



business

Longest non-stop flight to take off from New York to Sydney

- Passenger numbers have been restricted to minimise the weight

- No other airline has ever achieved the feat

- Scientists from two Australian universities will be on board

- Impact of jetlag will be closely watched

- Airbus and Boeing have pitched aircraft for the Qantas ultra long-haul routes

- Qantas will test a service from London to Sydney in the coming months

AFP | Sydney

A plane and its passengers are set to test the mental and physical limits of long-haul aviation when Qantas operates the first direct flight by a commercial airline from New York to Sydney.



Air travel often involves a lot of sitting around, but a test flight between New York and Sydney will top out at a whopping 19 hours on a plane

In the first of three "ultra long-haul" test flights planned by Australia's national flag carrier this year, researchers will monitor the effects on passengers of the 19-hour non-stop journey.

Up to 40 passengers and crew -- most of them Qantas employees -- will be on board the Boeing 787-9 when it departs New York on Friday. The plane is scheduled to arrive Down Under Sunday morning.

Passenger numbers have been restricted to minimise the weight on board and give the plane sufficient fuel range

to travel approximately 16,000 kilometres (about 9,500 miles) without re-fuelling, heading west over the Pacific.

No other airline has ever achieved the feat, which Qantas CEO Alan Joyce has called the "final frontier in aviation".

Scientists from two Australian universities will be on board to monitor passengers' sleep patterns, melatonin levels, and food consumption.

Pilots will also wear a device that tracks their brain waves and alertness.

With a 15-hour time difference between New York and



more jetlag," University of Sydney professor Stephen Simpson said.

"But people seem to be wildly different when it comes to the experience of jetlag -- and we need more research on what contributes to jetlag and travel fatigue, so we can try and reduce the impact of long-haul flights."

Qantas last year introduced the first direct service from the western Australian city of Perth to London, with the 17-hour journey one of the longest passenger flights in the world.

As well as the New York-Sydney route, Qantas will test a service from London to Sydney in

"ultimately a business decision".

Pilots concerned

Another hurdle could come from within the organisation.

Qantas pilots have raised concerns about the impact of ultra long-range flying on safety standards.

The Australian and International Pilots Association (AIPA), which represents Qantas pilots, said the exploratory flights "will produce a limited set of data that will not adequately replicate real-world flying conditions".

AIPA safety director Shane Loney has called for a "scientific long-term study" into the impacts on crew.

"Pilots are concerned about being able to get enough quality rest during ultra long-range flights to maintain peak performance and we believe significant caution should be exercised in the initial operations to make sure there are no unintended consequences," he said.

A Qantas spokesperson said the test flights are "just one part of the work we are doing to assess how to operate these flights safely".

Both Airbus and Boeing have pitched aircraft for the Qantas ultra long-haul routes. Joyce has said it is not a "foregone conclusion" which company will be chosen.

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AIPA SAFETY DIRECTOR SHANE LONEY

Sydney, the impact of jetlag will be closely watched.

"We know from the basic science of circadian rhythms that a bigger time difference between departure and arrival locations, and travelling east rather than west, tends to mean people feel

the coming months.

The airline is considering launching commercial services on the marathon routes -- if the economics stack up.

A decision will be made on the validity of the flights at the end of the year. Joyce has said it is

EU leaders split over \$1.2 trillion post-Brexit budget

Reuters | Brussels

European Union leaders discussed a new budget plan on Friday that could allow the EU to spend up to 1.1 trillion euros in the 2021-2027 period, but deep divisions among governments may block a deal for months.

Under a proposal prepared by Finland, which holds the EU's rotating presidency, the next long-term budget should have a financial capacity between 1.03 per cent and 1.08pc of the EU gross national income (GNI), a measure of output.

That would allow the EU to spend 1 trillion to 1.1 trillion euros for seven years in its first budget after the departure of Britain, one of the top contrib-



European Union leaders attend a round table meeting at the European Union leaders summit, in Brussels

utors to EU coffers.

After the meeting, some EU leaders and officials described the talks as difficult.

The Finnish document, seen by Reuters, is less ambitious than proposals put forward by the European Commission, the

EU executive, which is seeking a budget worth 1.1% of GNI. The EU parliament called for an even bigger budget, 1.3% of GNI.

But the Finnish proposal moves beyond a 1% cap set by Germany, the largest EU economy. And it has displeased most of the 27 EU states, EU officials said, suggesting long negotiations before a compromise can be reached.

Talks on budgets are usually among the most divisive in an EU increasingly prone to quarrels.

Under the proposal, subsidies to poor regions would drop to less than 30pc of the budget from 34pc now. Aid to farmers would fall to slightly more than 30pc from over 35pc of the total.

Apple's Cook meets China regulator

Reuters | Beijing

Apple Inc Chief Executive Tim Cook met the chief of China's market regulator in Beijing on Thursday, the Chinese agency said, a week after the US firm was thrust into political tensions between the mainland and protesters in Hong Kong.

Apple last week removed from its app store an app that helped Hong Kong protesters track police movements after a Chinese state newspaper sharply criticised it for allowing the software. The company said the app, HKmap.live, was used to target the police.

Cook had defended the removal in the face of criticism for appeasing mainland China, telling Apple workers that



Tim Cook, CEO of Apple

"this decision best protects our users".

China's State Administration for Market Regulation said in a statement on its website that its chief, Xiao Yaqing, and Cook discussed topics including Apple expanding investment in China, consumer rights protection and fulfilling corporate social responsibility. It did not give more details.

Samsung admits Galaxy S10 fingerprint access flaw

Seoul

Tech giant Samsung Electronics yesterday acknowledged a major flaw with its fingerprint system that allows other people to open its top-end smartphones, advising users to delete all registered prints.

Samsung is the flagship subsidiary of the giant Samsung Group and crucial to South Korea's economic health. The conglomerate is by far the biggest of the family-controlled empires that dominate business in the world's 11th-largest economy.

But it has a history of humiliating setbacks with major products, most notably a worldwide recall of its Galaxy Note 7



The world's biggest smartphone maker has touted the Galaxy S10's in-display fingerprint sensor as 'revolutionary'

devices in 2016 over exploding batteries, which hammered its

reputation. Earlier this year it had to delay

the launch of its first foldable smartphone, the Galaxy Fold, after pre-release users found faulty screens.

Samsung's latest problem emerged after a user in the UK told the Sun newspaper earlier this week her Galaxy S10 smartphone could be unlocked by someone else simply by putting on a screen protector and applying an unregistered fingerprint.

The flaw meant anyone who got hold of her phone could transfer funds using her financial apps, the user told the British paper.

In a statement released Friday, Samsung said the issue involved "fingerprint sensors un-

locking devices after recognising three-dimensional patterns appearing on certain silicone screen protecting cases as users' fingerprints."

The firm advised users of the Galaxy Note10, 10+ and Galaxy S10, S10+, and S10 5G to "delete all previous fingerprints" and register their data anew.

"Please refrain from applying a silicone screen protecting case to your device until a software update, which is planned to be released beginning next week," it added.

The statement was released a day after Samsung said it would soon roll out a fix, but did not

specify what the problem was.

The world's biggest smartphone maker has touted the Galaxy S10's in-display fingerprint sensor as "revolutionary".

"When you place your thumb on the screen, it sends ultrasonic pulses to detect the 3D ridges and valleys of your unique fingerprint to quickly and accurately recognise you," the firm has said about the technology involved.

Kakaobank, South Korea's internet-only bank, has told its customers not to use fingerprints to access its mobile banking services and employ passwords and pattern locks instead until the problem is fixed.