

# viaDubai

Monthly Newsletter issued by Dubai Civil Aviation Authority

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Issue 83 October 2021

## Dubai Expo: Guiding The World Towards a Better Future

### Reinvent, Rebuild, Recover

**Luís Felipe de Oliveira**

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### Game-changer for hospitality industry

Expo 2020 is seen as a game-changer for the UAE's economy in general and the hospitality and tourism industries in particular as they will receive a huge push through the event. Expo 2020 has come as a catalyst that accelerates the recovery in the UAE's hospitality industry which will restore the industry back to the 2019 levels.

### Dubai in the wings to host the biggest airshow

Dubai will play host to the world's third-largest airshow in November. Featuring the latest of civil and military aircraft, the biennial Dubai Airshow 2021 will showcase the aviation industry's recovery following the 21st century's second pandemic.

### Emirates to hire 3,000 cabin crew

Dubai's award-winning Emirates Airline is set to hire a 3000 cabin crew as normal operations gradually resume. The world's biggest long-haul airline will also recruit 500 people for airport services in the next six months as the carrier seeks to ramp up operations to cater to recovering travel demand.

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In 2007, the functions of the Department of Civil Aviation were restructured. Accordingly, the Dubai Civil Aviation Authority (DCAA) was established as a regulatory body, by a decree of H.H. Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Al-Maktoum, Ruler of Dubai, on proclamation of law No. 21 of 2007, as amended by law No. 19 of 2010, to undertake development of Air Transport Industry in the Emirate of Dubai and to oversee all aviation-related activities.

## ViaDubai

Via Dubai is the official bilingual monthly newsletter of DCAA, designed to highlight the initiatives and developments in the aviation industry and act as a knowledge-sharing platform for all the stakeholders and aviation professionals.

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### Our Vision

The World Airport, Dubai

### Our Mission

To achieve leadership and ensure sustainability in the field of safety, security and environmental protection in the civil aviation sector and to support an attractive investment environment for the aviation industry.

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## Leading the recovery journey



His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of UAE and Ruler of Dubai, once said: "The future is not built on possibilities and numbers but rather on clarity of vision, planning, action and implementation."

This has been achieved with Expo 2020 Dubai, the world's third-largest event after the Olympics and FIFA World Cup, taking place on Emirati soil. This event is anticipated to have the largest global participation despite the negative impacts of the coronavirus pandemic on the global economy.

The much-awaited event's historic opening comes after years of preparation and hard work by all the authorities in the UAE to bring honour and reputation to the country and enhance its image globally. For the next six months and beyond, the world will write stories of its success, excellence and leadership that made it possible.

Dubai Airports started receiving large number of visitors and tourists who come to the UAE specifically to visit the exhibition to discover the global trends and future in the

fields of creativity, culture, arts, science and technology. Dubai welcomed them with a distinctive Emirati flavour worthy of the event and its guests.

On this occasion, I express my deep appreciation to all the employees at Dubai Airports, our strategic partners and service providers, especially the frontline staff, who have worked throughout these years and set plans to provide the most hospitable and safest services for the guests of this great event.

Our government took strategic decisions and offered the right incentives to enable the country to overcome the effects of the pandemic and put us in the right position to lead the world's economic recovery, and build bridges across the world to accelerate the recovery process, especially in aviation and tourism sectors. The economic indicators issued by the authorities suggest we are on the right path, and that we are on the way to full recovery. The start of Expo 2020 Dubai is the start of realizing this task. I welcome the guests and visitors to Expo 2020 in their second home.

**Ahmed bin Saeed Al Maktoum**

# Dubai - Dazzling the World



Dynamism, long-term vision, economic diversification, teamwork and unwavering determination to excel have all contributed to the UAE in staying ahead and enabled it to deliver on its promises and achieve its ambitious goals.

Finally, EXPO 2020 Dubai has taken off and activities were launched with the widest global participation in modern history despite the long period of isolation that humanity lived through due to the coronavirus pandemic. The EXPO 2020 opening constitutes a glimmer of hope and encourages a faster return to normal life than it is now.

The Dubai Civil Aviation Authority (DCAA), together with several federal and local institutions that were involved in tackling the Covid-19 outbreak and the national and foreign airlines, worked together in combatting the pandemic, that paved the way to opening the airports for passenger and cargo movement and climbing steadily towards the pre-pandemic levels.

They worked tirelessly, around the clock, to ensure the implementation of the vision of our leaders to overcome the challenges in post-pandemic recovery and to ensure a safe and secure return of visitors, including those to EXPO 2020. Their collective action had immensely contributed towards accelerating the return of the aviation sector on its previous path of progress to serve the entire humanity.

Dubai International Airport, together with the related institutions, is committed to facilitating the arrival of millions of visitors to participate in this global event which has put under one roof a variety of activities and programmes that allow visitors to learn about their future and the future of the coming generation in the fields of medicine, science, information and communication technology, arts and other fields.

It is pertinent to note that Dubai through its airports have handled about 13 million passengers, in addition to the movement of a considerable volume of cargo, during the first seven months of 2021, a very promising number. We expect significant growth in the number of passengers through DXB during EXPO 2020 Dubai's six-month run.

This will contribute towards pushing forward the growth levels of passenger traffic to and fro from the world as a whole. It is only the beginning- the rest of the journey is going to be more beautiful, InshaAllah.

We are on the path to dazzling the world, thanks to the vision, guidance, faith and support of our rational government, and the concerted efforts of everyone in the Emirates to make EXPO 2020 a living example of sharing minds and working together to build a better future the humanity has dreamed.

**Mohammed Abdulla Ahli**



## DCAA and dans in deal for data exchange

The Dubai Civil Aviation Authority (DCAA) and Dubai Air Navigation Services (dans) have signed a cooperation agreement for data exchange and enhancing operational procedures.

The agreement had been signed by Mohammed Abdullah Lengawi, Executive Director for Aviation Security and Accident Investigation Sector at DCAA and Ibrahim Hussain Ahli, Deputy CEO of dans, the ANSP of Dubai.

The main objective behind signing the agreement is to automate the data exchange process between the systems of both entities to enhance aviation safety while ensuring optimal use of the available resources by integrating the DCAA (IIAN) Accident Reporting System and the (ATMARS) of dans.

Through this partnership, the two organizations aim to digitize the data exchange process and incidents reporting processes which will be managed by both sides. This important achievement will be in line with the Dubai government's paperless strategy. Integrating the



two systems will also accelerate and enhance the decision-making process and create new services and procedures that will contribute towards elevating the aviation safety levels.

DCAA and dans are constantly strengthening their relations with various strategic partners by signing joint agreements that aim to develop and improve procedures and services according to global standards.

**Mohammed Abdulla Lengawi**  
**Executive Director of the Aviation Security and Accident Investigation Sector - DCAA**

# DCAA all set to participate in Airshow

The Dubai Civil Aviation Authority (DCAA) will be actively participating in the forthcoming Dubai Airshow to be held from November 14 to 18 at the Exhibition Centre at Dubai World Central.

"Dubai is preparing strongly for the launch of its seventeenth airshow with the participation of 1,200 exhibitors from 148 countries," said Mohammed Abdulla Lengawi, Executive Director of the Aviation Security and Accident Investigation Sector at the DCAA, who affirmed the authority's readiness to actively participate in this exhibition, which is one of the largest aviation exhibitions in the world.

Lengawi said: "There is a working team of senior officials and employees of the authority, working closely with the work teams in other concerned authorities, as one homogeneous team to ensure the presentation of a wonderful and successful exhibition by all standards, to emphasize the critical role that Dubai plays in supporting the aviation sector worldwide."

Dubai Airshow, which is held under the patronage of His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai, is the largest trade event in the field of aviation to be held since the pandemic forced the organizers of the Farnborough and Le Bourget exhibitions to cancel their exhibitions in 2020 and 2021, respectively.

The exhibition is supported by the Dubai Civil Aviation Authority, Dubai Airports, Aviation Engineering Services Projects and the Ministry of Defence.

During his participation in the meeting of the Military Committee of the Dubai Airshow 2021, Lengawi indicated that the authority is making great efforts in coordination with the concerned authorities, to make this session of the Dubai Air



Show a distinguished one by all standards.

The exhibition is being held in its current session with the participation of 1,200 exhibitors from 148 countries, after the global aviation industry was severely affected by the Covid 19 pandemic, which constitutes a message of hope for the gradual recovery of this important industry.

The exhibition will witness more than 160 displays of aircraft of various types and sizes. In addition to the many free conferences that will include more than 150 industry experts who will highlight in their speeches important themes in the aviation sector such as: global air traffic, space, aviation sustainability, advanced air mobility, and new technologies.



# Dubai Expo: Guiding The World Towards a Better Future

The resounding success of Expo 2020 is a catalyst of recovery as evidenced by the huge crowd flocking the Expo venue. The world received an exceptional dose of hope towards recovery as they repose confidence in the capabilities of the UAE leadership to make the impossible possible and move forward where others retreat.



First, the people in the UAE erupted in joy when Dubai won the bid to host the World Expo first time in the Mena region, then the UAE astonished the world by bringing to reality the Greatest Show on Earth against all odds on October 1, 2021, and now after two weeks of the spectacular opening, the world started deriving the desired benefits of the Expo.

The mission is accomplished because of the vision, leadership, delegation, business acumen and determination.

It was like light at the end of the tunnel as the world is slowly recovering from the devastating effect of the pandemic on every sphere of life. The successful opening of the Expo brought in hope, optimism and a positive outlook.

