

AVIATION

NokScoot launch date set for 2015

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The launch of NokScoot, the second Thailand-based long-haul low-cost carrier, has been set for the first quarter of 2015 instead of later this year as expected earlier.

The launch date came as the airline, a joint venture between Thai budget carrier Nok Air and Singapore's no-frills Scoot, yesterday named its chief executive and executive board chairman.

It was also revealed that Pete Air Co, the holder of the airline licence that NokScoot acquired to expedite NokScoot's creation, was officially renamed NokScoot Airlines Co on Wednesday.

SET-listed Nok Airlines Plc, Scoot Pte Ltd and Pueannammitr Co purchased shares of Pete Air Co on June 19.

Piya Yodmani, who has been deputy chief executive of Nok Air since 2004, was named chief executive of NokScoot.

Nok Air chief executive Patee Sarasin assumed chairmanship of the new airline's executive board.

Mr Piya will concurrently retain his position as deputy chief executive of Nok Air.

In a statement yesterday, Mr Piya acknowledged that the competition in the low-cost airline market was intense and challenging.

Mr Piya said he was committed to offering the highest value to passengers.

He said NokScoot expected to start operation in the first quarter of 2015 but did not say where it would fly to.

But he confirmed Bangkok's Don Mueang airport would be used as its base, with the flights operated by Boeing 777-200 wide-body jets.

A NokScoot spokeswoman attributed the delayed launch of NokScoot to the time required for obtaining regulatory approval for routes.

While it was reported that NokScoot had eyed Tokyo's Narita airport for its maiden service, the spokeswoman said the airline would fly to destinations popular with Thais and where there were good numbers of tourists wishing to visit Thailand.