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A STAR ALLIANCE MEMBER 

Star Alliance Welcomes New Members of the Team

Sydney, May 3, 1999 -- Chief Executive Officers and other high-ranking officials of the Star Alliance carriers met in Sydney today to extend a formal welcome to the latest Star Alliance team members, Ansett Australia and Air New Zealand. With the addition of Ansett and ANZ, Star Alliance is now eight strong -- and a ninth airline, Japan's All Nippon Airways (ANA), will be joining in October of this year. The other six members of Star Alliance are Air Canada, Lufthansa German Airlines, SAS - Scandinavian Airlines, Thai Airways International, United Airlines and Varig Brazilian Airlines.

The Sydney meeting of the Star Alliance Chief Executive Board is timed to mark the second anniversary of the global airline alliance. After two years, Star Alliance has a solid head over its competitors, which just came on the field within the past several months. The formation of competing teams of airlines is resulting in greater choice for travelers, more efficient connections - both in terms of time and reduced hassle - and cost savings. Citing research conducted by the University of Illinois in the United States, and based on data provided by the U.S. Department of Transportation, Star Alliance says transatlantic fares on connecting flights served by Star Alliance carriers are significantly lower (36 per cent) than those offered by non-aligned airlines on identical routes. The linkages have also resulted in a net increase in the choices and the number of destinations available to Star Alliance passengers.

The Star Alliance members are also sharing information and best practices to tackle common issues. At a news conference here today, the chief executives released a joint statement saying that the Star Alliance carriers are prepared for the millennium change, and a second statement setting out the common principles they have adopted in dealing with environmental issues. On Y2K, the CEOs said they were confident that all factors under the airlines' direct control will be resolved well in time for the millennium change, and that they are continuing to review external factors, such as airports, air traffic control and other infrastructure. While they are optimistic, the CEOs made it clear that a flight would not operate "unless we are respectively satisfied that these external factors will not compromise its safety." They added, "The advent of a new millennium does not change (our) preoccupation for safety." In their Environmental Commitment Statement, the CEOs pledged to continue their efforts "to reduce the impact of our business on the environment and maintain a healthy balance between progress and environmental sustainability." Since the creation of Star Alliance in May 1997, the member airlines have served some 400 million passengers, travelling across a combined network of more than 720 destinations in over 110 countries around the world. On average, a Star Alliance flight takes off somewhere on the globe every 12 seconds.

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