

PRESS RELEASE

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Asia Pacific Aviation Environmental Forum
Brunei 2006

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AAPA Forum Voices Asia Pacific Perspectives on Aviation and the Environment

More than 120 aviation industry stakeholders, including international experts and regional representatives from governments, regulators, airports, airlines and academia, met in Bandar Seri Begawan, Brunei Darussalam, 28-29 November 2006, to examine a range of environmental issues related to aviation.

The Forum was organised by the Association of Asia Pacific Airlines (AAPA), hosted by Royal Brunei Airlines, and endorsed by the Department of Civil Aviation of Brunei.

In his opening remarks to the Forum, Mr. Andrew Herdman, Director General of the AAPA noted that:

“Aviation plays an important role in modern economic and social development. At the same time we must minimise our impact on the natural environment we inhabit. Aviation faces a number of distinct issues relating to the environment. Noise, particularly around airports, has long been a contentious subject. Manufacturers have made significant progress in reducing the noise footprint of modern aircraft, which are noticeably quieter in operation. Local air quality is another aspect of being a good corporate citizen, where airlines continue to work closely with airport operators to

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manage local emissions, including emissions from ground transport systems and services, as well as aircraft emissions on the ground.”

On the issue of climate change Mr. Herdman added that: “the threat represented by global warming also has some bearing on aviation, although it is worth noting that aviation generates only 2% of total CO₂ emissions, whilst contributing directly and indirectly to 8% of global economic activity. Nevertheless, aviation is committed to continuous improvements in fuel efficiency, through the use of newer designs and more efficient operating procedures.”

In view of the international nature of the aviation industry, Mr. Herdman emphasised the need for “consistency of application, and a harmonised global approach, rather than unilateral regional initiatives, in order to avoid competitive distortions”. Mr. Herdman said the AAPA would remain focused on “ensuring that the views of Asia Pacific are both heard, and carry proper weight, in an international context.”

In his welcoming address, Pengiran Dato Yassin, Chairman, Royal Brunei Airlines, said “Society expects the aviation sector to play its part in meeting high level CO₂ reduction targets as well as easing community noise disturbance. Failure to do so will affect the ability of the industry to grow, certainly in the longer term and in some cases in the shorter term. So, difficult challenges lie ahead. But this industry has shown that it can meet them, and will continue to do so.”

In his keynote address Pehin Dato Hj Bakar, Brunei’s Minister of Development, called on the business community to recognize that environmental protection and conservation is neither an obstacle to economic growth, nor a burden for the economy, but offers opportunities for sustainable growth. He urged the corporate sector to adopt sustainable development as an integral aspect of business management, keeping a balance between economic and environmental requirements.

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Emphasising the human aspect in his own keynote remarks, Dr. Grahaeme Henderson, Managing Director, Brunei Shell Petroleum Company said “although the Forum focuses on the aviation sector and its specific challenges of emissions, noise and waste, environmental issues are a universal challenge. We all have to work together to meet these challenges, not just as industry partners, but also as individuals.”

Amongst the conclusions reached at the Forum, it was noted that fuel typically accounted for more than 25% of total operating costs, thus airlines and manufacturers would continue to invest in new technologies to minimise fuel burn and emissions. Longer term research into possible alternative fuel sources was also being actively pursued. Meanwhile, governments, airports and air navigation service providers were urged to explore ways to improve the efficiency of airspace utilization, and airport operations, to realize further identified gains in fuel efficiency and reduction in the environmental impact of aviation. In view of the need for globally harmonised measures, governments were urged to work collaboratively within the ICAO framework in seeking to reconcile the interests of citizens and countries at different stages of development in moving towards truly sustainable global development. Finally, governments were urged to recognize the ineffectiveness of green taxes in changing behaviour, making voluntary initiatives and market based measures more appropriate tools in tackling environmental challenges.

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Association of Asia Pacific Airlines (AAPA)

The AAPA is the trade association of 17 scheduled international airlines based in the Asia-Pacific region. The AAPA permanent secretariat is headquartered in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia with international representation in Brussels and Washington, D.C. Collectively, AAPA member airlines carry 270 million passengers and 10 million tonnes of cargo representing approximately one-fifth of global passenger traffic and one-third of global air cargo traffic respectively, and thus play a critically important role in the ongoing development of global aviation.

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