

MALAYSIAN AVIATION COMMISSION

Consumer Report January to June 2022



**Malaysian
Aviation Commission**
Suruhanjaya Penerbangan Malaysia

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Consumer complaints summary



This Consumer Report summarises aviation consumers' complaints registered with MAVCOM through its website, e-mail, telephone, walk-in, mobile application and received in writing from 1 January to 30 June 2022 ("1H22").

A total of 1,251 complaints were registered with the Malaysian Aviation Commission ("MAVCOM") in 1H22, in which, 99.1% (1,240) of the total complaints were received on airlines and 0.9% (11) related to airports. This is an increase of almost 8 times more than the corresponding period last year when 157 complaints were registered with MAVCOM.

87.9% (1,100) of the total complaints received in 1H22 have been resolved and closed by MAVCOM. Complaints related to flight rescheduling, flight cancellations and online booking made up 46.1% (577) of the total complaints registered with MAVCOM for the same period. Through MAVCOM's review of the complaints received in 1H22, about a quarter of the complaints have resulted in airlines reversing their initial decisions by providing resolutions that are more equitable or satisfactory to the consumers.

In addition, MAVCOM also received 1,317 non-actionable complaints due to incomplete documentation by consumers or the complaints have been resolved, as the airlines or airports had fulfilled their obligations under the Malaysian Aviation Consumer Protection Code 2016 and Malaysian Aviation Consumer Protection (Amendment) Code 2019.

AirAsia was the highest contributor with 42.1% (527) of total **complaints registered** with MAVCOM in 1H22, followed by Malaysia Airlines, 40.7% (509), and Batik Air, 7.9% (99). For **every million passengers carried**, Malaysia Airlines received the highest number of registered complaints with 199 complaints, followed by Batik Air with 167 complaints and AirAsia with 95 complaints per million passengers.

Non-actionable complaints registered with MAVCOM



MAVCOM also received 1,317 complaints which were non-actionable due to the following reasons:

- 1,160 complaints were related to incomplete document submission by consumers resulting in MAVCOM's inability to accurately and fairly evaluate the complaints, despite MAVCOM's follow-up;
- 59 complaints were non-actionable as a result of MAVCOM's immediate assessment established that the airline or airport concerned had fulfilled the obligations under the Malaysian Aviation Consumer Protection Code 2016 and Malaysian Aviation Consumer Protection (Amendment) Code 2019. ("MACPC");
- 35 consumers request to withdraw the complaints as a fair resolution was provided by the airline;
- 31 complaints were beyond the scope of MACPC;
- 29 complaints were related to bookings made through travel agents and the consumers have approached MAVCOM for assistance; and
- 3 complaints were more than 1 year from the date of incident.

COVID-19 update - Flight disruptions



Global air travel resumed a strong recovery trend from April 2022 onwards, primarily driven by international demand based on International Air Transport Association's ("IATA") announcement in June 2022. Early signs of recovery for the aviation industry were attributable to the ease of domestic inter-state travel and Malaysia's International borders being fully reopened on 1 April 2022.

Malaysia's passenger traffic increased from an average of **2.90 million** between **January to April 2022** to an average of **4.79 million** between **May to June 2022**. Notwithstanding the recovery and continued market growth, airlines were impacted by the hike in fuel prices and operational and resource constraints due to the prolonged pandemic circumstances.

During the COVID-19 period of flight disruptions, airlines offered refunds through various forms such as travel vouchers and credit accounts. The reopening of international borders offered larger flight network and destinations for consumers to utilise their travel vouchers for future travels.

AirAsia X's debt restructuring was completed in March 2022 and the airline has been processing refunds in the form of travel vouchers progressively in upholding their commitment to consumers. As of 15 July 2022, AirAsia X has refunded 80% of the RM599.9 million outstanding money in the form of travel vouchers owed to air travel consumers. The Commission will be monitoring the progress on the utilisation of travel vouchers by AirAsia X consumers.

MAVCOM received 504 COVID-19 related request cases in 1H22. During the course of the aviation recovery period, airlines have been processing consumers' request to utilise the travel vouchers and credit accounts. The validity of the travel vouchers issued by the airlines are between 2 to 5 years.

Consumer complaints by airline

Complaints on airlines registered with MAVCOM have multiplied more than eightfold to 1,240 complaints in 1H22 from 154 complaints in the corresponding period last year. All airlines had an increase in the number of complaints in 1H22. Similarly, the number of passengers carried by airlines increased significantly compared to the same period last year.

For every million passengers carried, Malaysia Airlines received the highest number of registered complaints with 199 complaints, followed by Batik Air with 167 complaints and AirAsia with 95 complaints per million passengers.

