

AIRLINK

CONTENTS - DECEMBER 2020

Airport Talk

- Airport GCEO Speaks **45**
Key Measures in Aviation and
Tourism Recovery **46**

Aviation News

- Malaysia Airports & Alibaba Launches
Cainiao Aeropolis eWTP Hub **48**
Malaysia Airports Installs Safety
Equipment at 19 More Airports **49**

- STARLUX Launches Three Major Routes
to Bangkok, Osaka and Tokyo **50**

- Malaysia Airlines Fly to New
Destinations Amidst Pandemic **51**

- oneworld, SkyTeam and Star Alliance
Support ICAO Guidelines **52**

- Qatar Airways Takes Delivery of
Three A350-1000 **53**

- ANA and Japan Airlines Ensure of
Passengers Amidst Covid-19 **54**

- Qantas Marks 100 Years of
Serving Australia **55**

Aviation Interview

- Aviation Interview with
Kenneth Chan
Operations Director,
Cainiao KLIA Aeropolis Sdn Bhd **56**





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A corporate leader with diverse experience, he is harnessing the latest technological advances to spur Malaysia Airports to greater heights as a smart aviation regional hub.

This month, Dato' Mohd Shukrie Mohd Salleh shares how Malaysia Airports manages to consistently maintain high health and safety standards amidst the novel coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic to not only win gold accolades for several of its local airports but also bags award recognitions for its corporate office and a fully owned subsidiary from the Malaysian Society for Occupational Safety and Health Standards (MSOSH). Its overseas asset, Istanbul Sabiha Gokcen International Airport (ISGIA) in Turkey, also made headways in terms of ranking and improved contributions.



Airport GCEO Speaks

As a responsible airport operator, we are committed to ensure safety and health standards are practised across our network of airports nationwide. In MSOSH's latest annual awards, our Sandakan Airport in Sabah clinched the Gold Class 1 recognition while the KL International Airport (KLIA) in Sepang, Selangor and Kota Bharu Airport in Kelantan each received a Gold Class 2 Award.

Our corporate office also garnered a Gold Class 1 Award whereas Sama-Sama Hotel, sited adjacent to our flagship airport KLIA, received a Silver Award. All these awards involve stringent documentation on the protocols and periodic on-site verification audits by a panel of auditors from various agencies.

The evaluation also covers the readiness of our emergency response plan and among other things, the establishment of the ISO 45001 management system. We have a specially designated unit to primarily look at OSH matters and keep us constantly updated

on the latest global trends as our airport guests' safety is of utmost importance to us.

We are honoured that Eurocontrol, a Brussel-based organisation for the Safety of Air Navigation recently ranked ISGIA as the fifth busiest airport in Europe with an average of almost 500 flights daily. Based on our latest data, ISGIA, which has been sustaining growth momentum since July, registered 1.9 million passenger traffic in October, achieving almost 60% of its October 2019's 3.2 million passenger traffic. ISGIA also added Salam Air to its growing list of foreign airlines that had resumed operations with its two flights weekly.

In Malaysia, while our operations have been affected by the imposition of the Conditional Movement Control Order in all states except for Perlis, Pahang and Kelantan, thus impacting domestic travel, we are heartened to have 34 airlines flying to 29 destinations in 23 countries, providing the vital connectivity links for both passengers and cargo.

Nepal Airlines, with its four times weekly frequency, was the latest addition to resume its Kathmandu-Kuala Lumpur on 26 October while our 2.6 million sq ft Cainiao Aeropolis eWTP Hub, formerly known as the KLIA Aeropolis DFTZ Park, commenced operations in early November. We are confident this new e-fulfillment facility will enable us to double our cargo volume to 1.4 million a year by 2029, and notwithstanding the doubling of freighter flight during this period.

Tapping into the synergistic partnership we have with local industry players such as Pos Aviation, MABkargo, GTR, GD Express, Pos Laju and J&T Express, we hope to contribute our part in helping to resuscitate the national economy through more job creation and opening up of ecommerce business opportunities through this MAHB-Cainiao joint-venture project. As we end 2020, which has been unprecedented due to the pandemic, we are eternally committed in providing safe and seamless travel for all our guests.



