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# MEDIA RELEASE

## GREEN LIGHT FOR RUNWAY EXTENSION

The Gold Coast Airport runway extension is set to take off as Queensland Airports Limited unveiled final plans and the schedule of works today.

The runway extension has been foreshadowed by Gold Coast Airport Pty Limited since it took over the airport in 1998. Federal Government approval for the project was received in November 2004.

QAL Chairman Jim Tolhurst said the extension would be the first piece of major infrastructure for the airport to be built since 1981 when the domestic terminal was opened.

"This is a wonderful opportunity for Gold Coast City to join the ranks of international destinations with its own international airport," Mr Chant said.

"A single extra 767 flight per day will provide an additional 100,000 seats into the region a year and is estimated to create 800 direct and indirect jobs and \$130 million in increased intermediate expenditure.

"The commencement of the project demonstrates a vote of confidence by shareholders in Gold Coast Airport Pty Limited and the Gold Coast and Northern Rivers tourism industries.

"Gold Coast City Council's substantial increase in marketing funding to Gold Coast Tourism was very much a factor in our decision to proceed with development."

QAL Managing Director Dennis Chant said the 500 metre extension together with the introduction of new technology aircraft would open up the Gold Coast to services from as far away as the west coast of USA.

"The new Boeing 787 Dreamliner being acquired by Qantas and Jetstar is ideally suited for point to point, long haul, low density tourism routes," Mr Chant said.

"A lack of international air capacity into South East Queensland has been identified as an inhibitor to tourism growth in the Gold Coast and Northern Rivers regions.

"This investment in runway infrastructure will allow Gold Coast Airport to take advantage of Federal Government regional dispersal initiatives and effective open skies policy for regional international airports."

Gold Coast Airport Chief Operating Officer Paul Donovan said Gold Coast Airport management had recently been in discussions with Australian and Asian based medium-haul low cost carriers.

"From these discussions we are confident there is a window of opportunity to introduce services within the next 12 months," Mr Donovan said.

"We are pleased to announce Gold Coast-based FRH Group has been awarded the project contract due to their experience in the construction of airport works both in Australia and internationally."

Mr Donovan said works were expected to allow operation of the runway by the end of March 2007 at an estimated cost of \$20 million.

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