Table 1: Consumer complaints by airline, 1H22

	AirAsia		AirAsia X		Batik Air		Firefly		Foreign Airlines		Malaysia Airlines		MASwings		SKS Airways		Total	
	Jan-June		Jan-June		Jan-June		Jan-June		Jan-June		Jan-June		Jan-June		Jan-June		Jan-June	
	2022	2021	2022	2021	2022	2021	2022	2021	2022	2021	2022	2021	2022	2021	2022	2021	2022	2021
Total complaints received by MAVCOM	1,219	97	86	20	171	29	35	7	72	10	975	67	16	NA	2	NA	2,576	230
Total complaints registered with MAVCOM (Complete document submission)	527	65	48	16	99	19	18	4	32	5	509	45	6	NA	1	NA	1,240	154
MAVCOM's immediate assessment found that the airline had fulfilled their obligations	30	1	0	1	4	1	5	NA	NA	NA	20	2	0	NA	0	NA	59	5
Total passengers carried (in millions)	5.5	0.5	0.008	0.0003	0.6	0.2	0.5	0.1	NA	NA	2.6	0.2	0.4	0.1	NA	NA	9.6	1.2
Complaints received by MAVCOM per million passengers carried	95	119			167	113	38	36	NA	NA	199	204	15	0	NA	NA	130	132

Note: AirAsia X was excluded from the per million passengers carried calculation in view of the ongoing debt restructuring process

Source: MAVCOM, ASL Holders

Consumer complaints by category



The top 3 complaint categories registered with MAVCOM in 1H22 were flight rescheduling, flight cancellation, and online booking. (refer to Table 2). For the same period in 2021, refunds were the top complaint followed by complaints on frequent flyer programs and flight cancellation.

Complaints related to flight rescheduling have increased tremendously from just 8 complaints in 1H21 to 233 complaints in 1H22. AirAsia contributed 65% of complaints on flight rescheduling, followed by Malaysia Airlines with 30% and Batik Air with 4%.

Complaints related to flight cancellation have increased considerably to 211 complaints from just 14 complaints for the same period in 2021. Malaysia Airlines contributed 54% of the complaints on flight cancellation, followed by AirAsia with 36% and Batik Air with 7%.

Complaints related to online booking have multiplied more than 13 times from 10 complaints in 1H21 to 133 complaints in 1H22. AirAsia contributed 47% of the complaints on online booking, followed by Malaysia Airlines with 32% and Batik Air with 12%.

Table 2: Complaints by category, 1H22

Complaints Category	Number of complaints	% of Total
Communication of change in flight status	42	3.4
Customer service	47	3.8
Denied boarding	11	0.9
Facilities/inflight services	27	2.1
Flight cancellation	211	16.9
Flight delays	101	8.1
Flight rescheduling	233	18.6
Frequent flyer program	95	7.6
Lounge	1	0.1
Mishandled baggage	91	7.3
Offloaded	83	6.6
Online booking	133	10.6
Others	55	4.4
Price of tickets	15	1.2
Refunds	99	7.9
Safety and security	3	0.2
Special assistance/PWD	4	0.3
Total	1251	100.0

Source: MAVCOM

Note: 'Others' comprise of complaints regarding travel credit rebooking, misleading advertainments, different fare price published vs. call centre, reroute of flight to a different airport. Refer to the **Appendix** for more details.

Consumer complaints by airline and category

Table 3: Complaint categories by airline, 1H22

Airlines/Categories	AirAsia		AirAsia X		Batik Air		Firefly		Foreign Airlines		Malaysia Airlines		MASwings		SKS Airways		Total	
	Jan-June		Jan-June		Jan-June		Jan-June		Jan-June		Jan-June		Jan-June		Jan-June		Jan-June	
	2022	2021	2022	2021	2022	2021	2022	2021	2022	2021	2022	2021	2022	2021	2022	2021	2022	2021
Communication of change in flight status	21	2	-	-	2	-	-	1	2	-	16	1	-	-	1	-	41	4
Customer service	11	2	-	-	4	6	-	-	-	-	30	2	-	-	-	-	45	4
Denied boarding	10	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	11	-
Facilities/inflight services	7	-	-	-	1	1	1	-	-	-	9	1	-	-	-	-	18	1
Flight cancellation	77	6	2	1	16	17	-	-	3	-	113	5	-	-	-	-	213	14
Flight delays	74	1	-	-	4	2	3	2	3	-	14	1	3	-	-	-	101	4
Flight rescheduling	151	1	-	-	10	2	2	-	1	-	69	4	-	-	-	-	234	8
Frequent flyer program	39	12	41	12	1	1	-	-	-	-	14	3	-	-	-	-	95	27
Lounge	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	-
Mishandled baggage	10	3	-	-	-	4	2	-	8	1	70	-	1	-	-	-	91	6
Offloaded	21	3	-	-	5	1	2	-	10	2	43	4	2	-	-	-	87	11
Online booking	63	6	1	-	18	3	7	-	2	-	42	3	-	-	-	-	134	10
Others	1	-	3	1	21	1	-	-	2	-	28	1	-	-	-	-	56	3
Price of tickets	7	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	8	2	-	-	-	-	15	6
Refunds	33	25	1	2	16	16	1	1	1	1	47	18	-	-	-	-	100	54
Safety and security	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	3	1
Special assistance/PWD	2	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	4	1
Total	527	65	48	16	99	56	18	4	32	5	509	45	6	0	1	0	1,240	154

