



PO Box 16193
Collins Street West VIC 8007

19 April 2013

Mark Basile
Australian Competition and Consumer Commission
Level 35, 360 Elizabeth Street
Melbourne VIC 3000

Dear Mr Basile,

Re: ACCC consultation: Virgin/ Air New Zealand

The Consumers' Federation of Australia (CFA) is a peak body for over 100 community based consumer organisations and consumer advocates. CFA is managed by a volunteer Executive Committee sourced from member groups and does not employ any full-time staff.

As a result, it is with regret that we decline your invitation to provide a submission. Whilst we agree there is a clear need for a consumer voice to be heard on important issues like code share agreements between airlines, our lack of resources means that CFA does not currently have the capacity to provide input.

In the circumstance we can only encourage you to keep the following basic principles at the forefront of their minds:

Consumers in Australia are entitled to:

- *affordable and equitable access to essential services*
- *protection from unsafe or unfit products and services*
- *products and services that are sustainable in terms of their environmental effects*
- *fairness*
- *information and education to assist them in making choices in an increasingly complex marketplace*
- *accessible and effective remedies for failures and breaches of the law*
- *active monitoring and enforcement of consumer protection laws*
- *input through representative bodies to policy-making that affects their interests*

Low income and disadvantaged consumers deserve special protection.

We encourage you to note the constraints we have raised in this letter in your consultation process.

Yours sincerely,

Catriona Lowe
Chair
Consumers' Federation of Australia