# French Pacific Islands

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### A specific context for air transport services

- Geographical constraints :
  - very distant; small population
  - > dependence on air transportation
- Economic feature of air transport :
  - last stop of route sector
  - > limited schedule flexibility
  - > handling facilities hard to adapt (peak hours)

# A specific context for air transport services

- Impact of liberalisation on such markets:
  - the « hub & spoke » strategy is hard to set up
  - major operators focus on the more significant flows of traffic

- > Air services are very changeable:
  - in New Caledonia : Corsair, AOM, Continental Micronesia,
    Solomon Airline
  - in French Polynesia: Corsair and AOM.

## Local airlines: a key for air transportation

- The example of New Caledonia: Aircalin
  - Initially (1983), a regional network:
    one Boeing 737 (Wallis, Papeete, Sydney, Brisbane, Auckland, Fiji)
  - Since 2000, development of long-haul destinations:
    - lease of one Airbus A 310 (Nouméa Osaka)
    - 2003 : two A 330 (Nouméa Tokyo)
    - 2004 : one A 320
- In French Polynesia: Air Tahiti Nui (Airbus A 340)

## Local airlines: the necessary resources

- Financial means:
  - > for initial investment and operating costs
- Regulation authority :
  - to insure safety and security according to ICAO standards
  - what structure?
    - >> State-based authority: French DGAC in New Caledonia, W&F and French Polynesia
    - > Regional cooperation: Pacific Aviation Safety Office (PASO)



#### Other solutions

Cooperation for the creation of a common airline ...

Subsides for a local or foreign airline, with public service duties: the case of Wallis & Futuna

# The need for an adequate traffic rights policy

- Liberalism / protectionism, a difficult balance
  - Too much protectionism is prejudicial to development
  - Liberalisation doesn't stimulate small potential markets:
    - it's always done on the most profitable markets
    - it must be supported by the creation of new markets, based on adequate accommodation structures

## The need for an adequate traffic rights policy

- > A balance that marks the traffic right policy:
  - Pacific French islands have to arbitrate between their will to protect "their" airline, and the promotion of their markets

- Their traffic right policy relies mainly on airlines' commercial agreements : eg. Qantas and Air New Zealand code-share with Aircalin.

#### Conclusion

> Whatever the solution, the development of air transportation in these territories must take into account the local constraints without any dogmatism...