at the bottom left of the page.

The decision by Virgin Blue is the result of work begun by the NTTC during 2002 and coordinated by Peter Roberts since his appointment as Aviation Development Director for NT Airports Pty Ltd in November 2002.

"This result involved a team effort, including efforts by the Chief Minister, Minister for Tourism and the NTTC," Mr Kew said.

"It demonstrates the importance of establishing the dedicated position of Aviation Development Director, who is able to focus totally on new route development with both existing and new airlines," he said.

Local industry in Alice Springs is expected to strongly support the new move.

"This news will be most welcome in Central Australia where local tourism and other business interests believe the expansion of air services will be the catalyst for economic growth for the local economy," Don McDonald, General Manager of Alice Springs Airport said.

"We hope that this new service to Alice Springs will be the first of further additional services," he said.

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