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Key Measures in Aviation and Tourism Recovery

The novel coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic has posed the biggest challenge to global economies, including Malaysia with many losing jobs and sources of income. Addressing this health crisis, the Malaysian government announced several measures in the recent Budget 2021 to help prop up our economy and industries.

Among them was the RM50 million allocated for the retraining of 8,000 aviation staff who had been laid-off. Wage subsidy lasting three months was also provided for the tourism and retail sectors, which is expected to benefit 70,000 employers and 900,000 staff.

According to the Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture, RM200 million additional allocation has been given to spur the industry's recovery in 2021, which was not mentioned in the Budget 2021 announcement on 4 November. It will cover, among other things, discounts to be given for the promotion of travel destinations, transportation, shopping and services.

Covid-19 vaccine updates

Hopes for the revival of the beleaguered tourism and aviation industries, both adversely hit by Covid-19, could happen earlier than expected in the wake of recent vaccine announcements by pharmaceutical companies such as Moderna and Pfizer/BioNTech whose final data analysis indicate 95% efficacy in preventing the spread of the virus.

Besides the United States, among the other countries in the race working to come up fast with a Covid-19 vaccine are India, China, Russia and the United Kingdom (UK). While the vaccine provides an indication of when this "invisible enemy" can be curbed, it will help the aviation, tourism and travel industries which are trying to stay afloat to determine policies and the necessary measures to be taken in the meantime.

To date, Covid-19 has not only continued in its spread to 217 countries and territories with over 55.6 million cases worldwide and 1.34 million deaths recorded but also witnessed recent spikes in some countries, including Malaysia, and another round of lockdown in the UK.

The International Air Transport Association's (IATA) has recently published a guide outlining important considerations when handling the transport and distribution of vaccines, pharmaceutical, life science and medical products. 'The Guidance for Vaccine and Pharmaceutical Logistics and Distribution' provides recommendations for governments and the logistics supply chain in preparation for what will be the largest and most complex global logistics operation ever to be undertaken by the air cargo industry.

Recognising the complexity of this challenge, IATA has enlisted the support of various strategic partners. They include the International Civil Aviation Organisation, International Federation of Freight Forwarders Associations, International Federation of Pharmaceutical Manufacturers and Associations, Pan American Health Organisation, United Kingdom Civil Aviation Authority, World Bank, World Customs Organisation and World Trade Organisation.

In terms of capacity and connectivity, IATA observes that global route network has been drastically reduced from pre-Covid-19's 22,000 city pairs. As such, the urgency for governments to re-establish air connectivity to ensure adequate capacity is available for vaccine distribution has never been greater.

While the immediate challenge is the implementation of a harmonised pre-departure Covid-19 testing to reopen travel borders without imposing the 14-day quarantine, IATA's Director General and Chief



Executive Officer Alexandre de Juniac could not stress enough for all to be prepared for when a vaccine is ready.

“Delivering billions of doses of a vaccine that must be transported and stored in a deep-frozen state to the entire world efficiently will involve hugely complex logistical challenges across the supply chain.”

Defining the roles and responsibilities of all parties concerned in the safe, fast and equitable distribution of the Covid-19 vaccine, he calls on them to look into the provision of the necessary facilities and infrastructure such as ultra-cold or temperature-controlled storage and contingencies when such facilities are unavailable.

Where border management is concerned, there must be timely regulatory approvals, storage and clearance by customs and health authorities. Additionally, priorities for border processes is essential. They include introducing fast-track procedures for overflight and landing permits for operations carrying the COVID-19 vaccine and potential tariff relief to facilitate the vaccine’s movement, says IATA. Since vaccines are highly valuable commodities, arrangements must be made to ensure shipments remain secure from tampering and theft.



linked to the resumption and revival of global air connectivity.

IATA has some 290 airlines as members which makes up 82% of global air traffic while the ITF represents nearly 700 transport workers trade unions with around 20 million workers in 150 countries.

The Air Transport Action Group estimates some 4.8 million aviation jobs at risk due to air travel demand falling more than 75% in August compared to August 2019. Covid-19 related border restrictions and quarantine measures have effectively closed down the aviation industry, grounding planes and leaving infrastructure and aircraft manufacturing capacity idle.

Both IATA and the ITF have requested governments to provide continued financial support for the aviation industry, which plays an essential role connecting nations and carrying essential cargo.

