

PRESS RELEASE

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Asia Pacific Airlines May 2022 Traffic Results

Robust growth in passenger demand; soft cargo markets

Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia – Preliminary May 2022 traffic figures released today by the Association of Asia Pacific Airlines (AAPA) showed international air passenger demand strengthened markedly amidst the lifting of travel restrictions that unleashed a robust return of travellers since the pandemic.

For the month, the number of international passengers carried by Asia Pacific airlines increased more than five-fold to a combined total of 7.3 million, with demand rising to 23.6% of volumes recorded in May 2019. The jump in demand, combined with a relatively more moderate 114.8% expansion in available seat capacity, led to a significant 43.7 percentage point increase in the average international passenger load factor to 71.5% for the month, narrowing the gap to levels achieved before the pandemic brought international travel to a standstill.

By contrast, prevailing supply chain disruptions and slowing demand further stymied global trade activity. This, in turn, led to a 5.6% year-on-year decline in international air cargo demand as measured in freight tonne kilometres (FTK) in May. Meanwhile, offered freight capacity expanded by 1.0% year-on-year compared to the same month last year, with a consequent 4.8 percentage point decline in the international freight load factor to an average of 69.4% for the month.

Commenting on the results, Mr. Subhas Menon, AAPA Director General said, “The COVID-19 pandemic has transformed the world in many ways. Yet, what hasn’t changed is people’s desire to travel, as evidenced by the strong uplift in international travel upon the lifting of border control measures across the region.”

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Mr. Menon added, “On the other hand, after a buoyant 2021, air cargo demand is facing some headwinds with export orders facing downward pressures, driven by waning business confidence levels amid an increasingly cloudy global economic outlook.”

Mr. Menon continued, “As the region’s airlines emerge from the deepest and most prolonged crisis ever faced, keeping a lid on costs remains vital, as escalating fuel expenditure, higher labour and maintenance costs, on top of substantially heavier debt burdens, threaten to undermine the already fragile financial recovery. In addition, airlines face increasing operational constraints as the air transport eco-system strives to keep up with the ramp-up in demand.”

Mr. Menon concluded, “Nevertheless, the healthy increase in international passenger demand and corresponding recovery in load factors lends some cause for optimism, as the region’s airlines continue to streamline operations while investing to improve the travel experience as part of ongoing efforts to achieve a sustainable and technology-enabled future for air transport.”

TRAFFIC UPDATE – PRELIMINARY

International Scheduled Services of Asia Pacific Airlines

International	May-22	May-21	% Change	Jan-May 2022	Jan-May 2021	% Change
Passengers (Thousand)	7,328	1,306	+ 461.1%	21,922	5,918	+ 270.4%
RPK (Million)	28,296	5,129	+ 451.7%	91,309	24,970	+ 265.7%
ASK (Million)	39,585	18,425	+ 114.8%	160,176	90,172	+ 77.6%
Passenger Load Factor	71.5%	27.8%	+ 43.7 pp	57.0%	27.7%	+ 29.3 pp
FTK (Million)	5,538	5,864	- 5.6%	27,829	28,501	- 2.4%
FATK (Million)	7,982	7,903	+ 1.0%	40,007	38,708	+ 3.4%
Freight Load Factor	69.4%	74.2%	- 4.8 pp	69.6%	73.6%	- 4.0 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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