

Qantas chief Alan Joyce backs new Sydney international terminal



Qantas chief executive Alan Joyce. Picture: John Feder.

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Qantas chief executive Alan Joyce has thrown his support behind the push for a potential new international terminal at Sydney Airport.

Last month Sydney Airport flagged a new terminal four, which would allow international flights adjacent to the existing facilities that operate for domestic flights, including terminal three used by Qantas.

But the terminal would go around space used by the Qantas jet base, which has a lease that runs until 2020.

Mr Joyce said there would be “real revenue benefits” to Qantas from having domestic and international operations in the same spot. “It also gives us real cost benefits,” Mr Joyce said.

“At the moment we tow aircraft between the two terminals. We’ve got significant duplication of resources between the two.”

International flights to and from Sydney currently operate from the T1 terminal. For the plan for a T4 terminal to take shape, maintenance facilities for the national carrier’s fleet at the Qantas jet base would have to move.

Plans for the cargo facilities at the jet base would also need to be addressed.

Mr Joyce said there was “a good dialogue” with Sydney Airport and “we are working through” what would happen to maintenance and cargo facilities.

“So there’s significant redevelopment of Sydney,” Mr Joyce said.

“But that’s over a long period of time. We’re talking about over the next couple of decades a lot of this is going to take place.”

Qantas International chief executive Gareth Evans said Sydney was “always going to be the heart of our operation”.

“While we are going to continue to evolve the network around the country, I think Sydney is always going to be the biggest port and the most important port in our operation,” Mr Evans said.

The senior Qantas figures made the comments during a briefing at last week’s International Air Transport Association annual general meeting at Cancun in Mexico.

Sydney Airport is expected to release its 2039 master plan over the next 12 months.

The ASX-listed company’s chairman, Trevor Gerber, has said Sydney Airport would use information it gathered during talks about the proposed Badgerys Creek airport in formulating the plan.

Sydney Airport walked away from the chance to operate Sydney's second airport earlier this year, prompting the government to declare that it would build the airport.

Plans for a new T4 would be part of a significant expansion aimed at dealing with competition and expectations of strong growth in passenger traffic.

Sydney Airport's departing boss, Kerrie Mather, has indicated that plans include an expansion of the existing T1, the new T4 with new international gates adjoining T2 and T3, and new aeronautical facilities south of the airport's General Holmes Drive.

But she has also said the plans are flexible.

Annabel Hepworth travelled to Cancun as a guest of Virgin Australia and IATA.

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