ITF General Secretary Stephen Cotton says, “The global aviation industry is in a state of prolonged crisis. By the end of the year, almost 80% of wage replacement schemes will run out. Without urgent intervention from governments, we will witness the biggest jobs crisis the industry has ever seen.”

Cotton believes this catastrophic job crisis can

be avoided with clear, coordinated strategy built on relief, recovery and reform. They include governments developing a roadmap for long-term industry recovery that includes investment in workforce, green technologies, especially sustainable aviation fuels.

In Malaysia, the aviation sector contributed 3.5% to the country’s gross domestic product in 2019 with the majority of the airports managed by Malaysia Airports.

Datuk Seri Dr Zambry Abdul Kadir, Malaysia Airports Chairman says monthly payment moratorium and relief packages has been provided to ease the cashflow of its small to medium-sized retailers impacted by Covid-19. Assistance will also be provided by Malaysia Airports to airline companies via Network Reconnecting Programme (NRP), which aims to facilitate the resumption of flight routes to Malaysia once borders are opened by providing additional benefits to airline partners such as a year-long discount on aeronautical charges.

Some good news for its retailers, the airport operator is expected to roll out another relief package for a new retail rental model in January 2021. It will be a good start next year coupled with the incentives allocated for the tourism sector under Budget 2021, which projects the local economy to rebound and grow by 6.5% to 7.5%.

Malaysia Airports & Alibaba Launches Cainiao Aeropolis eWTP Hub

Malaysia Airports' Aeropolis and Alibaba Group welcome the commencement of operations of the new e-fulfilment hub, Cainiao Aeropolis eWTP Hub, Malaysia (formerly known as KLIA Aeropolis DFTZ Park) as part of their joint efforts in strengthening the economic recovery of Malaysia and supporting the increase in trade flow in the broader region.

The hub is a joint venture (JV) between Malaysia Airports and Alibaba Group, and a major project under the electronic World Trade Platform (eWTP) partnership entered between the Malaysian government and Alibaba Group in 2017. The commencement of operations is expected to help facilitate 24-hour delivery within Malaysia for e-commerce operators, with the ultimate goal of enabling 72-hour delivery to the rest of the world.

Operated by Alibaba's logistics unit, Cainiao Smart Logistics Network (Cainiao), Cainiao Aeropolis eWTP Hub, Malaysia aims to help elevate KL International Airport's air cargo network status as one of the leading distribution gateways within the ASEAN region. The e-fulfilment hub will reinforce the country's cargo and logistics ecosystem spanning air, sea and land connectivity. Southeast Asia's largest e-commerce firm Lazada is the first to leverage this hub while more companies are expected to move in soon to establish their regional distribution centers.

According to group chief executive officer (CEO) of Malaysia Airports, Dato' Mohd Shukrie Mohd Salleh, the airport operator is constantly looking at initiatives that can leverage KLIA's vast 10 x 10 km landbank, "The Cainiao Aeropolis eWTP Hub, Malaysia occupies 60 acres (2.6 million sq ft) with 1.1 million sq ft of warehouse space. We are confident that the new facility will be able to increase cargo volume by 700,000 metric



tonnes, thus doubling KUL's current volume to 1.4 million per year by 2029. We are targeting vertical markets from the automotive, sporting goods, fast moving fashion and lifestyle, retail electronics and medical equipment sectors, among others."

"With the growth in cargo volume, we are looking at improved airline connectivity via KUL with new routes and increase in flight frequency, belly space utilisation and freighter capacity. We hope to double the current number of freighter flights in the next 10 years. Existing airline partners at KUL will enjoy new business yield while we create a synergistic partnership with local industry players e.g. Pos Aviation, MABkargo and GTR to integrate existing facility within the Cainiao Aeropolis eHub, Malaysia while the final mile delivery for the fulfilment of the goods will be operated by GDex, Pos Laju, J&T Express and others," he said.

"Constant improvements through automation, robotics and artificial intelligence and big data will continue to be made to the supply chain and value-added services. There is potential to hit at least USD10.1 billion GDP growth and create more than 100,000 jobs by the 10th year of the hub's operations," he further added.

Eric Xu, General Manager of Cainiao Smart Hub said, "As one of Cainiao's key regional hubs, the Cainiao Aeropolis eWTP Hub, Malaysia will play a strategic infrastructural role in facilitating cross-border trade for SMEs and improving overall consumer experience for imports and exports. With the rise of a global digital economy, we believe that smart logistics will continue to play a pivotal role in helping SMEs to access a wider global market and improving their market competitiveness."

