

PRESS RELEASE

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Association of Asia Pacific Airlines
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Level 27-1, Menara Prestige
1 Jalan Pinang
50450 Kuala Lumpur
MALAYSIA
Tel +603 2162 1888
Fax +603 2162 6888
www.aapairlines.org

Asia Pacific Airlines January 2021 Traffic Results

Passenger traffic still down, air cargo continues to climb

Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia – Preliminary January 2021 traffic figures released today by the Association of Asia Pacific Airlines (AAPA) showed that airline operations are still depressed, as the spread of COVID-19 variants resulted in tighter border restrictions in international as well as domestic markets across the world. Meanwhile, air cargo demand keeps improving as world trade starts to gain renewed momentum.

Asia Pacific airlines carried a combined total of 1.3 million international passengers in January, just 3.9% of the same month last year when 33.5 million passengers flew on the region's carriers. Offered seat capacity was 12.1% of the January 2020 volume, while the international passenger load factor averaged 27% for the month, a significant 54 percentage point decline from the 81% achieved in the corresponding month last year, when traffic volumes were still relatively unaffected by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Growth in the e-commerce sector in the midst of further recovery in the global manufacturing sector lent support to air cargo markets. In January 2021, air cargo demand as measured in freight tonne kilometres (FTK) recorded a marginal increase of 0.3%, the first year-on-year growth in many months, partly boosted by higher demand for air shipments ahead of the Lunar New Year celebrations. Offered freight capacity fell by 25% year-on-year, reflecting the prevailing capacity crunch as a result of the decline in passenger bellyhold space. The international freight load factor averaged 71.6%, an 18 percentage point increase compared to the same month last year.

Commenting on the results, AAPA Director General Mr. Subhas Menon, said, “Renewed efforts to contain COVID-19 through lockdowns and border restrictions have again affected international passenger demand, which remains close to a standstill.”

Mr. Menon added, “The uneven roll-out of vaccinations across the world will only delay the full reopening of borders. In this extremely challenging operating environment, airlines are struggling to survive. While some airlines are receiving financial support, further assistance would be needed for most airlines to stay afloat, given that international borders remain largely shuttered.”

“Meanwhile, the industry is working with several stakeholders to prepare the ground for the sustained resumption of air travel, notably on contactless digitalized tools and passenger facilitation protocols to ensure a safe and seamless journey for travelers. The Asia Pacific aviation industry is committed to playing its part in the COVID-19 pandemic, through the carriage of time-sensitive cargo supplies especially vaccines, and the safe repatriation of residents.”

TRAFFIC UPDATE – PRELIMINARY

International Scheduled Services of Asia Pacific Airlines

International	Jan-21	Jan-20	% Change
Passengers (Thousand)	1,304	33,467	- 96.1%
RPK (Million)	5,015	124,371	- 96.0%
ASK (Million)	18,559	153,203	- 87.9%
Passenger Load Factor	27.0%	81.2%	- 54.2 pp
FTK (Million)	5,361	5,347	+ 0.3%
FATK (Million)	7,488	9,985	- 25.0%
Freight Load Factor	71.6%	53.5%	+ 18.1 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.

For further information, please contact:

Office of the Director General

Tel +603 2162 1888 Fax +603 2162 6888

Email: odg@aapa.org.my

Website: www.aapairlines.org

Twitter: [@aapairlines](https://twitter.com/aapairlines)