

DGCA grants Air Operator's Certificate to newly established airline Fly91

The Goa-based regional airline carrier aims to enhance connectivity across India's tier 2 and tier 3 towns

Directorate General of Civil Aviation on March 6 granted Air Operator's Certificate (AOC) to newly established airline Fly91.

Fly91 operated its first flight on March 2, 2024 and the Goa-based regional airline, whose code is IC, aims to be a catalyst for connectivity across India's tier 2 and tier 3 towns. Fly91 is the first Indian airline to use Goa's Manohar International Airport as its home base.

Fly91 carried out its acceptance and proving flights between March 2 and March 5. The company has been set up by Manoj Chacko, a 30-year veteran of the airline and travel industries.



"The grant of the AOC is the final step of a rigorous process laid down by the DGCA and marks the completion of all regulatory and compliance requirements for the airline to begin its commercial operations," said the airline's management on Wednesday.

"This is a significant milestone for each and every member of FLY91 and I wish to place on record the commitment, dedication, meticulous planning and exemplary collaboration that ensured that we achieved this milestone in record time," said MD and CEO of Fly91, Manoj Chacko.

Fly91 received its first ATR 72-600, one of the two aircraft leased from Dubai Aerospace Enterprise last week. The aircraft flew in from Hyderabad to be part of the regional airline's fleet.

Commenting further on the significant milestone, Chacko said: "We are extremely thankful to the Ministry of Civil Aviation and the DGCA for their direction, proactive support and efficiency throughout the AOC process. We now look forward to commencing the sale of tickets leading to the start of commercial operations soon.

The airline has already been allocated its first set of routes under the government's Regional Connectivity Scheme (RCS) UDAN.

The routes allotted under UDAN 5.0 will see FLY91 connect the cities of Sindhudurg, Jalgaon, Nanded in Maharashtra and Agatti in Lakshadweep, along with other business and leisure destinations, namely Bengaluru, Goa, Hyderabad and Pune.

Fly91 will focus on working along with larger airlines to provide last-mile connectivity to smaller towns around Goa, Chacko, who was formerly executive vice-president of Kingfisher Airlines, told Moneycontrol in June 2023.

Chacko joined hands with Harsha Raghavan, former Fairfax India head, to launch Just UDO (just fly) Aviation, which is behind Fly91. Raghavan's investment firm Convergent Finance pledged Rs 200 crore as the project outlay for the upcoming airline.

Fly91 wants to cater to the short-haul segment (45-90 minute flight duration) and connect underserved places where bigger aircraft cannot land or demand is not viable enough for larger airlines.

"The plan for Fly91 is to operate a fleet of leased 70-seater ATR 72-600 turboprop jets. The plan is to bring six aircraft to the Goa base within the first year," Chacko told Moneycontrol last year.