



May Kunmakara, Phnom Penh, November 11, 2011

Australian Airline Will Launch Direct Flights to Kingdom

AN Australian national airline would launch daily direct flights between Cambodia and Australia early next year, the Secretariat of State of Civil Aviation said yesterday.

The airline had conducted a feasibility study and a market survey in co-operation with a Cambodian technical team, Long Chheng, deputy cabinet chief of the SSCA, said, although he declined to name the company concerned.

The airline recently submitted a licence application after determining that the venture would be profitable, Long Chheng said.

“They see the market demand between the two countries. That’s why they made decision to start direct flights on daily basis,” he said.

The SSCA would offer the airline a licence in the hope of increasing Australian tourist visits, as well as economic growth, Long Chheng said.

The proposal also demonstrates the close relationship between the two countries, he said, adding that approval should come next week.

No information on which Australian cities the airline would service was available.

The Kingdom had opened many new direct flights this year, bringing the total number of airlines to 23, Ho Vandy, co-chair of Cambodia’s private tourism working group, said. The increases reflect what he called the country’s “open-sky policy”.

“With that policy, we’ve noticed that the number of tourists is increasing year on year. Even when [travel] in neighbouring countries is increasing slowly, we still continue to do better than them,” Ho Vandy said.

New Daily Flights From Phnom Penh to Australia Planned – The Phnom Penh Post, Nov 2011

“This is because we have political stability . . . tourist safety and better service at an affordable price.”

Myanmar Airways International recently opened flights between Phnom Penh and Myanmar’s capital, Yangon. Several Korean carriers would also increase flights during the winter season, the Post reported last month.

The number of foreign tourist arrivals rose about 15 per cent year-on-year during the first nine months of the year, hitting to 2,084,789 visitors, according to the Ministry of Tourism. Australian tourist numbers climbed nearly eight per cent to 73,385 between January and September, compared with 68,170 during the same period in 2010.

Long Chheng said the airline would probably operate Boeing 747s or Airbus A330s, making for quicker trips to the southern continent.

“It will reduce time and expense for passengers, whereas transfers would normally take time before reaching the country,” he said.