Malaysia Airports Installs Safety Equipment at 19 More Airports



Malaysia Airports continues its efforts in keeping airport guests safe from the spread of Covid-19 by installing the latest thermal scanners and additional sneeze guards at 19 more airports nationwide.

Visitors to the airports can be rest assured that they will have a safe airport experience as the airport operator continually implements various contactless and physical distancing solutions at critical checkpoints throughout the terminals.

According to the group chief executive officer (CEO) of Malaysia Airports, Dato' Mohd Shukrie Mohd Salleh, "Since the onset of the pandemic, we have not stopped exploring

means and ways to help mitigate the risks of Covid-19. We consider this as part and parcel of our obligation to help keep our country safe. We have been working very closely with the Ministry of Transport (MOT), Ministry of Health (MOH) and other related agencies, mainly through the joint committee at KL International Airport - the KUL COVID Committee. We pilot the latest technology solutions at KUL first before rolling them out at other airports because KUL serves the majority of our passengers."

A total of 23 new thermal scanners and 600 units of sneeze guards have been installed at all 19 airports: Penang International Airport, Langkawi International Airport, Kuching International Airport, Kota Kinabalu

International Airport, Subang Airport, Terengganu Airport, Tawau Airport, Labuan Airport, Alor Setar Airport, Sandakan Airport, Kota Bharu Airport, Miri Airport, Ipoh Airport, Kuantan Airport, Melaka Airport, Bintulu Airport, Limbang Airport, Sibul Airport and Lahad Datu Airport.

Dato' Mohd Shukrie added that Malaysia Airports remains vested in maintaining the highest levels of safety without compromising on service levels as befitting KUL's reputation as one of the world's best airports, "It is crucial that while we cater to the new normal in air travel, we continue to provide seamless airport experiences to our passengers."

STARLUX Launches Three Major Routes to Bangkok, Osaka and Tokyo

Despite the global aviation industry being battered down by the pandemic, STARLUX announced on 26 October that it will open three destinations in Bangkok, Osaka, and Tokyo in December to seize key routes to some of the largest Asian cities. Bangkok and Osaka routes are scheduled to open for reservations on the STARLUX official website and major travel agencies from 2 November, while Tokyo route is tentatively scheduled to open in mid-November.

Taipei Taoyuan - Bangkok (Suvarnabhumi) route is scheduled to operate on 1 December; the Taipei Taoyuan - Osaka (Kansai) route will be launched on 15 December; and the Taipei Taoyuan - Tokyo (Narita) route will be launched on 16 December. The airline welcomes the gradual recovery of the travel market, and also seeks to provide passengers returning home, traveling for business trips and studying abroad a peace of mind. The Taipei-Bangkok and Taipei-Osaka route will be operated twice weekly on Tuesdays

and Fridays whereas the Taipei-Tokyo route will be operated twice weekly as well on Wednesdays and Saturdays.

Glenn Chai, CEO of STARLUX said, "Before the outbreak of the pandemic is controlled, we need to change our original network plan. However, the ultimate goal of STARLUX is still the same. As a result, we will stay on track and stick to the plan as to the delivery of our 13 A321neos, the opening of our Flight Operation Centre in the beginning of next year and every other essential item on our schedule."

With regard to the newly added routes to Bangkok, Osaka and Tokyo, STARLUX will continue safety precautions, including measures to prevent Covid-19. These measures include full cabin and amenities cleaning and disinfection on every flight, cabin crew wearing disposable waterproof gowns, surgical masks, waterproof gloves and eye protection equipment.

STARLUX is a boutique airline in Taiwan, founded in May 2018, currently running routes including Taipei Taoyuan-Macau, Taipei Taoyuan-Da Nang and Taipei Taoyuan-Penang. STARLUX's A321neo has 188 seats, including eight in business class and 180 in economy class. Most services will remain available, allowing the airline to continue providing the most enjoyable flights an airline can during this difficult time.

The airline has been continuously adjusting its flight schedule in response to changing conditions to maintain operations over the course of the pandemic. From a temporary suspension of all routes, postponing the launch of the Cebu and Okinawa routes, and operating belly freight flights to the current partial resumption of flights to Macau and Penang, the airline remains devoted to fulfilling passenger and cargo flight operations as well as personnel training in the most efficient way.