The world received an exceptional dose of hope towards recovery thanks to the resounding success of the Expo since its inception. It is also the confidence in the capabilities of the UAE leadership to make the impossible possible and move forward where others retreat.

The world always derived strength and hope from the words of His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai.

"Dubai is ready... and 190 countries are ready... and the world."

This optimism was also expressed by the Secretary-General of the International Bureau of Exhibitions, Dimitri Kirkentz, who said: "Expo 2020 Dubai will be an opportunity for everyone to meet and discuss the most important emerging topics in the world, develop innovative solutions to our global problems here in Dubai, and through connecting minds, we will create a better future."

The world awaits many surprises with each passing day of the extraordinary event, which is considered the largest event of its kind in the world since the



### **Mohammed bin Rashid:**

"The Expo will certainly go in the history books as an exceptional event to be engraved in mankind's memory. We have proven to the world the UAE is a fruitful tree that can welcome everyone who dreams of a better future for this planet. This gathering is an ideal platform for highlighting the importance of human solidarity and cooperation. This is the unprecedented experience that our world needs."

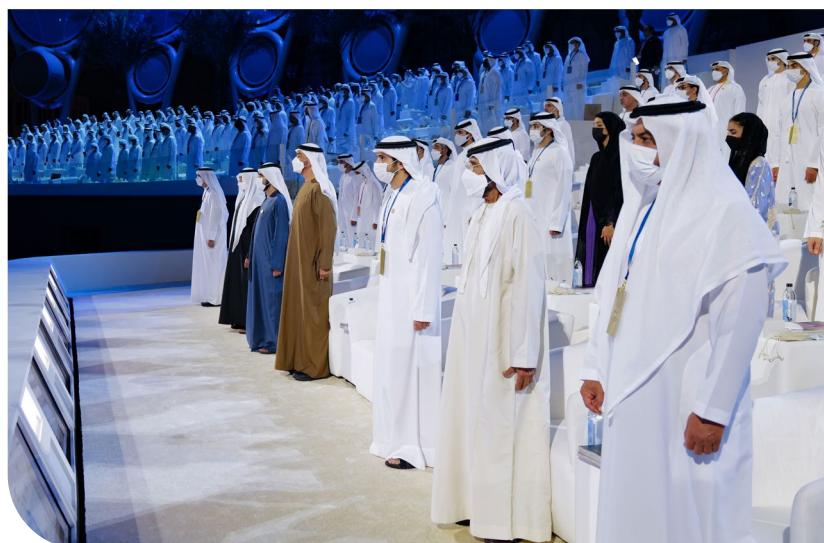


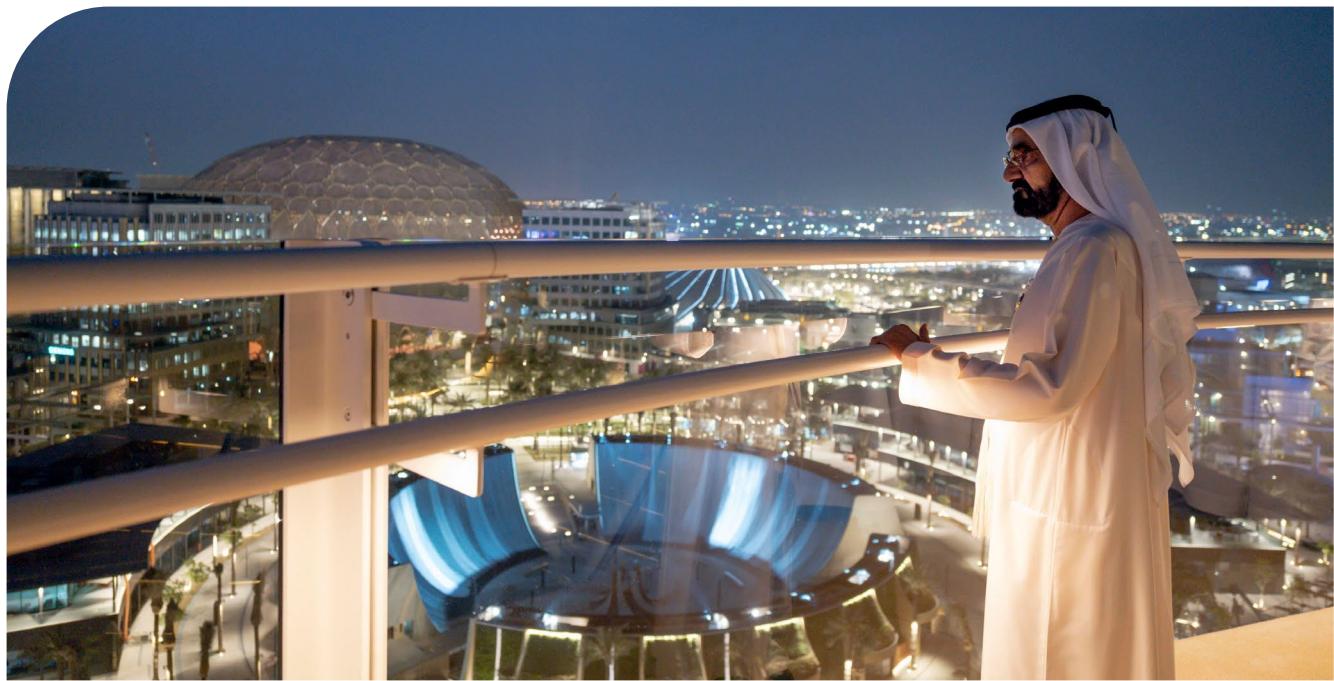
### **Mohammed bin Zayed:**

"The driving force behind the exceptional organisation of Expo 2020 is a visionary leader with indomitable will, my brother His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid, who has worked tirelessly to inspire and unite national teams to deliver an outstanding event that is a source of joy and pride for the people of the UAE."

media has praised the successful opening of the exhibition and its importance at this particular time as a driver of global recovery.

The first-ever World Expo in the Middle East, Africa and South Asia (MEASA) has become a reality with a spectacular once-





in-a-lifetime opening ceremony in Dubai for a 182-day run ending with the UAE's Golden Jubilee celebrations. The mega global event saw participants from 192 countries converging on Dubai showcasing the best of human accomplishment and excellence to live up to the theme "Connecting Minds, Creating the Future"

His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai, and His Highness Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Crown Prince of

Abu Dhabi and Deputy Supreme Commander of the UAE Armed Forces, welcomed delegations from across the world participating in Expo 2020 Dubai at the event's spectacular opening ceremony. Participants from 192 countries have converged on Dubai for the mega global event, which is being held for the first time in the Middle East, Africa and South Asia (MEASA) region.

His Highness Sheikh Hamdan bin Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Crown Prince of Dubai, announced the official opening

of Expo 2020, saying: "Today, the entire world gathers in the UAE. Today, we witness, together, a new beginning, as we inaugurate, together, with the blessings of Allah, Expo 2020 Dubai. May God grant us success."

During the ceremony, Their Highnesses conveyed the greetings and good wishes of President His Highness Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan to participants in the six-month event that celebrates human innovation, enterprise and achievement.

His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid said the opening of Expo 2020 is a historic moment for the UAE that is the culmination of the collaborative efforts of national teams who have worked with dedication, passion and pride to deliver an exceptional event. Bringing together people from 192 nations representing a vast diversity of cultures and experiences, Expo's opening is a moment of pride for the entire nation, he said.

"Today, the UAE starts another chapter in its journey to the future with a new sense of purpose. It is a journey full of exciting possibilities where new dreams and ambitions can be realised. The UAE has shown



the world that it always embraces challenges, and that it is capable of emerging stronger from crises by creating new opportunities for growth and development," His Highness said.

### The driving force

His Highness Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed said the UAE, said: "The driving force behind the exceptional organisation of Expo 2020 is a visionary leader with indomitable will, my brother His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid, who has worked tirelessly to inspire and unite national teams to deliver an outstanding event that is a source of joy and pride for the people of the UAE."

Welcoming global participants, His Highness Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed said Expo provides an unparalleled platform for new international economic, technological and commercial partnerships, and a worldwide dialogue to unlock new avenues for progress.

His Highness Sheikh Nahyan bin Mubarak Al Nahyan, Minister of Tolerance and Coexistence and Commissioner-General of Expo 2020 Dubai, delivered a speech at the opening event in which he said: "Today, in the year of our Golden Jubilee, we share with the world the lessons we have learnt, most importantly that by connecting minds, we are able to achieve



milestones others thought were impossible. It was this same vision that motivated us – back in 2011 – to bid to host the World Expo and to choose "Connecting Minds, Creating the Future" as its theme."

### Once in a life time experience

A glittering line-up of stars welcomed the UAE residents and visitors from the world at its opening ceremony that will remain etched in people's memories for its sheer grandness by the 3,000-strong audience inside the magnificent Al Wasl Plaza and everyone who virtually viewed the captivating ceremony. The opening ceremony used never-seen-before broadcasting technology to beam the stunning 90-minute show. It was one of the few ceremonies that happened in a garden supported by

a dome. It was supported by one of the biggest immersive video, sound and light systems in the world.

### A variety of live music

performances by the planet's selected influential artists and a sensory overload of powerful visuals were beamed across Al Wasl Plaza's dome, the world's largest 360-degree projection screen. Over 3,000 lighting fixtures, 1,000 speakers, 1,300 costumes and 1,000-plus participating performers and volunteers contributed to a one-of-a-kind spectacle of masterful artistic collaboration. The Expo has three thematic districts – Sustainability, Mobility and Opportunity. Free bus rides have been arranged for visitors from 18 locations across the country.

