

PRESS RELEASE

Issue 2021: 16

Tuesday, 26 October 2021
For Immediate Release
September 2021 / Traffic / Preliminary

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Asia Pacific Airlines Traffic Results - September 2021

Severe weakness in international air passenger demand continues, in contrast to strong air cargo markets

Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia – Preliminary September 2021 traffic figures released today by the Association of Asia Pacific Airlines (AAPA) revealed yet another month of severe weakness in international air passenger demand, whereas international air cargo markets continued to strengthen on the back of growth in demand.

For the month, the region's airlines carried a combined total of 1.2 million international passengers, representing 4.1% of the 30 million recorded in the same month of 2019. The international passenger load factor averaged 33%, whilst available seat capacity was 13.9% of pre-pandemic levels.

Meanwhile, amidst ongoing recovery in the global economy, strong consumer and business sentiment continued to boost trade activity, benefitting air cargo markets. Prolonged congestion at major shipping ports and associated global supply chain disruptions have also led to businesses turning to air cargo to speed up deliveries.

As a result, Asia Pacific airlines saw a 23.3% year-on-year growth in international air cargo demand as measured in freight tonne kilometres (FTK) in September. Offered freight capacity recorded a relatively slower 14.8% year-on-year increase, driving the average international freight load factor to 76.1% for the month.

Commenting on the results, Mr. Subhas Menon, AAPA Director General said, "The severe weakness in international passenger numbers seen since the onset of the pandemic reflect the border restrictions enforced by governments across the region."

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Mr. Menon added, “Nevertheless, as vaccination rates increase, more governments are moving away from zero-COVID approaches towards a risk-managed approach in favour of relaxation of border restrictions for vaccinated travellers. This is a welcome step towards the recovery of air travel. The encouraging increase in ticket bookings in markets where barriers to travel have been lowered also reflect strong travel confidence.”

Mr. Menon concluded, “However, for air passenger recovery to gain more substantial momentum, inconsistent health and border measures need to be replaced with harmonised or mutually-recognised protocols that will remove much complexity and confusion for the travelling public. We urge more governments to collaborate across borders in adopting an objective risk-based approach in line with WHO and ICAO guidelines to restore global air travel mobility.”

TRAFFIC UPDATE – PRELIMINARY

International Scheduled Services of Asia Pacific Airlines

International	Sep-21	Sep-20	% Change	Jan-Sep 2021	Jan-Sep 2020	% Change
Passengers (Thousand)	1,228	870	+ 41.1%	11,185	66,760	- 83.2%
RPK (Million)	6,571	4,717	+ 39.3%	50,107	256,912	- 80.5%
ASK (Million)	19,925	14,969	+ 33.1%	167,465	394,649	- 57.6%
Passenger Load Factor	33.0%	31.5%	+ 1.5 pp	29.9%	65.1%	- 35.2 pp
FTK (Million)	6,093	4,941	+ 23.3%	52,407	43,312	+ 21.0%
FATK (Million)	8,008	6,976	+ 14.8%	70,340	66,481	+ 5.8%
Freight Load Factor	76.1%	70.8%	+ 5.3 pp	74.5%	65.1%	+ 9.4 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 represent 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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