For more information, please visit www.starlux-airlines.com



Malaysia Airlines Fly to New Destinations Amidst Pandemic



As Malaysia remains under the Recovery Movement Control Order (RMCO) and Conditional MCO in certain states, closing its borders to foreigners and citizens from leaving due to the Covid-19 pandemic – Malaysia Airlines continues its rescue and repatriation mission, transporting stranded citizens back to their home countries.

The situation has brought upon opportunities for the national carrier to fly to new cities outside its usual network, which include international destinations across Asia, the Middle East, Europe and even Africa such as Cam Rahn, South Sudan, Cairo, Turkmenbashi, Turkmenabat, Dili, Nadi and Port Moresby as of 22 October.

Group Chief Operations Officer of Malaysia Airlines Berhad, Ahmad Luqman Mohd Azmi said, “Out of the 218 flights, 168 were charter services through strategic collaboration with government ministries and individual organisations. So far, we

have flown over 20,000 passengers safely back to their loved ones. It has been a challenging yet exciting experience for us to operate in these new markets under the current circumstances, due to the ever-changing health and safety requirements as well as strict border controls by the respective countries. However, active engagements with the respective embassies, ministries, government agencies and regulatory bodies have made it possible.”

Over the same period, the airline’s sister company, MABkargo has worked closely with governments and Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) to transport over 2,000 tonnes of medical equipment and disaster-relief provisions to impacted regions around the globe. This includes ventilators, surgical gloves, sterile isolation gowns and protection suits with goggles for various organisations via over 50 Passenger-to-Cargo (P2C) and Cargo in Cabin (CIC) flights. The CIC allows the airline to carry cargo on seats, overhead stowage compartments,

closets and under the seats depending on the size of the boxes.

Added Luqman, “The demand for medical equipment worldwide has kept our aircraft flying and our cargo terminals busy. Our freighter schedules are adjusted to meet customers’ requirements. Despite lesser flights in the network, we continue to support the value-chain of day-to-day business and ensure minimal disruptions.”

On 29 October, Malaysia Airlines also had the honour of flying the first and second batch of the Malaysian Armed Forces’ Malaysian Battalion 850-8 (Malbatt 850-8) for a peacekeeping mission to Lebanon under the United Nations Interim Force. Three pilots and ten cabin crew operated the flights that departed from the Royal Malaysian Air Force (RMAF) base in Subang to Lebanon utilising Malaysia Airlines’ Airbus 330-200 aircraft.

For more information, please visit www.malaysiaairlines.com

oneworld, SkyTeam and Star Alliance Support ICAO Guidelines

The three global airline alliances, oneworld, SkyTeam and Star Alliance, are in full support of the International Civil Aviation Organization's (ICAO) second-phase Council on Aviation Recovery Task Force (CART) report released on 10 November. Together, they urge governments to implement the report guidelines for passenger testing protocols, as well as the adoption of digital health pass technology, so air travel may safely resume.

Government-imposed travel and entry restrictions continue to significantly impact global travel demand. Meanwhile, Covid-19 testing has emerged as an important part of an end-to-end solution to enable the safe restart of international travel by potentially reducing the reliance on the blunt instrument of blanket quarantines.

With extensive travel restrictions creating much uncertainty for customers, testing can play a role in enabling the safe restart of travel. Any solution used in declaring passenger health data should be consistent, scalable and cost effective – this will provide clarity and confidence to customers, airlines and other stakeholders as international travel resumes.

”



Rob Gurney
oneworld CEO

On behalf of their 58 member airlines, representing over 60% of world airline capacity and carrying over 1.87 billion passengers annually prior to the Covid-19 crisis, the three alliances are calling for a harmonised approach to testing that will form the foundation of a trust framework, as recommended by the ICAO guidelines.

“

Testing regimes and trials of digital health passes have identified means to restore confidence and reopening borders, complementing the layer upon layer of passenger safety measures already implemented by airlines and airports worldwide. Aviation supports millions of jobs around the world and drives international commerce, trade and tourism. Urgent action is needed to adopt testing and technology to mitigate Covid-19 risks to safely and quickly revive international air travel.