The Expo has pavilions of 192 countries – the largest in history. The iconic Al Wasl dome is an architectural marvel and the jewel of the site. Colourful immigration counters have been set up for families and visitors travelling through the Dubai International Airport (DXB).

The GDRFA-Dubai has decorated its counters with images of Expo 2020 mascots, Latifa and Rashid. Dubai Metro has extended the length of the world's longest driverless facility and created Route 2020 that extends 15 kilometres from Jebel Ali and connects seven stations





in between. The Expo Station is expected to receive 47,000 visitors daily during weekends.

It was a visually soothing scene with the flags of Expo's participating countries being revealed via a domino effect, opening one by one. Celebrated tenor Andrea Bocelli rounded off the opening night's electrifying proceedings with the lyrics of one of his all-time classics, *The Prayer*, conveying human connection. Earlier, chart-topping British vocalist Ellie Goulding belted out a resounding version of *Anything Can Happen* followed by Andra Day enrapturing the audience with *Rise Up*. Chinese concert pianist Lang Lang wowed with his wizardry.

Four-time Grammy-winning singer-songwriter Angelique Kidjo, together with renowned Saudi singer Mohammed Abdu, sang John Legend's powerful *If You're Out There*, with its moving lyrics imploring the world to join together.

#### This Is Our Time

The Expo 2020's official song, *This Is Our Time*, was sung by Arab artists Hussain Al Jassmi, Almas

and Mayssa Karaa while Emirati singing sensation Ahlam Alshamsi completed the formidable regional line-up. The artistic prowess of Oscar-winning composer A R Rahman's all-women ensemble, Firdaus Orchestra, comprising 50 musicians from across the Arab world, was simply marvellous.

Expo 2020 Dubai is seeing the participation of more than 200 countries, multilateral organisations, businesses, and educational institutions, thereby creating the largest and most diverse World Expo ever. The opening ceremony had been streamed live to more than 430 locations across the country offering everyone the chance to watch the spectacle which included three mind-blowing fireworks displays.

Dubai has made elaborate arrangements to make available the tickets for Expo 2020 Dubai online and through more than 2,500 Authorised Ticket Resellers (ATRs), including online travel agents, tour operators, hotel groups and airlines from 100-plus markets around the world.

To be run until the last day of March 2022, the 1,080-hectare Expo 2020 site had come upon a stretch of desert on Dubai's outskirts. The metaphor-heavy opening show, which featured over 900 artists from 64 countries and about 1,000 crew, turned out to be the most immersive in the world, with 252 projectors screening images across the 130-metre wide, 67-metre tall Al Wasl Dome.

Much before the Expo started, the UAE already has one of the world's highest vaccination rates per capita and has seen its daily case numbers drop to their lowest levels in over a year. Dubai has largely relaxed its pandemic-linked physical distancing and capacity rules and maintains a ban on dancing and mandates that masks be worn both indoors and outdoors.

Expo 2020 Dubai requires proof of vaccination or a valid PCR test to enter. An on-site Covid-19 testing station offers visitors free PCR tests, with results within six hours or a rapid test for AED125 with results available within 15 to 30 minutes. Pre-pandemic, Dubai forecast 25 million visitors to the



## Mohammed bin Rashid:

“The opening of Expo 2020 is a historic moment for the UAE that is the culmination of the collaborative efforts of national teams who have worked with dedication, passion and pride to deliver an exceptional event. Bringing together people from 192 nations representing a vast diversity of cultures and experiences. The Expo’s opening is a moment of pride for the entire nation.”

event over its six-month tenure but the organizers now refers to 25 million visits – both repeat visitors and those watching online. Those flying on the Emirates Airline are being given a free Expo 2020 ticket with their airfare. Each Expo staff has been given five free season passes to give away along with dozens of single-day and discount passes.

Several Dubai entities have been given free passes and Dubai government employees enjoyed six days of paid leave to enjoy the sights and sounds of the Expo with their families and friends. Global auditors EY, in 2019, estimated the event would contribute enormously to the Arab world’s second-biggest economy by “encouraging” millions around the world to visit the UAE along with stimulating travel and tourism sectors and supporting economic diversification. It said the six-month-long event will contribute nearly AED123 billion of Gross Value Added (GVA) to the country’s economy until 2031. EY

estimated construction projects for Expo would cost US\$7 billion alone.

Dubai, to reach out to the world, drafted several of the world’s biggest stars to share its message, from Argentinian soccer star Lionel Messi to a CGI-heavy advertisement featuring Australian actor Chris Hemsworth.

The Emirates aircraft and the city’s public transport system have been painted with the Expo logos. To mark the Expo, the future-focused Dubai has ramped up infrastructure facilities and launched several tourist attractions including Ain Dubai, the world’s largest Ferris wheel with a height of 250 metres.

The participating countries have spent millions of dollars to have innovative pavilions that convey their economic and tourism strengths to boost trade and investment in the coming year. The global exhibition is being held under the banner, Connecting Minds and Creating the Future, and is a demonstration of ingenuity and a place with global challenges like climate change, conflict and economic growth under the spotlight.

The Expo 2020 pavilions are amazing. China has one of the largest and is shaped like a traditional lantern; Morocco made its pavilion with traditional mud-building methods; Saudi Arabia’s include the world’s largest interactive lighting floor, LED mirror screen and interactive water

feature. The UK’s pavilion features a 21-metres tall structure made of slats on which algorithmically generated words appear to form a ‘Collective Message’.

The UAE Pavilion is the biggest of Expo 2020 and it is shaped like a falcon in flight and spans 15,000 square metres. The structure offers a shaded arcade nestled beneath 28 floating, movable wings that make up the pavilion’s roof. The wings can spread open within three minutes and rotate. The official app of Expo 2020 Dubai has been launched. The Mobile App helps create a personal schedule of events, attractions and parades to see and manage SmartQ reservations and buy Expo 2020 tickets. There is an interactive, GPS-enabled map with step-by-step directions and one can record the journeys in a Digital Passport.

As His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum told the Arabic newspaper, Al Bayan, the Expo will certainly go in the history books as an “exceptional event to be engraved in mankind’s memory”. He said: “Once again, the UAE people have demonstrated their unique ability to excel in every task when serving humanity. We have proven to the world the UAE is a fruitful tree that can welcome everyone who dreams of a better future for this planet. This gathering is an ideal platform for highlighting the importance of human solidarity and cooperation. This is the unprecedented experience that our world needs.”



# Expo 2020

## Come in for the most memorable and shared prosperity

**D**ubai, which has been the cynosure of the world since the spectacular opening of Dubai Expo 2020 on October 1, 2021, has spent billions of dirhams to hold the most dynamic and sustainable Expo, the world's third-biggest event after the Olympics and FIFA World Cup. Since winning in 2013 the bid to host the Expo, Dubai had worked its way to make it the most memorable event in human history.

Compared with other countries, the UAE has a relatively short history of participation in the World Expos whose history goes back to London in 1851. Of the seven Trucial States, it was only Abu Dhabi that participated in World Expo in Osaka, Japan, for the first time in 1970, a year before they joined together to form the UAE. The Abu Dhabi Pavilion was modelled after an Arabian mud-brick fort and its design featured a pair of square and cylindrical towers that took two years to complete. An Egyptian architect and Abu Dhabi's city planner oversaw the pavilion's architecture themed, Abu Dhabi - Past, Present and Future. Visitors were zapped on being served a variety of Arabic coffee.

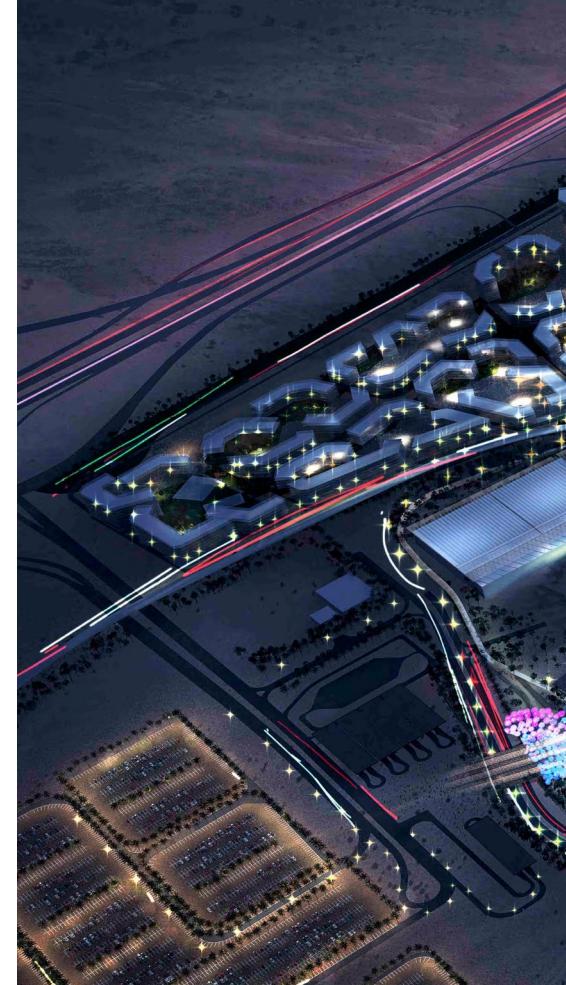
It was only in 1992 in Seville, Spain, that the UAE participated in the first Expo after its formation as the Arab world's successful federal experiment. In the year 2000, the world was surprised when the UAE won an award for the best pavilion at the World Expo in Hannover in Germany in which 154 countries participated. The pavilion welcomed about five million visitors in its six-month run. Visitors could get their hands painted in henna and fascinating falconry practices in a 360-degree cinema. Even sand and palm trees were shipped from the country's deserts for visitors to get a feel of the place. In 2008, the UAE bagged a golden award for best design and content at the Specialized Expo in

Zaragoza. It had eye-catching reflective interiors and wall-length screens.

