

Turkish Airlines applies for flights to Australia

-A Monitor Report

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Istanbul : In an effort to offer flight services to Australia, Turkish Airlines submitted an application to the country's Transport Minister, requesting to begin flights to Sydney and Melbourne.

With regulatory approval, the airline could reportedly be granted more than five weekly roundtrip flights between Turkey and Australia. The carrier hopes to begin the service by 2023 end.

According to reports, Australia's Transport Minister Catherine King confirmed that she received the application from Turkish Airlines for flights to Sydney and Melbourne.

If approved, the airline would be able to fly to Sydney Kingsford Smith International Airport and Melbourne Airport within 2024.

In July, reports said that the carrier had plans to launch tri-weekly flights to Australia via Changi Airport in Singapore.

Due to the current bilateral air services agreement between Turkey and Australia, Turkish Airlines is provided with up to seven flights per week between the two countries.

However, the carrier's CEO Ahmet Bolat hoped the weekly roundtrip flights would be doubled to 14.

Additionally, Bolat reportedly wants to sell tickets on flights between Australia and Singapore, thanks to fifth freedom rights. Otherwise, the CEO believes the planned service would not be economically successful.

Reports cited Turkish Airlines confirming that flights would begin in mid-December 2023.

Bolat mentioned that the carrier was working through "some legal issues" but explained that "both countries are working on it."

The CEO said the airline is planning to operate the route with the Boeing 787-9 Dreamliner and has future intentions to boost frequencies to five flights per week.

With its strategic target, Turkish Airlines hopes to increase frequencies to daily flights to Sydney and Melbourne, however, it could be a while before that happens.

"The way that we will do it will [be to] compete daily in the city that we selected, (and) then we'll go to another city," Bolat said, as per reports. That process could reportedly take two years.