”



Kristin Colvile
SkyTeam CEO

The recent digital ‘health pass’ trials, such as Common Pass, are presenting a strong case for using digital technology to deliver harmonised standards in the validation and verification of accredited passenger health data. The alliances support technical solutions that provide a consistent, scalable and affordable way to declare passenger health data that is simple to implement as part of the customer journey, with processes-initiated pre-travel to reduce passenger inconvenience at airports.

“

We welcome the publication of the updated CART report which, among other things, calls for the serious consideration of screening and testing as a means for easing travel and border restrictions, and reviving the travel and tourism industry and the global economy. A robust protocol for testing will also provide further evidence to demonstrate that air travel is not a material cause for infections and will pave the way for a framework of trust to be established between countries.

”



Jeffrey Goh
Star Alliance CEO

Qatar Airways Takes Delivery of Three A350-1000



Qatar Airways announced that it has taken delivery of three more Airbus A350-1000 aircraft, reaffirming its position as the largest operator of Airbus A350 aircraft with 52 in its fleet. All three A350-1000 are fitted with the airline's multi award-winning Business Class seat, Qsuite and will operate on strategic long-haul routes to Africa, the Americas, Asia-Pacific and Europe.

Qatar Airways Group Chief Executive, His Excellency Akbar Al Baker, said, "Qatar Airways is one of the few global airlines to have never stopped flying throughout this crisis. As one of the only airlines to continue taking delivery of new aircraft at this time, our strategic investment in modern, fuel-efficient twin-engine aircraft has enabled us to continue flying, taking over 2.3 million people home on more than 37,000 flights since the start of the pandemic. Due to Covid-19's impact on travel demand, we will continue to fly greener and smarter by keeping our fleet of Airbus A380 grounded, as it is not commercially or environmentally justifiable to operate such a large aircraft in the current market.

"Environmentally conscious passengers can travel with the reassurance that Qatar Airways continuously monitors the market to assess both passenger and cargo demand to ensure it operates the most efficient aircraft on each route. Rather than being forced to fly oversized aircraft due to limited aircraft options, reducing the flexibility for passengers to travel when they want, Qatar Airways has a variety of sustainable aircraft it can choose from to offer more flights with the right capacity in each market. Passengers can also rely on our airline to operate an honest schedule of flights with our mixed fleet giving us the ability to maintain services, and upgrade or downgrade aircraft size depending on passenger demand."

Passenger travelling on-board Qatar Airways' state-of-the-art Airbus A350-1000s can enjoy the widest cabin body with larger windows creating an extra spacious feel; the widest seats of any aircraft in its category with generous room in all classes; advanced air system technology including HEPA filters which deliver optimal cabin air quality, renewing air every two-to-three minutes for more comfort and less fatigue; LED mood lighting which mimic a natural sunrise and sunset to help

reduce the effects of jet lag and the quietest cabin of any twin-aisle aircraft that includes a draft-free air circulation system resulting in a low ambient cabin noise level for a more peaceful journey.

The airline's internal benchmark compared the A380 to the A350 on routes from Doha to London, Guangzhou, Frankfurt, Paris, Melbourne, Sydney and New York. On a typical one-way flight, the airline found the A350 aircraft saved a minimum of 16 tonnes of carbon dioxide per block hour compared to the A380. The analysis found that the A380 emitted over 80% more CO₂ per block hour than the A350 on each of these routes.

In the cases of Melbourne and New York, the A380 emitted 95% more CO₂ per block hour with the A350 saving around 20 tonnes of CO₂ per block hour. Until passenger demand recovers to appropriate levels, Qatar Airways will continue to keep its A380 aircraft grounded, ensuring they will only operate commercially and environmentally responsible aircraft.

For more information, please visit www.qatarairways.com or call 03 – 2118 6100

ANA and Japan Airlines Ensure Safety of Passengers Amidst Covid-19



All Nippon Airways (ANA) and Japan Airlines (JAL), under the direct supervision of The Nippon Care-Fit Education Institute, announced on 26 October the new accessibility guideline for customers requesting special assistance at the airport and during flights. This ensures a safe and accessible journey when traveling during the Covid-19 crisis.

The airlines jointly introduced new measures in providing assistance involving physical contact; strengthening initiatives to ensure hand disinfection and sterilisation and approaching diagonally or from the side to prevent direct transmission. The new measures strengthen the ability to provide timely information for those with visual and/or hearing impairment.

