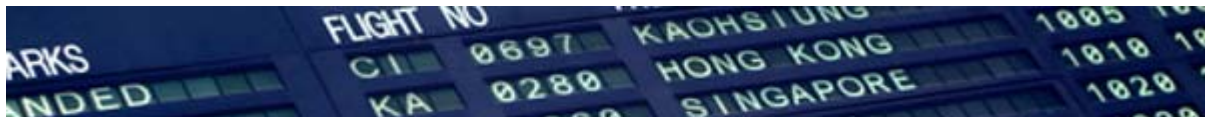


## Frequent Flyer news released on May 14, 2010

As part of the announced take-over of *Continental* by *United*, the Frequent Flyer Programs **Mileage Plus** and **OnePass** will be merged, too, probably similarly to the former procedure between *Delta* and *Northwest*. Details and a schedule for this are not yet known, but as OnePass has already aligned very much to Mileage Plus when Continental joined Star Alliance last year, the changes will probably be limited for frequent flyers.



After Air New Zealand took a stake in Australian *Ansett*, what has almost ruined the airline itself following Ansett's collapse in 2001, Air New Zealand was rather careful in Australia. In the meantime, *Virgin Blue* has emerged, however, and occupies today basically the position of Ansett, even if it has not yet reached the same standing with business travellers. That's why Air New Zealand is trying its luck now again and has announced a far-reaching alliance with Virgin Blue, which will also extend to the Frequent Flyer Programs **Airpoints** and **Velocity**. It would nevertheless be too early to conclude from that a possible orientation of Virgin Blue towards Star Alliance: A former code share agreement with *United* has been abandoned in favour of a larger cooperation with *Delta* and the airline pursues in general an alliance-independent way when it comes to partnerships, e.g. with *Emirates*.



*China Eastern* was almost a natural candidate for **oneworld** as Star Alliance (*Air China/Shanghai Airlines*) as well as SkyTeam (*China Southern*) have already members from China, but **oneworld** only a pseudo Chinese member in the form of *Cathay Pacific*. Star could have been a possible option, too, following the merger of China Eastern and Shanghai Airlines. To a general surprise, China Eastern has now decided, however, in favour of a membership with SkyTeam, which should be realised next year. Whether Shanghai Airlines continues to remain a Star member remains to be seen.



Every frequent flyer knows how expensive a "free" ticket can become after adding all surcharges and taxes - but there are always more innovative creations. **Aeroplan** members now have to pay an additional fee of 7.50 or 15 Canadian dollars per one-way flight on most *Air Canada* flights - in order to cover air traffic control costs. Aeroplan gives the impression that this is a completely new fee in aviation, what is obviously complete nonsense. But new is indeed that an airline has the idea that air traffic control costs are no longer an integral part of the ticket price and can hence be added as surcharge to award tickets.



Usually we don't talk about simple hotel partnerships here. But an exception should be made if two of the largest Frequent Flyer and hotel programs announce the end of their partnership at a complete surprise after having cooperated for decades. This is what has happened between *Marriott* and American Airlines: As of July 01, **Marriott Rewards** members will no longer be able to collect **AAdvantage** miles.

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