

# Qantas forecasts \$1.1 billion loss in 'worst' half year

December 16 2021

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In this July 6, 2020, file photo, a Qantas Airbus A380 arrives at Southern California Logistics Airport in Victorville, Calif. Australian national carrier Qantas is forecasting a loss of more than 1.1 billion Australian dollars (US\$790 million) in July-December in what its chief executive, Alan Joyce, called one of the worst periods of the entire pandemic. In a notice to the Australian Stock Exchange on Thursday, Dec. 16, 2021, Qantas said the emergence of the Omicron variant of COVID-19 is affecting international bookings after Australia finally began to ease entry restrictions. Credit: AP Photo/Matt Hartman, File

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In a notice to the Australian Stock Exchange on Thursday, Qantas said the emergence of the Omicron [variant](#) of COVID-19 is affecting international bookings after Australia finally began to ease entry restrictions.

The airline had seen a "significant drop in [booking](#) momentum due to the news of the Omicron variant and the additional quarantine restrictions imposed," Joyce told the exchange.

"The news of the Omicron variant had a clear impact on people's confidence to book international trips in particular. But we haven't seen large numbers of cancellations," he said.

Qantas has added new international and domestic routes based on customer demand, Joyce said.

"Domestic demand has started to pick up again and we're expecting a strong performance over the Christmas period and continued strength into early next year as more restrictions ease," he said.

The recent sale of land near Sydney Airport and rise in domestic bookings have allowed the airline to pay down debt to about A\$5.65 billion by the end of December.

With many Australian states closing borders and the majority of Australians in lockdown, "This has been one of the worst halves of the

entire pandemic," Joyce said.

Still, Qantas has shown confidence in its recovery, placing an order for 134 new Airbus jets over the next 10 years, the largest aircraft order in Australian history.

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