

MEDIA RELEASE

Supporting Asia-Pacific jobs, economic growth and sustainable development through aviation

Air transport supports 28.8 million jobs, \$626 billion of Asia-Pacific GDP

New York, 19 July 2016 – Aviation is vital to the modern, globalised world, supporting millions of jobs and driving economic growth. But the benefits of connectivity must be protected with appropriate support from governments if the air transport sector is to help fulfil its potential as a connector of people, trade and tourism and is a driver of sustainable development. These are the conclusions drawn in a new report, *Aviation: Benefits Beyond Borders*, issued by the Air Transport Action Group (ATAG).

Worldwide, aviation supports 62.7 million jobs and generates \$2.7 trillion in gross domestic product (GDP). Not only does air transport provide significant economic benefits, but it also plays a major role in the social development of people and communities all over the globe, allowing people to travel for educational opportunities and cultural exchange, more broadly. Across Asia-Pacific, specifically, air transport supports 28.8 million jobs and contributes \$626 billion to the region's GDP.

In the next 20 years, forecasts suggest that aviation-supported jobs worldwide will increase to over 99 million and GDP to \$5.9 trillion. Asia-Pacific boasts the highest share of global traffic at 33% and aviation in the region is forecast to grow strongly at 5.1% per annum for the next 20 years. With the liberalisation of the air transport market in the ASEAN region being agreed in 2015, the prospects for further growth is greatly increased, although government support is needed to help modernise airspace management and reduce congestion that could have a negative impact on growth.

ATAG executive director, Michael Gill, says that the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development at the United Nations highlights a number of goals that the international community should strive to achieve by 2030: "We found that air transport in some way supports 14 of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals, from decent work and economic growth to quality education and reduced inequalities. By continuing to grow in a sustainable manner, aviation can strive to be a force for good for many years to come."

"A significant factor in our work on sustainable development is the industry's world-leading climate action plan. We need support from governments around the world to agree on a key part of that plan at the upcoming International Civil Aviation Organization Assembly, where we hope an agreement can be reached on a global offsetting scheme for air transport. It is a vital part of our industry's future role in helping to support development worldwide."

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Andrew Herdman, Director General of the Association of Asia Pacific Airlines (AAPA), said: “Aviation is a key driver of economic and social development, nowhere more so than the Asia Pacific region, and we are strongly committed to delivering sustainable future growth. Governments have an important role to play in providing a stable policy framework and coordinating the necessary investments in associated aviation infrastructure to match the projected growth in travel and tourism demand, spurring further income growth and job creation, as well as strengthening regional integration and global connectivity.”

Patti Chau, Regional Director for Airports Council International Asia-Pacific: “Like other members of the aviation industry, airports share a common vision for the sustainable development of the sector. Airports are key infrastructure, enabling transportation of passengers and cargo and facilitating economic development. Growth in connectivity is essential to a country’s and region’s prosperity and at ACI, we call on governments in Asia-Pacific and the Middle East to continue to develop aviation policy that will support the growth of air transport, whilst respecting the right balance between that growth and sustainability.”

Hai Eng Chiang, Director Asia Pacific Affairs for the Civil Air Navigation Services Organisation (CANSO): “Rapid air traffic growth in the world’s largest aviation market requires safe, efficient and cost-effective air traffic management to cope with rising demand. As providers of air traffic management services, CANSO Members work closely with neighbours and industry partners in critical areas such as air traffic flow management and ADS-B surveillance. Similarly, States in the Asia Pacific region have a key role to play by cooperating and breaking down national barriers towards the common vision of a seamless sky.”

The report, *Aviation: Benefits Beyond Borders*, covers the global aviation sector, with regional and some national analysis. It is available for download at www.aviationbenefits.org.

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Notes:

- The full report and case studies are available from www.aviationbenefits.org
- Media may also be interested in the newswire, capturing sustainable aviation news from across the industry at www.aviationbenefits.org/newswire
- The **Air Transport Action Group** is a coalition of organisations and companies throughout the air transport industry that drive the sustainable development of the air transport sector. Funding members include ACI, Airbus, ATR, Boeing, Bombardier, CANSO, CFM, Embraer, Honeywell Aerospace, GE, IATA, Pratt & Whitney, Rolls-Royce and Safran. www.atag.org