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Inaugural IATA-SAA conference on Passenger facilitation

Conference brings together international experts and delegates who will discuss the latest trends in achieving seamless air travel experience for travellers

More than 25 experts from various international organisations and over 100 airline and airport participants from more than 40 countries are gathered in Singapore with one purpose in mind - to make the air travel experience for passengers a seamless process. This is the objective of the inaugural Conference on Passenger Facilitation jointly organised by the International Air Transport Association (IATA) and the Singapore Aviation Academy (SAA), the training arm of the Civil Aviation Authority of Singapore (CAAS). The Conference is being held at SAA from 3 to 5 October 2005.

In today's post September 11 environment, the needs of States to protect national security and ensure border integrity often interferes with the ease of travel that passengers have come to expect with modern air travel. Nonetheless, there are new initiatives already in place or soon to be implemented that will allow governments, airports and airlines to reduce the "hassle factor" that many passengers currently encounter each time they travel. This Conference provides a timely international platform to discuss both the concerns and possible solutions to a wide range of issues that impede the smooth flow of today's travellers.

Issues such as global initiatives on passenger facilitation, use of technology such as biometrics to enhance security, travel documents for the future as well as passenger check-in practices and systems will be deliberated at the Conference. Experts from organisations like IATA and the International Civil Aviation Organization and countries such as Singapore, the United Kingdom, Netherlands, the United States, the United Arab Emirates, Australia and Germany will share their perspectives and experiences in this area.

Singapore's Minister for Transport, Mr Yeo Cheow Tong, was at SAA this morning to open the joint Conference. Minister Yeo said, "To promote efficient and hassle-free travel, airlines, airports, aviation authorities, border control and security agencies must therefore all play their part to re-examine the issues and processes, and initiate improvements." He added "As a major airport, Changi Airport has always endeavoured to provide the best experience for air travelers. We call this the "Changi Experience". Changi Airport is constantly mindful of the need to strike a balance between enhancing passenger security and maintaining our high standards of passenger facilitation."

"The air transport industry has learned a lot about security as a result of September 11. Since then, the extra security measures have cost airlines US\$5.6 billion a year. We

need to harmonise and co-ordinate security activities. Our achievements in safety were made possible through international cooperation, harmonization and global standards. The same approach is needed for security. This conference is an excellent example of the cooperation needed to achieve effective yet convenient security", said Mr Andrew Drysdale, Regional Vice President (Asia Pacific), IATA.

Note to Editors:

About SAA - The Singapore Aviation Academy (SAA) was established in 1958 and is the internationally-recognised training arm of CAAS. It is made up of three specialised schools - the School of Aviation Management , the School of Air Traffic Services , and the School of Airport Emergency Services . Together, the three schools offer more than 200 training programmes annually. To date, SAA has trained more than 31,700 personnel from 185 countries. In 2000, SAA received the 34 th International Civil Aviation Organization Edward Warner Award for its eminent contributions as a centre of excellence in international civil aviation training.

About IATA - The International Air Transport Association's (IATA) mission is to represent, lead and serve the airline industry. IATA brings together 265 member airlines, including the world's largest. Flights by these airlines account for 94% of all international scheduled air traffic.