### The Shanghai structure

In 2010, the UAE pavilion in Shanghai was one of the largest structures at the sprawling site – it was built on an exhibition space of 3,000 square metres. The pavilion's reflective skin of gold-coloured stainless steel imitated the colour palette of the desert, the dunes of which crested at the height of 20 metres. It won awards for being the best pavilion, the most popular international pavilion and the best midsize building. The pavilion attracted two million visitors. In 2012, the UAE pavilion in Yeosu in South Korea highlighted its maritime history and conserving the vitality of the ocean.

Three years later, the Expo in Milan witnessed the UAE pavilion remaining the cynosure of all eyes. The 4,000+-square-metre site was constructed in a series of parallel waves, and the 12-metres high curvy walls were textured with patterns inspired by dunes. Walking through the pavilion, visitors gained a first-hand experience of the UAE's traditional streets and courtyards. Inside the pavilion, digital reconstructions, interactive exhibits and an augmented reality device narrated the different areas of growth and development within the UAE. The pavilion won the best exterior design award. It was at this Expo the UAE, with Dubai as the



host city, won the bid to host the World Expo in 2020.

No World Expo had been staged in the Middle East, Africa and South Asia (MEASA) during its 170-year-run. It was the outcome of years of hard work. In early 2011, five cities bid to host the global event, with Dubai making a last-minute entry. Dubai threw its hat into the ring with four other cities - Ayutthaya (Thailand), Ekaterinburg (Russia), Izmir (Turkey) and Sao Paulo (Brazil) – vying to host the expo. In December 2012, a delegation went to the French capital to attend the General Assembly of the 160-member-countries International Exhibitions Bureau (BIE), the international body responsible for overseeing the calendar, bidding, selection and organisation of world expos, and met the delegates to showcase the UAE's strengths as the best destination for the high-profile global event. In April 2013, the UAE's bid got a shot in the arm when former US president Bill Clinton backed Dubai's candidature. "The UAE I think is in a strong position to win the bid for Expo 2020 because Dubai's model of shared prosperity is more important today than ever and an inspiration to several countries in the Middle East."



### The catalyst

After choosing the theme, Connecting Minds, Creating the Future, Dubai began developing a 438-hectare site in Jebel Ali, next to the Al Maktoum International Airport, for the Expo which, it has been argued, would be a catalyst and trigger to superior economic growth in Dubai and the Middle East region. The total cost of hosting Expo 2020 had been estimated at US\$10 billion. Dubai began investing to extensively improvise and upgrade the facilities to handle the influx of visitors -- about 25 million over the six months. A report by global consultancy EY says the six-month-long event will support over 900,000 jobs and contribute nearly AED123 billion of Gross Value Added (GVA) to the country's economy until 2031. Dubai built a venue of 4.38 square kilometres, including a dedicated exhibition zone of two square kilometres.

The 438-hectare site included the 150-metre wide, 69-metre tall domed Al Wasl Plaza to house about 200 country-pavilions. The UAE Pavilion is modelled on the wings of a falcon; tiered trefoil-shaped Mobility Pavilion and Sustainability Pavilion. The Expo

site is capable of producing enough solar power to cater for 50 per cent of its power needs.

### The virus impact

All was going well for Dubai in terms of infrastructure development and facilities enhancement till the second quarter of 2020. The coronavirus pandemic impacted the UAE with Dubai airport getting closed for the first time in history. The Covid-19 pandemic prompted the postponement of Expo 2020 Dubai by a year from its earlier scheduled run from October 2020 with over 120 countries committed to taking part, with seventy per cent of attendees expected to be international visitors, the highest proportion in Expo history. Dubai continued construction work on the project during the coronavirus pandemic. For the first time, every participating country will have its very own pavilion. "We can say that the UAE is 100 per cent ready for the largest cultural event in the world," remarked His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of UAE and Ruler of Dubai.

New metro line Route 2020 has been started by Dubai Metro specifically

for the event. It is a 15 kilometres extension to the Metro Red Line and will connect Jebel Ali Station to the new Expo 2020 Station, with seven stations in between. An official app of Expo 2020 Dubai is launched. The Mobile App will help create a personal schedule of events, attractions and parades to see and manage SmartQ reservations and buy Expo 2020 tickets. There will be an interactive, GPS-enabled map with step-by-step directions and one can record the journeys in a digital passport.

Visitors to Expo will be able to see Al Wasl Opera which occupies a prime spot among the diverse range of installations and artistic creations. There will be the world's largest 360-degree projection surface. Visitors will have the chance to immerse themselves in Emirati culture at the Expo 2020 Dubai site, where the UAE Pavilion will dominate as the largest on-site. With a space of 15,000-square-metre, the four-storied building resembles a massive falcon in flight, paying homage to the national symbol and long falconry tradition. The eight-time participation of the UAE in the World Expos will certainly remain etched in memory forever.

# Dubai brings to life our Vision: Sheikh Mohammed

Today, the UAE has astonished the world, by bringing to reality the Greatest Show on Earth against all odds. And the joy is doubled when the world is flocking to Dubai to celebrate and gain from Dubai Expo 2020.



In November 2013, on Dubai winning the bid in Paris to host the World Expo, UAE President His Highness Shaikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan congratulated His Highness Shaikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice-President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai, and said: "Our joy in the UAE was doubled by the win as it coincides with the celebrations of the 42nd National Day."

"Country possesses all it takes to successfully organise a unique event that will add a new and outstanding imprint on the Expo series of events," His Highness said.

His Highness Shaikh Mohammed said: "We renew our promise to astonish the world in 2020. Dubai will bring to life our vision: Connecting Minds, Creating the Future."



On winning the bid, the nation erupted in joy and businesses cheered.

Today, Dubai has astonished the world, by bringing to reality the Greatest Show on Earth against all odds. And the joy is doubled when the world is flocking to Dubai to celebrate and gain from Dubai Expo 2020.

From the time the Bureau International des Expositions (BIE) general assembly in Paris named Dubai as the host of the 34th World Expo on 27 November 2013 till the magnificent opening of the mega event, the mission was accomplished because of the vision, leadership, delegation, business acumen and determination.

His Highness Shaikh Mohammed entrusted the challenging task to the Expo Dubai 2020 Higher Committee headed by Sheikh Ahmed bin Saeed Al Maktoum, President, Dubai Civil Aviation Authority, Chairman, Dubai Airports, Chairman and Chief Executive, Emirates Airline and Group. The task is also accomplished ably by Her Excellency Reem Al Hashimy, UAE Minister of State for International Cooperation,

Director-General Dubai Expo 2020 Bureau and Managing Director of the Dubai Expo 2020 Higher Committee.

To support the nationwide collaboration, His Highness Sheikh Ahmed created a City Readiness Subcommittee led by His Excellency Mohammed Ibrahim Al Shaibani, Vice Chairman of the Expo 2020 Dubai Higher Committee.

The subcommittee included Mohammed Al Tayer, Chairman of the Board and Executive Director of the Roads and Transport Authority; Helal Saeed Almarri, Director General of Dubai's Department of Tourism and Commerce Marketing and Director General of Dubai World Trade Centre Authority; Khalifa Al Zaffin, Executive Chairman, Dubai Aviation City Corporation; Major General Abdullah Khalifa Al Merri, Commander-in-Chief of Dubai Police; and Engineer Dawood Al Hajri, Director General of the Dubai Municipality.

The coordinated efforts of these personalities and the guidance from the leaders culminated in the successful opening of the mega event, the first-ever World Expo to be held in the Middle East, Africa, and South Asia (MEASA) region.

There are 200-plus pavilions, out of which 191 pavilions are representative of the participating countries. For the first time in World Expo history, every participating country has its own pavilion. Expo brings together

these countries displaying ideas, inventions and innovations to address the problems of a world reliant on technology.

Expo 2020 Dubai is shaping up to be a truly global destination that will offer millions of people the unique opportunity to experience the entire world in one place. The Expo is run under the theme 'Connecting Minds, Creating the Future' through the celebration of varied cultures and never-before-seen innovations. This overarching theme is further divided into key subthemes of Sustainability, Opportunity and Mobility.

The master plan, designed by the American firm HOK, is organized around a central plaza, entitled Al Wasl, enclosed by the three large thematic districts.

As of April 2021, the high-level taskforce entrusted with the steering the progress of Expo 2020 Dubai has reaffirmed its commitment to welcoming the world, as it reviewed final preparations for the largest event ever held in the Arab world.

#### Emirates pavilion

The Emirates pavilion merits special mention. Located in the Opportunity District of Expo 2020 Dubai, the Emirates Pavilion is in walking distance of Al Wasl Plaza, the main staging area and where the glittering opening ceremony took place, and close to Rove Expo 2020 the only hotel at the world's greatest show.

The towering facade of the Emirates Pavilion has been inspired by the shape of an aircraft's wings taking flight. Emirates has designed its pavilion to offer people a glimpse into the future of commercial aviation.