The guideline follows the International Air Transport Association’s (IATA) “Guidance on Accessible Air Travel in Response to Covid-19”, which lays out the basic principles for airlines to follow on special assistance requests, and the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism (MLIT) of Japan’s guideline on measures of

communication-based assistance for customers that need special assistance.

Based on the jointly announced new accessibility guidelines, ANA and JAL will act responsibly and respond to the needs of the traveling public, while strengthening efforts to prevent the spread of Covid-19. Both carriers seek to provide a safe, secure and accessible travel experience.

The guidelines include ensuring that environments are thoroughly sanitised. The airlines are committed to create hygienic environments at airports, lounges, and inside the aircraft in order to provide greater safety and peace of mind when traveling under conditions of concern for infection with the new coronavirus. Secondly, the implementation of appropriate measures to prevent infections of both customers and airline employees in response to customer needs and conditions such as disabilities. And finally, providing appropriate information and providing customers with updated information on infection prevention measures.

Qantas Marks 100 Years of Serving Australia



Queensland and Northern Territory Aerial Services (QANTAS) marked 100 years since it was founded in the Australian outback on 16 November this year.

On 16 November 1920, two veterans of the Australian Flying Corps, Hudson Fysh and Paul McGinness, together with local grazier Fergus McMaster, founded what would later become the national carrier. This happened just 17 years after the first powered flight by the Wright Brothers, two years after the end of World War One and at the tail end of the last major global pandemic, the Spanish Flu.

The new airline focused on conquering the “tyranny of distance” that was a major barrier to the growth of modern Australia. Its early chances of success were uncertain, to the point early backers called their investment “a donation”.

Initially carrying mail between outback towns, the airline was flying passengers to Singapore by the 1930s. By the end of the 1940s its strategic importance saw it nationalised and in the 1960s it was an early adopter of the jet aircraft that mainstreamed global travel. Qantas invented business class in the 1970s, switched to an all-747 fleet in the 1980s, was privatised in the 1990s, founded Jetstar

in 2004, went through major restructuring in 2014 and, by 2020, had recently completed several important ‘firsts’ in non-stop travel to Europe and the US.

Qantas is the oldest continuously-operating airline in the world and the only one that (normally) flies to every single inhabited continent on earth.

Planned centenary celebrations have been significantly scaled back due to the impact of Covid-19 – but Qantas will still mark the occasion with a low-level flyover of Sydney Harbour on the evening of its anniversary.

The flight path is expected to pass near Rose Bay where our Empire Flying Boats took off for Singapore between 1938 and 1942.

Qantas Chairman, Richard Goyder, said: “The history of Qantas shows it’s no stranger to a challenge or a crisis. That’s often when its role as the national carrier has really come to

the fore. We want to use this moment to say thank you to all those who have supported Qantas over the years. And, in particular, to the many people who have dedicated some or all of their careers to this great company.”

Qantas Group CEO, Alan Joyce, said: “Around the world, Qantas is probably best known for its safety record, endurance flying and long list of aviation firsts. But for Australians, there’s nothing quite like seeing the flying kangaroo at the airport, waiting to take you home. We hope to be doing a lot more of that in the months and years ahead.”

For more information, please visit www.qantas.com



AVIATION INTERVIEW WITH KENNETH CHAN

Operations Director, Cainiao KLIA Aeropolis Sdn Bhd

A strong believer that the customer always comes first, the personable Kenneth Chan of the joint-venture project, Cainiao Aeropolis eWTP Hub, between Malaysia Airports and Alibaba Group makes it a point to attend the customer’s needs and rendering the best service or solution possible. Having learnt well from his mentors during his interesting career path that spans over 15 years, the 42-year-old counts it a blessing that he can always count on them whenever he needs their advice or to bounce off ideas.



How has your experience in the aviation industry handling guest services, cargo and line operations, business development and ground handling equip you for your current position?

I am very fortunate to be able to draw from my previous experiences to enable me to perform my present tasks and responsibilities effectively. The multiple-faceted aviation industry has been very educational and rewarding. Given the opportunities to work in various countries, I learnt from different people and cultures.

You have been with the company since July 2019. What were the challenges faced in getting this new hub, formerly known as KLIA Aeropolis DFTZ Park, started?

