

PRESS RELEASE

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Asia Pacific Airlines Traffic Results - April 2020

Passenger demand collapses, decline in cargo markets deepens

Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia – Preliminary April 2020 traffic figures released today by the Association of Asia Pacific Airlines (AAPA) showed that international air passenger markets were battered by the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. The rapid spread of the virus, resulting in border closures and travel restrictions across the world, forced an almost complete shutdown of international airline operations. Meanwhile, air cargo markets remained active but were affected by weakening demand, and disruptions to global supply chains, including the sharp reduction in passenger belly-hold capacity.

Overall, Asia Pacific airlines saw international passenger numbers plunge 98.8% year-on-year to a combined total of just 368,000 passengers in April compared to the 31.9 million carried in the same month last year. The average international passenger load factor slumped to a historical low of 28.0% for the month as available seat capacity declined by 94.6%.

With the COVID-19 crisis escalating in many countries, community-wide lockdowns and social distancing measures dampened consumer demand leading to a marked slowdown in global trade and manufacturing activity. As a result, Asian airlines saw air cargo demand, as measured in freight tonne kilometres (FTK), fall by 28.3% year-on-year in April.

In addition, the grounding of most of the region's passenger fleets further reduced air cargo capacity in the market. Although partly mitigated by additional freighter operations and the deployment of cargo-only passenger flights, offered freight capacity fell by 38.3%, leading to a 9.4 percentage point increase in the average international freight load factor to 67.5% for the month.

Commenting on the results, Mr. Subhas Menon, AAPA Director General said, “The April traffic numbers underscore the devastating impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on global air travel markets. Uncertainty remains as to how long the crisis will persist. Nevertheless, with infection curves showing signs of flattening, it is hoped that conditions are beginning to bottom out.”

“Whilst severe travel restrictions continue to limit the early restart of aviation activity, there are some encouraging signs in the market. A number of airlines have begun restoring domestic flights, whilst a small number of international flights are still being operated, with plans to operate additional services as border restrictions are progressively relaxed. However, patchy, uncoordinated measures across countries, including various screening protocols and often onerous quarantine requirements, are deterring passengers from flying, and slowing the process of restarting aviation.”

Mr. Menon concluded, “The countries in the Asia Pacific region were the first to encounter COVID-19 and are the first to witness some stabilisation and degree of control over the spread of the disease. Hopefully, the region can also lead the much-needed recovery in air travel. The progressive resumption of international air services will only be possible if a globally harmonised, outcome-based mitigation framework is adopted across countries. We welcome ICAO’s leadership in setting up its COVID-19 Aviation Recovery Task Force (CART) to recommend strategic priorities and policies for States and industry operators. Asia Pacific airlines remain committed to working closely with governments and relevant international bodies towards a timely restoration of air services, and supporting the revival of trade, tourism, economic and social activity.”

TRAFFIC UPDATE – PRELIMINARY

International Scheduled Services of Asia Pacific Airlines

International	Apr-20	Apr-19	% Change	Jan-Apr 2020	Jan-Apr 2019	% Change
Passengers (Thousand)	368	31,871	- 98.8%	59,899	127,543	- 53.0%
RPK (Million)	2,125	114,725	- 98.1%	231,117	461,879	- 50.0%
ASK (Million)	7,604	141,634	- 94.6%	331,056	568,938	- 41.8%
Passenger Load Factor	28.0%	81.0%	- 53.0 pp	69.8%	81.2%	- 11.4 pp
FTK (Million)	4,130	5,762	- 28.3%	19,270	22,524	- 14.4%
FATK (Million)	6,118	9,913	- 38.3%	30,824	38,814	- 20.6%
Freight Load Factor	67.5%	58.1%	+ 9.4 pp	62.5%	58.0%	+ 4.5 pp

Effective January 2020, the dataset comprises aggregated traffic data from the following 40 Asia Pacific based carriers: 3K, 5J, 6E, 7C, 9C, 9W, AI, AK, BI, BR, CA, CI, CK, CX, CZ, D7, GA, HO, HU, IX, JL, JQ, KA, KC, KE, KZ, MH, MU, NH, NZ, OZ, PG, PR, QF, SG, SQ, TG, TR, VA and VN.

- Previous year data adjusted for comparison purposes
- RPK = revenue passenger kilometres
- ASK = available seat kilometres
- FTK = freight tonne kilometres
- FATK = available freight tonne kilometres
- All figures, including estimates for missing data, are provisional

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Association of Asia Pacific Airlines (AAPA)

The AAPA is the trade association for 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, the region's airlines carry 1,623 million passengers and 23 million tonnes of cargo, representing over one-third of global passenger and air cargo traffic, and thus play a leading role in the ongoing development of global aviation.

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