Alice Springs Travelling Public to be Cheated Again?

There is growing concern in Alice Springs that Qantas is likely to pull out of the daily Adelaide - Alice Springs – Darwin route and downgrade it with its no-frills subsidiary Jetstar, yet the Martin Labor Government has done nothing about it, according to Shadow Minister for Central Australia, Dr Richard Lim.

“In the last couple of months, there is increasing discussion within the tourism industry and travellers that Qantas is likely to pull out of its daily Adelaide – Alice Springs – Darwin route and replace it with its no-frills subsidiary, Jetstar coming so soon after Virgin Airlines’ pullout,” Dr Richard Lim said.

“And throughout all this, the Martin Labor Government does nothing to prevent diminishing services for Alice Springs from the airlines, while it was very happy to provide a handsome subsidy to Virgin to attract it to Darwin.

“Clare Martin also appointed a high profile aviation adviser to help promote air services to the Territory. All I see are benefits for Darwin and no where else.

“I had heard that Jetstar officials were in town a couple of months ago to assess the Alice Springs Airport terminal facilities.

“Since then, I had concerns expressed to me by no less than three separate sources that discussions are underway to explore whether it would be better for Qantas to keep servicing the route or to replace it with Jetstar.

One of the sources said that he had heard about it while he was in Melbourne recently.

“It appears that Qantas is finding that the Adelaide – Alice Springs – Darwin route is not bringing in sufficient yields and therefore is replacing it with its no frills subsidiary to boost it’s bottom line.

“Yet again, Alice Springs is going to be treated poorly. Not only do we have to put up with the shabby way we were treated by Virgin Airlines when it first of all switched the Sydney to Alice Springs route for Adelaide to Alice Springs and then pull out all together, we are now facing with a downgrade of air services from Qantas.

“At the same time, regional airline flights between Alice Springs – Tenant Creek – Katherine – Darwin have just about gone altogether.

“When is the Martin Labor Government going to understand that the Territory is not only Darwin, that over half the population live outside of Darwin and deserve the services that she enjoys in Darwin,” Dr Lim said.

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