#### Emirates Livery

Emirates Airline unveiled a special Expo 2020-theme livery ahead of the start of the Expo. Special messages that say "Dubai Expo" and "Be Part of the Magic" run across both sides of the A380 fuselage.

The Expo 2020 Dubai livery will appear on three Emirates A380 aircraft to



visually tell the story and reaffirm the themes of one of the largest events to take place since the start of the pandemic. The distinctive blue Expo aircraft will join the 40 other special liveries dedicated to Expo 2020 Dubai, which have collectively flown to more than 130 destinations across the Emirates network since 2018.

#### A platform to connect businesses

Expo 2020 Dubai has created a new platform to help companies connect, collaborate and expand their operations. Firms from around the world can now unlock new business opportunities, forge international partnerships and drive growth by registering on Expo 2020's Online Marketplace (OMP).

The free-to-use platform enables users to showcase their products, services and expertise to Expo 2020 and its participants, licensees and contractors, as well as other registered businesses.

#### GDP growth catalyst

Expo 2020 Dubai's long term investment in the future of the country will boost its economy by AED 122.6 billion (\$33.4 billion) and support 905,200 job-years till 2031. It is predicted to add the equivalent of 1.5 per cent to UAE Gross Domestic Product.

From November 2013 – when Dubai won the bid to host the Expo – until its opening, the economic impetus was be driven by the construction sector as work continued on building the site

and supporting infrastructure such as roads, bridges and the Dubai Metro Route 2020 line. Crucially, small and medium enterprises, a core component of the UAE economy, received AED 4.7 billion in investment during the pre-Expo phase, supporting 12,600 job-years and in line with Expo 2020's goal to foster innovation and support small businesses.

By April 2019, it was a dream coming true for event organisers: A world-class venue with 45,000 sqm of high-tech flexible space at Expo 2020 Dubai, where for six months the most forward-thinking minds and ideas on the planet will be circulating in one place.

The Dubai Exhibition Centre (DEC), co-located at the Expo 2020 site, offers unparalleled networking opportunities as 191 nations and millions of visitors come together to celebrate and build a better future.

The DEC's two campuses house a theatre, auditorium, several multi-purpose halls, four suites and 24 meeting rooms, complete with onsite catering and best-in-class audio, visual and telecommunication facilities.

The venue will also play a key part of Expo's legacy plans, attracting domestic and international visitors to the heart of District 2020, enhancing the UAE's reputation as a destination for major conferences and fuelling growth in Dubai's knowledge-based economy well into the future.

# Game-changer for hospitality industry

Expo 2020 has come as a catalyst that accelerates the recovery in the UAE's hospitality industry which will restore the industry back to the 2019 levels.

Expo 2020 is seen as a game-changer for the UAE's economy in general and the hospitality and tourism industries in particular as they will receive a huge push through the event and.

Expo 2020 has come as a catalyst that accelerates the recovery in the UAE's hospitality industry which will restore the industry back to the 2019 levels.

The UAE's hospitality sector will continue on its path of sustainable growth after the Expo event, driven by pent-up demand for international travel and travel restrictions being continuously eased across various geographies.

The hospitality industry is expecting to return to the 2019 figures of RevPAR (Revenue Per Available Room) and the strong expectations will continue into 2022 when the industry expects to see the full recovery to pre-pandemic levels by the end of next year.



According to the latest forecast from hospitality industry data provider STR, Dubai hotel occupancy is set to rise by an impressive 77 per cent year-on-year, with RevPAR rising by an even stronger 86 per cent. These are heartening numbers after so many hard months impacted by the long lockdowns, travel restrictions and the general economic slowdown following the pandemic.

The industry is already seeing a systematic reopening of international markets. For example, Emirates Airline is currently operating at around 90 per cent of its network pre-pandemic. As expected, the numbers are reflected in the hotel bookings.

## Favourite destination

The various attractions at the Expo make the UAE the most sought after destination for travellers from around the world, directly contributing to a better pace of recovery in the UAE.

"Recovery is a combination of different factors including airline networks, health departments, rules and regulations revolving around quarantine, and travel agencies highlighting destinations," said Guy Hutchinson, President and CEO at Rotana.

The positive sign is that local hiring in the hospitality sector is picking up due to the Expo 2020. Already the hiring of talent, especially the Emiratis, has seen a significant elevated curve recently.





## Expo 2020 will revitalise the UAE's hospitality industry as the country recovers from the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic

Like any big global event, the hospitality, tourism and airline sectors get a major push through the volume of international travellers expected to arrive through the six months of the Expo.

### Exponential growth

Business investors across the world are exploring opportunities. The Dubai hospitality industry is all set to grow exponentially with over 25,000 rooms joining the market. Due to such remarkable growth, many hospitality jobs are also rising in a dramatic way. Also there are massive opportunities for the local talent to join and be part of this growth.

Expo 2020 will revitalise the UAE's hospitality industry as the country recovers from the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic.

The recovery of many international markets and the enormous amount of pent-up demand for travel after a year of social distancing will generate

many opportunities for the hospitality sector in the UAE.

Proactive policies implemented by the government such as the UAE strategy for domestic tourism, various visa reforms are the most encouraging signs instilling greater confidence in the long-term prospect.

The easing of travel restrictions to and from the UAE to key feeder markets will further boost the recovery of the country's hospitality sector.

Major hotel chains have put in place strategic plans to cash in on the arrival of thousands of guests. Rotana hotels in Dubai will provide free shuttle buses to and from the Expo 2020 metro station, in cooperation with Expo 2020 Dubai and the Roads and Transport Authority.

The Expo is one of the first major opportunities to reconnect the world physically.

Demand for domestic air travel is leading the recovery, with intra-regional markets expected to follow as health and travel restrictions ease, followed by long-haul travel's return to pre-pandemic levels by 2023 to 2024, said the outlook report by Boeing.

### Branded new hotels

The Expo is also expected to witness the opening of branded new hotels in Dubai during the mega event when the demand level will also reach a very high level as a large number of foreign visitors will be visiting.

Global consultancy Colliers said in a report that Dubai is expected to see the opening of about 40 per cent of 2021 forthcoming supply in the fourth quarter.

It said the branded hospitality market in UAE reached 108,040 keys by the end of second quarter of 2021, with Dubai being the largest contributor to the new supply followed by Abu Dhabi.

"The supply in the market is expected to increase at a CAGR (compound annual growth rate) of eight per cent between 2021 and 2023. This will introduce an additional 17,470 keys to the market," the report said.

Colliers predicted that the number of hotel rooms in the UAE are projected to increase from 111,390 in 2021 to 119,940 in 2022 and 128,860 a year later.

As a result of the easing of Covid-19 pandemic restrictions, hotel occupancy also increased in the UAE.

Dubai Expo 2020 remains a great contributor to the hotel occupancy during the six months that it welcomes the world to Dubai with figures forecasted above 80 per cent.



# Dubai Airports: Welcoming the world with an Emirati flavour

A historic day in the life of the UAE began with the launch of Expo 2020 Dubai – the first-ever in the MENSA since 1851- and welcoming the world thanks to the tremendous efforts made by all the authorities to present an exceptional global event.

Dubai International Airport is the most prominent gateway from which visitors will come to the city-emirate from all over the world and received by the staff members with welcoming smiles and Emirati hospitality. They get the same exceptionally welcoming reception from the moment they enter the airport until the moment they leave it, with all the precautionary measures adopted globally for the health safety of both travellers and employees.

All the strategic partners and service providers at DXB are working round-the-clock to provide the best and safest services to the millions of passengers who are expected to use the airport during the next six months to participate in one of the world's largest events that Dubai had promised to make it an exceptionally memorable to the world.

The aviation and tourism sectors are the main sectors that share

the responsibilities of providing facilities and services to the visitors in a way that enhances the reputation of Dubai -and the UAE. Dubai International Airport is on the list of the world's largest airports in terms of numbers of international passengers for the straight seventh year despite the coronavirus pandemic and its disastrous effects on the global aviation industry - it handled about 87 million passengers in 2019.

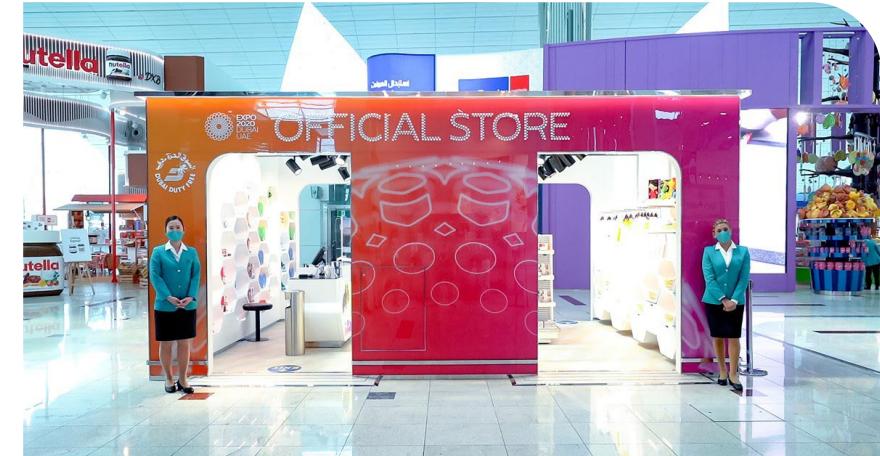


Despite the Covid-19 pandemic, Dubai has been in the lead to grapple with the pandemic from its very beginning





Despite the Covid-19 pandemic, Dubai has been in the lead to grapple with the pandemic from its very beginning. This year, the gradual recovery of global air traffic is taking place and DXB handled about 13 million passengers during the first seven months of 2021.



