

## PRESS RELEASE

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September 2023 / Traffic / Preliminary

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### **Asia Pacific Airlines September 2023 Traffic Results**

*Passenger market recovery gathers pace while air cargo demand turns a corner*

**Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia** – Preliminary September 2023 traffic figures released today by the Association of Asia Pacific Airlines (AAPA) showed solid expansion in international passenger markets, led by a steady rebound in tourist arrivals across the region. Further revival in demand on routes connecting China, provided additional momentum to the travel recovery.

Overall, Asia Pacific airlines recorded a 111.0% year-on-year increase in the number of international passengers carried to a combined total of 23.7 million in September. This brings demand to 79.0% of the corresponding month in 2019, a marked improvement compared to 52.9% in January. Demand as measured in revenue passenger kilometres (RPK) increased by 90.9% year-on-year, while available seat capacity expanded by 86.1%, leading to a 2.0 percentage point increase in the average international passenger load factor to 79.7% for the month.

Meanwhile, following 18 consecutive months in decline since March 2022, the region's carriers recorded an upswing in international air cargo demand in September, with a 3.2% year-on-year growth as measured in freight tonne kilometres (FTK). While the increase was in part attributable to comparisons with depressed levels recorded last year, the start of the high demand season leading to the year-end festive period also contributed to growth. The international freight load factor fell by 3.3 percentage points to average 60.6% for the month, after accounting for an 8.8% year-on-year expansion in offered freight capacity.

Commenting on the results, Mr. Subhas Menon, AAPA Director General said, “During the first nine months of the year, Asian airlines in aggregate carried 194 million international passengers, 212% more than the same period last year, reflecting very strong post-pandemic recovery in demand. Air cargo demand turned positive for the first time in 2023 in September, which helped to moderate the decline for the year to date, to 6.4%. It is a welcome relief to have both passenger and cargo demand on a positive footing although the fall in export orders seen across major economies still signals challenging market conditions.”

Looking ahead, Mr. Menon said, “The outlook for the region’s travel markets is broadly positive going into the final quarter of this year, with continued expansion in air passenger demand supported by resilient growth in the Asian economies. Airlines are facing increasing headwinds, marked by sharply higher fuel costs in recent months. Nevertheless, the region’s carriers are buoyed by the strong recovery of air travel in the region and are looking forward to the growth continuing into 2024.”

**TRAFFIC UPDATE – PRELIMINARY**  
*International Scheduled Services of Asia Pacific Airlines*

<b>International</b>	<b>Sep-23</b>	<b>Sep-22</b>	<b>% Change</b>	<b>Jan-Sep 2023</b>	<b>Jan-Sep 2022</b>	<b>% Change</b>
Passengers (Thousand)	23,710	11,239	+ 111.0%	194,315	62,316	+ 211.8%
RPK (Million)	89,877	47,076	+ 90.9%	728,533	269,193	+ 170.6%
ASK (Million)	112,785	60,597	+ 86.1%	896,478	389,015	+ 130.4%
Passenger Load Factor	79.7%	77.7%	+ 2.0 pp	81.3%	69.2%	+ 12.1 pp
FTK (Million)	5,580	5,407	+ 3.2%	46,856	50,057	- 6.4%
FATK (Million)	9,203	8,461	+ 8.8%	77,003	73,976	+ 4.1%
Freight Load Factor	60.6%	63.9%	- 3.3 pp	60.8%	67.7%	- 6.9 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

**END**

**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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