



MEDIA RELEASE

17 February 2012

AIRNORTH TAKES OFF FROM TOWNSVILLE

Townsville Airport Limited (TAPL) today celebrated the arrival of new airline partner Airnorth, welcoming the inaugural Darwin-Townsville service this morning.

Townsville Airport's Chief Operating Officer Mr Kevin Gill says the commencement of this service provides many benefits to both communities.

"This is a great day for the Townsville region, with both the tourism industry and business sector set to reap rewards.

"This service will provide some exciting new holiday options for Townsville locals, such as Kakadu, Arnhem Land, the Kimberley and Pilbara regions.

"The benefits don't stop there either, with Townsville locals also able to take advantage of international connectivity via Darwin to destinations such as Bali, Singapore and Ho Chi Min City to name just a few.

"We are excited to welcome our newest airline partner to the Townsville region and look forward to working closely with Airnorth and our industry partners in the coming months to fill the capacity on this new service," Mr Gill said.

"Airnorth is a long established regional airline and Qantas Commercial Partner. They also operate a Darwin – Mount Isa – Gold Coast service which has expanded since its inception, demonstrating their ability to develop and grow sustainable services.

"Flying in the state-of-the-art Ejet aircraft, travellers can be in Darwin a little over two and a half hours," Mr Gill said.

"Airnorth is proud to launch our Townsville-Darwin route today and have been pleased by the level of interest and support received since announcing this new service in November. Forward bookings on our initial services through to Easter are encouraging," said Airnorth's CEO, Simone Saunders.

This new service also offers a wide range of holiday options including quick weekend escapes for North Queenslanders to visit the Top End and beyond with easy and convenient connections to Southeast Asia, including Bali, Singapore, Manila and Timor-Leste with shorter travel times than currently available.

Internet fares are on sale now at www.airnorth.com.au and start from \$233*per person one-way, Darwin to Townsville. Bookings can be made by contacting Airnorth's reservations team on 1800 627 474, through your local travel agent or with Qantas who will code share on Airnorth's new service.

Schedule [all in local times]

Monday & Friday – from 17 February 2012

TL182	Depart Darwin	07:00	Arrive Townsville	10:05
TL183	Depart Townsville	11:05	Arrive Darwin	13:20

* Fare quoted is for online bookings only, subject to availability at time of booking, for one-way travel per person and includes all taxes. Credit card surcharges apply. Fares are correct as at 15/11/11 and are subject to change.

Ends

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Airnorth company background

Headquartered in Darwin, Airnorth is now the major airline based in Northern Australia and carries in excess of 250,000 passengers annually.

Airnorth is a full service carrier accommodating the needs of both business and leisure travellers, operating state-of-art regional jets through its interstate network and providing passengers with complimentary catering and a free baggage allowance.

The airline operates over 185 departures weekly, serving 16 destinations in the Northern Territory, Western Australia, Queensland and Timor-Leste including:

Darwin	Dili, Timor-Leste	Broome	Elcho Island
Gold Coast	Groote Eylandt	Gove [Nhulunbuy]	Karratha
Kununurra	Maningrida	McArthur River	Milingimbi
Mt Isa	Perth	Port Hedland	Townsville

Passengers can earn and redeem Qantas Frequent Flyer points on eligible fares on all Airnorth services.

Airnorth, through its partnership with Qantas Airways, offer seamless connectivity including through check in and interline baggage facilities, with Qantas code sharing on the majority of Airnorth's Jet services.

In addition to scheduled departures, Airnorth operates contract and ad-hoc charter services for a wide variety of companies undertaking oil & gas, mining, defence and government activity.

Airnorth directly employs more than 200 staff in Darwin and provides indirect employment through the contracting of ground service operations across its destinations.

Airnorth was recently awarded as the **2011 NT Exporter of the Year** as well as receiving the **Large Services Award** at the Northern Territory's Chief Minister's Export and Industry Awards that recognise the important contribution that NT businesses make to the local economy through job creation and increased prosperity in the community. As the NT winner Airnorth will now be entered into the Prime Minister's Exporter of the Year Awards in Brisbane in December.