**Dubai International Airport is on the list of the world's largest airports in terms of numbers of international passengers for the straight seventh year**

The Dubai Civil Aviation Authority (DCAA) expects a significant increase in the movement of passengers through the airport, thanks to several activities and programmes in the city, especially Expo 2020 Dubai and the 17th edition of the Dubai Airshow, and several international conferences that will take place during the remainder of the year.

His Highness Sheikh Ahmed bin Saeed Al Maktoum, President of Dubai Civil Aviation Authority, Chairman of Dubai Airports and Chief Executive of Emirates Airline and Group, said: "We have achieved several milestones this year despite the difficult period.

Dubai has been a symbol of resilience and dynamism in responding to the challenges brought by the coronavirus pandemic.

We are confident the collaborative work by key industry players will help restore consumer confidence and boost travel that will pave the way for the recovery of the air transport sector."

Dubai's economy has witnessed a significant recovery in its various sectors - the emirate's economy is scheduled to grow by 3.1 per cent this year and GDP will grow by 3.4 per cent in 2022 thanks to the decisive measures, facilities and incentives taken by the Dubai government to mitigate the repercussions set off by the pandemic and the global economic challenges casting its shadow on the emirate.



# Dubai in the wings to host the biggest airshow

Dubai will play host to the world's third-largest airshow in November. Featuring the latest of civil and military aircraft, the biennial Dubai Airshow 2021 will showcase the aviation industry's recovery following the 21st century's second pandemic.

Dubai Airshow 2021 will be the biggest yet, as the aviation industry recovers from a turbulent spell brought about by the pandemic.

The airshow will be the largest aerospace trade event to be held since the pandemic forced the cancellation of Farnborough and Le Bourget in 2020 and 2021, respectively.

About 1,200 exhibitors from 148 countries will take centre stage at Al Maktoum International Airport, also known as Dubai World Central, from November 14 to 18.

Commenting on the progress that Dubai's aviation sector has

made following the pandemic, His Highness Sheikh Ahmed bin Saeed Al Maktoum, President of Civil Aviation Authority, Chairman of Dubai Airports and Chairman and Chief Executive of Emirates Airline and Group, said, "We have crossed many significant milestones this year despite the difficult period. Dubai has been a symbol of resilience and agility in responding to the challenges that the pandemic brought, and we are confident that the collaborative work done by the sector's key players to restore consumer confidence and boost travel operations will pave the way for a thriving aviation industry. Dubai Airshow 2021 will serve as



His Highness Sheikh Ahmed bin Saeed Al Maktoum

the ultimate testament to the industry's steady recovery and growth and firmly establish Dubai as the leading global aerospace hub."

Participating in meeting of the Military Committee of the Dubai Airshow 2021, Mohammed Abdullah Lengawi, Executive Director of the Aviation Security and Accident Investigation Sector at the Dubai Civil Aviation Authority, stressed the readiness of the authority for active participation in the Airshow, which is one of the largest aviation exhibitions in the world.

The meeting with the ambassadors and military attaches from the diplomatic missions in the country was to inform them of the preparations and for hosting the exhibition in its seventeenth session.

"The authority, which is the official partner and supporter of the Dubai Airshow, has invited dignitaries and delegations from civil aviation institutions from different countries of the world. Through its participation, the authority introduces visitors to its legislative role," he said.

Highlighting the most important current and future projects in the aviation industry, he said that the teams of the Authority's



employees work with their partners as a homogeneous team to ensure the continuity of the exhibition's success and that Dubai is always a pioneer and at the forefront of the world's cities.

Anita Mahra, Senior Executive Vice President, Communications and Brand Management at Dubai Airports, said: "This year, we look forward to welcoming the most prominent international companies specialized in the aviation and aerospace sector from more than 98 countries from around the world, as the world looks to Dubai and the UAE as the ideal destination for exhibitions of this size."

Featuring the latest of civil and military aircraft, the biennial Dubai Airshow 2021 will showcase the aviation industry's recovery following the 21st century's second pandemic and industry stalwarts speaking about its future growth trends. The only global airshow since 2019 will introduce a dedicated hub for start-ups.

The global aviation industry had been hit hard by the Covid-19 pandemic but slowly several countries are reopening their borders and business, especially travel and tourism, gradually returning towards normalcy.

To be held for five days from November 14 at Dubai World Central (DWC), the sought-after industry platform will feature over 20 country pavilions and will have over 160 aircraft displays. It will host several free-to-attend conferences that will have over 150 industry experts as speakers. Three stages will host sessions addressing global air traffic, space, aviation sustainability, advanced aerial mobility and new technologies. Organisers say the airshow will work towards making it "the ideal event for strategic development and the creation of new partnerships".



The 17th edition of the airshow will be held with the support of the Dubai Civil Aviation Authority (DCAA), Dubai Airports, Dubai Aviation Engineering Projects (DAEP) and the UAE Ministry of Defence. It will take place under the patronage of His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of UAE and Ruler of Dubai. Organised by Tarsus F&E Middle East, the event will receive visitors who had to register to attend the event with a ticket priced at US\$85 that gives them access to all five days of the event.

The show is set to witness a major presence of Saudi aerospace players like the General Authority of Civil Aviation (GACA), Saudi Aerospace, Saudi Arabian Airlines (SAA) and Oxford-Saudia Flight Academy. Business aviation is one of the key sectors that will be represented at the event, with 30 per cent of the attendance being involved in that part of the industry. Key names in business aviation that will be taking part include Airbus, Boeing, Airports World Company, CAE, Citadel Completions, Comlux, Dassault Aviation, Embraer, Emojet, Gainjet Aviation S.A., Gulfstream Aerospace and Pilatus Aircraft.

Also to be held on side-lines are ticket-only conferences - Cargo Connect and Global Air Traffic Management. At the Aerospace 2050 Forum, the elements of

future transportation, research and development, government policies and industry's growth initiatives will be debated. It will update on space ventures and Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs).

Tech Xplore is the new addition this year designed to highlight how technology is helping reboot aviation and changing the entire flying experience. It will discuss the role of 5G, Artificial Intelligence (AI), Machine Learning, Cyber Security and Automation. For the first time, the airshow will also have a dedicated aerospace start-up hub - VISTA - to showcase the latest innovations and talents driving the future of the industry. The co-located event will be a platform for innovators and creators to connect with venture capitalists, CEOs, investors, developers, technology disruptors and operators.

Competitions will take place in partnership with aerospace entities like including Etihad Airways, Mohammed bin Rashid Space Centre (MBRSC), Amazon Web Services (AWS) and Boeing Applied Innovation for disruptive start-ups to showcase their innovative technologies and creative ideas. VISTA will include start-ups from 12 different sectors, including Artificial Intelligence (AI), Future Mobility, Software, Space, Aerospace, Material Science, Cyber Security, Defence, Tourism, Robotics, Drones and Sustainability.

# Sheikh Ahmed opens aviation security symposium

Experts highlighted the need for strengthening aviation security amid pandemic challenges at the 5th edition of AVSEC Global Symposium kicked off in Dubai on October 3, 2021.

The symposium brought together globally recognised security experts, local and international government officials, policymakers and high-calibre professionals from across the aviation security industry.

His Highness Sheikh Ahmed bin Saeed Al Maktoum, Chairman and Chief Executive of Emirates Airline and Group, inaugurated the three-day symposium that hosted 35 speakers and over 700 delegates from more than 50 countries, said a Khaleej Times report.

Juan Carlos Salazar, secretary-general of the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO); Robert Courts, United Kingdom parliamentary undersecretary of state at the Department of Transport; Cherubin Okende, minister of transport in the Democratic Republic of the Congo; Saif Mohammad Al Suwaidi, director-general of the UAE General Civil Aviation Authority (GCAA); Lieutenant-General Dhahi Khalfan Tamim, Deputy Chairman of Police and General Security in Dubai; other dignitaries and embassy officials representing a number of countries attended the first day activities of the event.

This edition of AVSEC highlights ICAO's 'Year of Security Culture', which seeks to holistically promote security across all aspects of aviation operations as the industry recovers. The symposium is hosting 38 engaging sessions and workshops that will highlight current topics in aviation security, such as environment security, managing fraud risk, wildlife trafficking, cargo and K9 security, innovation in law enforcement, and more.

In his keynote address, Juan Carlos Salazar said the pandemic has posed



many challenges, and taught us new lessons, driving us to adapt and evolve to maintain secure operations under very demanding circumstances.

"As operators continue to recover from its impact, we have been presented with another opportunity to rethink our approach and update our strategies, and above all to stay flexible and responsive as international air transport recovers to redefine itself as threats continue to evolve," he said.

Robert Courts said: "Over the last 18 months, we have fought a different threat to public safety. The pandemic has reminded us of the interdependence of the global community."

"Out of adversity was the opportunity to work together, and that international cooperation was vital to maintain safety in the skies. 'Security Culture' has remained a common theme this year, and without doubt, it amplifies and complements existing security measures and underpins everything we do," he said.

Dr Abdullah Al Hashimi, divisional senior vice-president of Emirates Group Security (EGS), said the AVSEC Global

Symposium has become synonymous with knowledge sharing, inspiring new ideas and connecting minds across the industry.

"Disruptive thinkers and decision-makers from around the globe come together with a unanimous goal of learning, sharing experiences and improving practices as a whole. This year, by partnering with Dubai Expo 2020 and other leading aviation organisations, we have ensured that even with the current challenges the world faces, our event remains relevant and impactful," he said.