Source: MAVCOM

Note: 'Others' comprise of complaints regarding travel credit rebooking, misleading advertainments, different fare price published vs. call centre, reroute of flight to a different airport. Refer to the **Appendix** for more details.

Consumer complaints by airport and category

MAVCOM registered **11 complaints on airports** in 1H22 as compared to 3 complaints in the same period last year.

Table 4: Complaint categories by airport, 1H22

Airports/Categories	Kota Bahru Airport		Kota Kinabalu International Airport		Kuala Lumpur International Airport (KLIA)		Kuala Lumpur International Airport 2 (klia2)		Kuching International Airport		Penang International Airport		Tawau Airport		Skypark Terminal		Total	
	Jan-June		Jan-June		Jan-June		Jan-June		Jan-June		Jan-June		Jan-June		Jan-June		Jan-June	
	2022	2021	2022	2021	2022	2021	2022	2021	2022	2021	2022	2021	2022	2021	2022	2021	2022	2021
Customer Services	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	2	1
Facilities	1	-	1	-	3	-	-	-	1	-	2	-	1	-	-	1	9	1
Others	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Total	1	-	1	-	4	1	1	-	1	-	2	-	1	-	-	2	11	3

Source: MAVCOM, Malaysia Airports Holdings Berhad ("MAHB")

Note: 'Others' comprise of complaints regarding the contest organised by MAHB

Total passenger movements for **all airports** in Malaysia between the period of **January to June 2022** was **21.2 million** in contrast to **3.1 million** for the same period in **2021**.

Other Initiatives

Malaysia's first International Aviation Webinar on Consumer Protection



On 28 June 2022, MAVCOM organised its **first-ever international hybrid webinar** on aviation consumer protection entitled, **'Charting the New Frontier: Aviation Consumer Protection Needs Today and Beyond'**.

Launched by the Minister of Transport, YB Datuk Seri Ir. Dr. Wee Ka Siong, the hybrid webinar saw participation by government representatives, key aviation and consumer industry leaders, international aviation associations, local consumer associations, members of the media, and aviation stakeholders from Malaysia, Singapore, Brunei, Thailand, Laos, Indonesia, Canada, United States of America, Brazil, Belgium, and France.

Among the key takeaways from the webinar include the need to enhance consumer protection for air travellers, especially for vulnerable communities, and to improve the accessibility of information for a wider range of people with hidden disabilities. The webinar also delved into the call for airport operators to prioritise efforts in enhancing the contactless travel experience for the comfort and protection of consumers, as well as how Artificial Intelligence (AI) could play a prominent role in increasing efficiency as well as improving aviation consumer protection.

Tackling current issues head-on, the webinar had a robust discussion on regulations to protect consumers, whereby strategic solutions for flight disruptions were proposed for industry leaders to consider.

The webinar furthermore touched on the topic of traveller expectations post-pandemic, and manpower constraints that had been the top operational challenge for airports, which affected consumer experience, not only in Malaysia but also faced globally.

The future of aviation consumer protection in Malaysia

MAVCOM is currently enhancing its Malaysian Aviation Consumer Protection Code (MACPC) based on consumers' feedback, key learnings during the pandemic as well as outcome from the international webinar hosted by MAVCOM.



FlySmart continues to protect travellers by educating and empowering consumers about their air travel rights

The Commission continues to educate and empower consumers by implementing various initiatives through its consumer sub-brand, FlySmart.

FlySmart Website, social pages and Mobile Application

While most countries have reopened their borders, MAVCOM continues with its ongoing efforts to provide information that would be beneficial to air travellers. The information includes travel requirements and documentation, health advisory, visas, and other facts through its **travel advisory** feature on the FlySmart website and mobile application.

