

TIME TO FLY

After much delay, NokScoot, Thailand's second long-haul low-cost carrier, is finally ready to start flying in May. **B2**

AVIATION

Long-delayed NokScoot set for May launch

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After repeated hold-ups, NokScoot, Thailand's second long-haul low-cost carrier, is finally ready to start flying in May.

Tickets for scheduled service went on sale online late last week for two initial routes, from NokScoot's base at Don Mueang airport to Incheon in South Korea and Nanjing in China.

The airline, a joint venture of SET-listed budget airline Nok Air and Singapore Airlines' no-frills Scoot, will commence its regular Nanjing service on May 5 and Incheon

service on May 10, according to its website.

NokScoot will operate three non-stop flights a week for each of the two initial routes, with promotional economy fares starting at 888 baht for one-way Nanjing service and 2,555 baht for Incheon.

A business-class seat, known as Scootbiz, goes for 5,555 baht for Incheon and 3,888 baht for Nanjing.

Those are net fares only, apart from extras like fuel surcharges and passenger service charges (PSCs) imposed by airport authorities.

In general, NokScoot's promotional

ticket price, including fuel surcharge and PSC, is about 15% lower than what Thai AirAsia X, the country's first long-haul LCC, is offering.

NokScoot has been forced to push back its launch date many times, most recently from late 2014 to the first quarter of 2015, due to regulatory delays.

The airline had planned to begin operations with flights to Tokyo's Narita airport, but it encountered constraints on the Japanese end.

Incheon and Nanjing, previously not listed as launch routes, were chosen instead.