The first day of the AVSEC Symposium was wrapped up with an aircraft hijacking simulation conducted by Emirates Group Security's Aircrew Training team in partnership with the UAE Presidential Guard Special Forces.

AVSEC Global 2021, organised by Emirates Group Security, is one of the most significant aviation security events in the region and one of the biggest globally, attracting influential leaders, elite thinkers, security solution innovators, and world-renowned experts to discuss the latest developments in the field.

# Dubai forms new board to enhance border security

A new organisation will be created to bolster Dubai's border security capabilities, based on a new law issued by His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice-President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai.

Sheikh Mansoor bin Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum will serve as chairman.

To be formed under Law No. (15) of 2021, the Dubai Council for Border Crossing Points Security seeks to ensure smooth coordination between various government entities involved in border control including the emirate's General Authority of Ports, Borders and Free Zones Security and relevant local, federal, regional and international organisations.

The new law also aims to ensure effective implementation of Dubai's strategic plan to improve the efficiency of entities involved in border control, said a Khaleej Times report.

The council is tasked with developing strategic border security plans and policies for the emirate; providing advice to the government on border control issues; and unifying the regulations and security criteria for protecting borders in Dubai.

Sheikh Mohammed also issued Decree No. (38) of 2021 forming the Board of the Dubai Council for Border Crossing Points Security. Sheikh Mansoor bin Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum will serve as chairman and Lt-Gen Mohammed Ahmed Al Marri as vice-chairman of the board.

Members of the board also include representatives from the Dubai Police, Dubai Customs, General Directorate of Residency and Foreigners Affairs-Dubai, Dubai Civil Aviation Authority,

Dubai Airports Company, Dubai Air Navigation Services and Dubai Maritime City Authority, in addition to the Secretary General of the Dubai Council for Border Crossing Points Security.

Sheikh Hamdan bin Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Crown Prince of Dubai and Chairman of The Executive Council of Dubai, also issued Decision No. (40) of 2021 appointing Omar Ali Salem Al Addidi as secretary-general of the Dubai Border Security Council.

The Dubai Council for Border Crossing Points Security is authorised to issue the decisions required to implement provisions of the new legislations. They annul any other legislation that may contradict their provisions.



# Emirates inks distribution deal with Sabre

Emirates, the world's largest operator of Boeing 777 and Airbus A380 aircraft with a network connecting over 120 cities on six continents, has inked an immediate-effect multi-year worldwide distribution agreement with Sabre, the leading software and technology company that powers the global travel industry.

Under the new agreement, one of the world's largest international airlines will benefit from Sabre-connected travel buyers and agencies through Sabre's Global Distribution System (GDS). EK, which carried over 58 million passengers in 2019, will create and distribute New Distribution Capability (NDC) offers through the Sabre GDS. The NDC is an IATA-certified Level 4 channel-agnostic solution that aims to bridge the gap between the airlines and travel agents, Online Travel Agents (OTAs), Travel Management Companies (TMCs) and travel



consultants. The airline industry has been developing NDC since 2012.

Sabre has re-established its long-standing partnership with the Dubai-based carrier and through this deal aiming to create a sustainable distribution model that benefits all constituents across the travel value chain. The new agreement will remove complexity in the buying process that is crucial to the recovery of the industry

that suffered largely due to the coronavirus pandemic.

Adnan Kazim, Chief Commercial Officer at Emirates, says the new deal supports meeting the needs of its agency partners and provides agencies with flexibility, choice and efficiency to "thrive in the current climate and will help us drive revenue and growth." In July 2020, the airline had rolled out a brand new online gateway to serve its travel trade partners around the world.

## Emirates to hire 3,000 cabin crew

Dubai's award-winning Emirates Airline is set to hire a 3000 cabin crew as normal operations gradually resume. The world's biggest long-haul airline will also recruit 500 people for airport services in the next six months as the carrier seeks to ramp up operations to cater to recovering travel demand.

These roles are Dubai-based positions and frontline customer-facing roles. Like many other major airlines around the world, EK took steps to slash costs and conserve cash by reducing staff wages, cutting jobs, and offering cabin crew voluntary unpaid leave

to cope with the fallout from the coronavirus pandemic. The airline has gradually restored its operations in line with the easing of travel restrictions around the world. It has recalled pilots, cabin crew and other operational employees who were stood down when the pandemic forced a drastic reduction in flights last year. It also reinstated the full salaries of its staff from October last year. Emirates is currently flying to more than 120 cities, representing 90 per cent of its pre-pandemic network. The airline plans to restore 70 per cent of its capacity by the end of the year, including bringing back more of its A380 aircraft into active service.



## Dubai creates new authority to oversee three freezones

Dubai has formed a new entity to oversee the operations of Dubai Airport Free Zone, Dubai Silicon Oasis and Dubai Commerce City. Dubai Integrated Economic Zones (DIEZ) Authority is an independent legal entity with financial and administrative autonomy. His Highness Sheikh Ahmed bin Saeed Al Maktoum has been appointed as DIEZ chairman with Dr. Mohammed Ahmed Al Zarouni as its executive chairman, effective the first day of January 2022.

Companies and individuals licensed in the Integrated Economic Zones under the Authority are exempted from all taxes, including income tax, for 50 years. Over 5,000 international firms covering 20 key economic sectors and employing 30,000 people will operate under DIEZ. Economic activity regulated by this authority generates five per cent of Dubai's GDP. DIEZ is tasked with creating, developing and managing the infrastructure and administrative services of Integrated Economic Zones. Collectively, all the free zones in Dubai registered AED135 billion in foreign trade in Q1 2021, accounting for 38 per cent of Dubai's total foreign trade.



## Lufthansa restores Munich-Dubai flights

Germany's Lufthansa has launched non-stop flights three times a week between its Munich hub and Dubai and utilizing Airbus A350 – a route it last served in April 2016. It will operate flights over the winter season to coincide with the Expo 2020 that is currently on in Dubai until March 2022.

The carrier considers the A350 aircraft as being the most efficient in its fleet. The German flag carrier has been operating its India flights via the Middle Eastern hub. This saw its Boeing 747s arriving at the airport, alongside the Airbus wide-bodies that regularly use the hub.

The Munich-Dubai flight is initially scheduled to run until April 23, 2022, to coincide with the end of the Bavarian Easter holidays. In July, Emirates Airlines is set to resume A380 flights to Munich. Due to the high demand, Munich is the third hub of the Lufthansa Group to add Dubai to its flight schedule, after Frankfurt and Zurich utilizing the most sustainable long-haul aircraft in its fleet: the Airbus A350-900. Lufthansa has operated

flights between Munich and Dubai as a regular fixture of its flight schedule from 2003, using Airbus A330 on the route. Replacing the Airbus A330 with the A350 will be a boon to the airline.

The A350 comes in a three-cabin configuration with business class, premium economy, and economy. From 2023, the airline will begin taking delivery of A350s with first class.

Lufthansa already serves DXB from Frankfurt (FRA) while fellow group carrier Swiss operates flights from Zurich. The German flag-carrier will compete on the MUC-DXB sector with EK that currently provides daily service using Airbus A380s. Lufthansa announced plans to reactivate five A340-600 aircraft next year, allowing it to offer a first-class cabin on selected routes from MUC. Commencing in summer 2022, the A340-600 will fly primarily to North American and Asian destinations. Before the Covid-19 crisis, the Lufthansa A340-600 fleet consisted of 17 aircraft. Twelve are now in the process of being sold.

# UN names Dubai as the world's most resilient city



Dubai has been named the world's most resilient city by the United Nations. Dubai has become the UN-designated role model for smart, sustainable and resilient cities. Dubai was ranked first globally for its resilience in a report by the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction, according to a report in The National. Dubai 2040 Urban Master Plan was launched with the aim of transforming the emirate and creating a truly interconnected, people-led city that balances community with tourism and modernity with heritage and nature.

The UN award acknowledged Dubai's adoption of best practices and innovative approaches in disaster risk reduction.

The assessment of Dubai by the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction focused on 10 key factors which make cities resilient. "Dubai's risk and disaster management teams work to constantly raise their preparedness to deal with unforeseen crises and develop long-term strategies to promote a culture of readiness to manage all kinds of risks," remarked Dubai Media Office.



## Emirates deploys A380s to Manchester and Frankfurt

Emirates Airlines has deployed a 615-seat A380, by far the world's densest-configured double-decker, from Dubai to Frankfurt and Manchester. The Manchester service started on October 1 that increases to twice daily. Frankfurt will start on December 1.

This change means that one of Frankfurt's two daily A380 flights will no longer have first class. Both Frankfurt and Manchester have previously seen the 615-seater on a scheduled

basis over the years. The airline resumed Dubai to Manchester on September 1, fittingly precisely 11 years after it first used the A380 on the airport pair.

The UK airport became A380-only in 2019, just before Covid-19 hit. Frankfurt has been a slightly smaller market than Manchester but its capacity exceeded one million in both 2016 and 2018. In 2019, Frankfurt was just 28,000 seats away from hitting the one million mark again. EK has operated

the A380 since December 2008, and its current fleet has seven different configurations. To Germany, one of the Dubai airline's most important markets, EK plans to operate 50 flights a week by the end of October.

This includes daily flights to Dusseldorf, Frankfurt, Hamburg and Munich. It has also announced that it will deploy its A380 superjumbos between Dusseldorf and Hamburg, allowing for more passenger capacity.