To craft a niche for Cainiao Aeropolis eWTP Hub, we had to be certain it would complement the existing logistics industry and bring about value-added benefits to the stakeholders besides promoting the KL International Airport’s (KLIA) growth as a regional air freight and logistics hub. Once we nailed down the key objectives of our hub’s presence, we strategised and developed plans to maximise our capabilities in the market.

Thereafter, we ensure that we spend time with customers to explain the hub’s capabilities and how it would best serve their business needs.

What is it like working with the Alibaba Group, one of the world's largest e-commerce players?

Thrilling, exciting and challenging. Being the 'first-mover' means we do not have any templates to follow. To realise the multiple programmes and projects planned for Cainiao Aeropolis eWTP Hub, I receive support within the Alibaba Group ecosystem as well as from my peers, senior leadership team members and not forgetting Malaysia Airports, which has been instrumental in making this project a reality from pre-planning to construction and past the operations stage.

With its recent commencement, what can we expect from this new e-fulfilment hub, the first outside of China, in the coming months?

Traditionally, air freight in KLIA serves the business-to-business (B2B) distribution channel. With Cainiao Aeropolis eWTP Hub's advent, we are excited for the growth and development of the business-to-consumer (B2C) and B2B2C distribution channels. The hub also seeks to complement existing supply chain by expanding multiple distribution channels for e-commerce and other businesses. Apart from importers building a gateway into Malaysia through this hub, Malaysian companies, especially the small and medium enterprises (SMEs) will have a channel to market their products directly to China and other international markets. This trade flow is not limited only to Malaysia, it can also be adopted by businesses in Southeast Asia as their regional transshipment hub and be connected with any of the local Alibaba logistics centres.

Operated by Alibaba's logistics unit, Cainiao Smart Logistics Network (Cainiao), the new hub will elevate the KLIA's air cargo network as a leading distribution gateway for ASEAN. How does it hope to achieve this?

Cainiao works alongside domestic and international stakeholders to build a sustainable logistics ecosystem. By being the region's epicentre for logistics network, Cainiao Aeropolis eWTP Hub aims to promote the "One Inventory, Multichannel Distribution" model not just for large corporations but also for SMEs in the region. As we transit into Logistics 4.0 and adopt cutting-edge technologies, we will strive to find new ways to improve efficiency, and to bring greater benefits and positive experiences for stakeholders within the industry.

What is your vision for Cainiao Aeropolis eWTP Hub beyond 2022?

We aspire to build a sustainable logistics ecosystem benefitting all stakeholders in the logistics value chain. Only then can we encourage and nurture the growth of international trade. Our hub will connect with other eHubs in Liège, Hong Kong, Dubai, Moscow and Hangzhou as well as other Alibaba or Cainiao fulfillment centres worldwide to provide a seamless and efficient logistics solution for all types of business. It will not only be a logistics centre but also a central location in KLIA to conduct business meetings, conferences and seminars. It will also serve as a knowledge and technology exchange platform and training centre.

From the onset, our goal in Malaysia is to double the cargo throughput in KLIA from its existing volume by 2029. We will also strive to bring about positive impact

to society through local job creation via the logistics and aviation value chains. We foresee new businesses will be established and there will be significant growth in human capital development to support the overall expansion of Malaysia's logistics and aviation industries.

You had also started out as an aerospace and defence consultant in the early part of your career. How do you see the future of aerospace in Malaysia?

Malaysia's upward trajectory in the aerospace industry will continue well into the next decade since plans to develop local businesses and talents have been put into place in the last decade. Several Malaysian aviation entrepreneurs have emerged as one of the world's best in different categories of the aerospace industry. Prior to the novel coronavirus pandemic, Malaysia's aerospace industry was expected to surpass revenue of more than RM55 billion annually and generate over 30,000 high income jobs. While the pandemic outbreak has caused much distress to many, I believe we can overcome this challenging period and emerge more resilient.

What are your interests in life and how do you maintain a work-life balance?

I treasure the times spent with my family, be it coaching my son in tennis or cooking for them. I am truly blessed to have a loving family and being a part of an extraordinary company that understands the sacrifices made by its employees to drive growth and success so much so that it always finds ways to include our family members in its programmes and activities as a token of appreciation.