The Commission has also urged travellers to check out information on their travel rights through the FlySmart website, social pages or mobile application to keep updated on their travel rights.

The FlySmart website offers quick and easy access to essential information on consumer rights and features handy tips, frequently asked questions, as well as informative videos for travellers. Consumers can learn about their rights in a more interactive manner and engage with the FlySmart team for any of their travel-related queries through the FlySmart social channels. The travel rights information is also available on the FlySmart mobile app which allows consumers to easily access information on the go.

It is important for consumers to be aware of their travel rights. On the app, there are useful information for consumers to exercise their travel rights when faced with issues such as flight delays, flight cancellation, mishandled baggage, denied boarding, and refunds.



Implementation of Airports Quality of Service (QoS) Framework at KLIA, klia2 and other airports in Malaysia



From the **overall 28 service quality elements** in the Airports QoS Framework, **MAVCOM had implemented** a total of **20 service quality elements** as of 30 June 2022 at **both terminals** (KLIA and klia2). The details of the implementation phase are as follows:

	Implemented			To be implemented in 2022
	Passenger Comfort and Facilities	Operator and Staff Facilities	Passenger and Baggage Flows	Queueing Times
Service Quality Elements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Kerbside congestion ▪ Wayfinding ▪ Flight information displays ▪ Availability of Wi-Fi ▪ Cleanliness of the terminal ▪ Ambiance of the terminal ▪ Overall satisfaction with the washrooms ▪ Overall satisfaction with the airport ▪ Cleanliness of passenger washrooms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Availability of aerobridge ▪ Availability of aerobridge operator ▪ Availability of Visual Docking Guidance System (VDGS) ▪ Availability of ramp Wi-Fi service ▪ Cleanliness of staff washrooms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Availability of Aerotrain Track Transit System (TTS) – for KLIA only ▪ Availability of lifts, escalators, and walkalators ▪ Availability of Baggage Handling System (BHS) equipment ▪ Outbound baggage ▪ Baggage retrieval – time to first bag ▪ Baggage retrieval – time to last bag 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Passenger security search ▪ Check-in ▪ Transfer queuing ▪ Outbound immigration ▪ Outbound customs ▪ Inbound immigration ▪ Inbound customs ▪ Kerbside queuing

The remaining 8 service quality elements are related to the **queueing times**. The **implementation phase** of the 8 service quality elements at both terminals is targeted to be completed **in the fourth quarter of 2022**.

Additionally, MAVCOM has completed the development phase of the **Airports QoS Framework** at **Subang, Langkawi, and Kota Kinabalu airports**. The implementation at all 3 airports is targeted to be completed in phases from the fourth quarter of 2022 onwards.

The Airports QoS Framework will also be **developed and implemented progressively** at the **remaining 19 airports** between **2023 and 2027**. ¹³

APPENDIX

Glossary

Categories	Details
Actionable complaint	Complaints with complete documentation for MAVCOM's review
Communication of change	Complaints in relation to no notification by airlines of changes in flight status
Complaints handling	Complaints on the manner in which consumers' feedback/complaints were handled
Customer service	Complaints on attitude and/or service levels of airlines/airports staffs
Denied boarding	Person(s) not allowed to board flights due to overbooking
Facilities and inflight services	Complaints on facilities and services onboard the aircraft such as toilet cleanliness, food quality, and inflight entertainment system
Flight cancellations	Complaints on flights that were cancelled by airlines
Flight delays	Complaints in relation to flights that departed 2 hours later than the scheduled time of departure reflected in the ticket
Flight rescheduling	Complaints on flights that were rescheduled by airlines with advanced notification to consumers
Frequent flyer programme	Complaints related to airline loyalty programmes such as discrepancy on the credit value or unable to access to consumer's profiles
Mishandled baggage	Complaints on baggage that were delayed, damaged, pilfered, lost or stolen
Offloaded	Complaints regarding person(s) not allowed to board flights due to insufficient travel documents or late arrival to boarding gate or check-in counter
Online booking issues	Complaints related to problems faced at the point of online booking such as payment confirmation or e-ticket not received by the passengers
Others	Complaints involving group check-in process, inaccurate airport details provided in the itinerary and no receipt for the paid extra baggage fee at the check-in counter.
Price of ticket	Complaints regarding price of tickets which are charged by airlines
PWD/Special Assistance	Complaints regarding special assistance requests for Persons with disability
Refunds	Reimbursement of money requested by consumers
Safety & Security	Complaints regarding the inflight safety/security

THANK YOU



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