## Dubai consolidates arbitration centres

Dubai has disbanded three principal arbitral institutions and formed a single body. It abolished the Dubai International Financial Centre's Arbitration Institute (DAI) along with the Emirates Maritime Arbitration Centre (EMAC) and transferred their property, staff and cases to the Dubai International Arbitration Centre (DIAC), according to a report in Global Arbitration Review (GAR).

A decree issued in September abolished the existing EMAC and the DAI and empowered DIAC to effectively step into the shoes of the abolished arbitration bodies whilst laying down a detailed statute covering DIAC's future objectives, scope and organisation. All of the rights and obligations of the EMAC and the DAI pass to DIAC. This includes a transfer of ownership of property, financial appropriations and employees.

There had been broad support for the concept as the next stage in developing Dubai's dispute resolution journey. The UAE's courts, including the DIFC Courts, will continue to hear lawsuits relating to arbitration proceedings conducted by the DIFC-LCIA, EMAC or DIAC.

Dubai had been recognised as one of the world's top 10 international arbitration hubs according to the May 2021 global arbitration survey by White & Case and Queen Mary University, which identified London and Singapore jointly as the world's favourite centres. EMAC had been the Middle East's only specialised maritime arbitration centre.

## DAE raises \$1 billion from debt market

Dubai Aerospace Enterprise (DAE) has raised US\$1 billion from the debt market, its second funding deal in 2021. The Middle East's biggest aeroplane lessor, owned by the Investment Corporation of Dubai (ICD), said the recovery in passenger air traffic demand is progressing well but not evenly in all jurisdictions and for all aircraft types, according to a report in The National. .

The uneven nature of vaccine deployment geographically and the emergence of virus variants remain a barrier to a predictable return to full normality. DAE is on track for a US\$1.1 billion target of sale-and-leaseback deals in 2021. In

June, credit rating agency Moody's Investors Service had revised DAE's outlook to "stable" and affirmed its "Baa3" issuer rating, citing the company's strong liquidity position and capital management, and signs of a recovery in air travel.

The DAE signed an agreement for 15 Boeing 737 Max-8 jets valued at about US\$1.8 billion at list prices. However, buyers usually receive discounts on the final price. It signed agreements to sell nine narrow- and wide-body aircraft valued at US\$500 million. The transactions are expected to close in 2021. Overall, DAE has committed to purchase 26 aircraft and sell 27 others during H1 2021.



## Uganda Airlines to start Dubai route in Q4 2021

The four-year-old Uganda Airlines has launched its first intercontinental flights to Dubai on the first day of October, using its pair of A330-800Ns. The flight from Entebbe/Kampala will take place three times weekly, Mondays, Fridays, and Saturdays. It has been timed ahead of the start of the Expo 2020 Dubai from October 1 and lasting March 31 next year.

The target market would be business travellers and migrant

workers travelling to the Middle East. It will be the carrier's first commercial flight out of Africa. Initially planned for July 2021, the inaugural flight was twice rescheduled due to delays caused by Covid-19 pandemic travel restrictions and regulatory delays in the certification of the two A330s. After Dubai, it will start services to London Heathrow, Mumbai, and Guangzhou.

The state-owned carrier currently serves 10 regional cross-border routes.



## Airport business impacted extensively due to pandemic

In its latest assessment, the Montreal-based Airports Council International (ACI) World has analysed the economic impact of the coronavirus pandemic, its effects on the global airport business, and the path to recovery. Despite the downside risks and setbacks, ACI World is optimistic about long term prospects for a return to the trajectory of growth.

Critical to this will be a harmonized and risk-based approach to travel restrictions underpinned by action to promote safe travel with a coordinated and approach to testing and vaccination.

After a decade of consistent and robust growth in global passenger traffic, the Covid-19 pandemic brought airports around the world to a virtual halt in Q2 2020, erasing almost overnight, more than 20 years of passenger traffic growth. Despite positive signs, the pandemic has remained an existential crisis for airports, airlines and

their commercial partners and the aviation industry. In 2020, the crisis removed more than 5.9 billion passengers for the whole year 2020, representing a decline of 62.3 per cent of global passenger traffic.

Compared to the 2019 level, the decline is recorded at 61 per cent. Europe followed by the Middle East and Africa became the most impacted regions. Europe is the only region posting a decline above 70 per cent seeing its traffic falling 70.5 per cent compared to the projected baseline.

The Middle East and Africa recorded declines of 68.5 per cent and 67.6 per cent, respectively. The crisis is forecasted to remove an additional five billion passengers by 2021 year-end. More passengers are expected to return to travel in Q3 and Q4 2021. Similar to 2020, the Middle East is forecasted to remain one of the two most impacted regions.

### Spanish airport operator to lose US\$1.8 billion in revenues

Spanish airport operator AENA is potentially close to losing up to US\$1.76 billion of revenues between the 2020-2025 period after Spain passed a law on pegging the rent of retail tenants to air traffic until footfall reaches pre-pandemic levels.

The minimum annual guaranteed rents owed to the operator will be reduced in direct proportion to the passenger flow in each local airport and will remain as such until travel returns to 2019 figures.

The legal change is set to protect all food, drink and retail businesses whose rental contracts with AENA were active on March 14, 2020, the day Spain went into Covid-19 lockdown.

Lawmakers voted in favour of the new legislation by a majority of 178 to 16. The operator expects traffic at its airports to recover to 2019 levels only in 2026, according to the British news wire Reuters.





## Malaysian airports anticipate travel recovery

Malaysia Airports says continuous efforts will be put in place to ensure the airport environment is proper at all times. MAHB is targeting for all its workers to receive both doses of vaccination by September-end. To date, five airports in the country have received the Airport Health Accreditation by the Airports Council International (ACI), said a report in The Malaysian Reserve.

The Kuala Lumpur, Kuching, Langkawi, Kota Kinabalu and Penang international airports have been certified in meeting the global health and safety standards. MAHB is anticipating a recovery of domestic air travel in Malaysia in the next few months. MAHB continues to face headwinds as Covid-19 pandemic-related



restrictions and border closures remain in place. It does not expect passenger traffic to recover to 2019 levels until the end-2023 at the earliest.

Analysts project the airport operator to remain in the red for the financial years ending December 2021 and 2022 after reporting its first loss in its 22 years as a publicly listed company in FY 2020. Only 25.8 million passengers travelled through the 39 airports it manages in the country in 2020, down 76 per cent from 105.3 million people in 2019.



## Dubai airport committed to net-zero carbon emissions

The Airports Council International (ACI World) and all five of its regions have created a long-term carbon goal for their member-airports and have committed to reaching net-zero carbon emissions by 2050. The long term carbon goal relates to the carbon emissions under the direct control of airport operators and will be a crucial component of the aviation industry's contribution towards this global effort. Airports have long taken a leadership role in addressing, minimising and mitigating the environmental impacts of aviation.

This has been demonstrated through their ability to decrease emissions over the last 10 years, supported and enabled by the Airport Carbon Accreditation (ACA) programme, despite significant traffic growth in that time.

The net zero carbon emissions by 2050 target were launched by ACI Europe in June 2019. Through a combination of new technology, operational efficiencies and infrastructure improvements, more than 10 billion tonnes of CO2 have been averted by the industry since 1990. In Europe, 235 airports have committed to net-zero by 2050 - 91 airports now set to achieve net-zero by 2030. The airports to undersign the ACI Europe commitment to net-zero carbon emissions have reached a total of 238.

# Reinvent, Rebuild, Recover



**Luis Felipe de Oliveira**  
Director-General  
Airports Council International (ACI World)

A dynamic economic environment, shifting passenger needs, and new expectations are rapidly changing the rules of customer experience for the airports. Travel will not be the same as it had been in the pre-coronavirus pandemic times. It will require a high degree of flexibility and adaptability from our industry.

As we continue to navigate recovery and come together to rebuild global connectivity, airports need to listen to their customers and tailor their services. They need to better align with their expectations and forge new relationships that accelerate growth. Customer loyalty could be strengthened by providing them with greater confidence in a still uncertain world.

Since 2006, our Airport Service Quality (ASQ) program has been the world's leading airport customer experience measurement and benchmarking program, covering all aspects of the passenger interactions in an airport, from departure to arrival and commercial areas. ASQ program reaches 60 per cent of the world's

8.8 billion annual passengers, and its surveys are conducted at more than 400 airports in more than 90 countries. The program is the only worldwide to survey passengers at the airport on the day of travel.

The Covid-19 pandemic has had a dramatic impact on global passenger traffic. It has affected the passenger expectations. Airports have proven their ability to shape and adapt to crises. They have continued to listen to their customers to adapt to the services and experiences they offer under very trying circumstances.

We will continue to adapt the ASQ program to ensure the benchmarking and findings remain the industry standard and are reflective and relevant for the changing landscape of air travel. As we continue to pave the road to recovery, it is time to reinvent, rebuild, and recover. A customer-focused approach will help guide the way forward.

*Edited excerpts from the address at the third annual ACI Customer Experience Global Summit*





## In Recovery Mode

International travel continues to lag significantly behind—still only about 20 per cent of where we were in 2019. It's clearly not where we expected it to be, particularly in the context of transatlantic. The performance of international travel markets is not where we need to be. We need to remember that international travel is not just about holidays. It is about connecting people, connecting families and connecting business.

We've seen before that about 60 per cent of people who travel for international travel are travelling for other than holiday purposes. And the travel restrictions (Covid-19 pandemic related) are causing great disruption. I think it's important that we reaffirm the need to get back to face-to-face meetings, the need to re-establish direct connectivity, and the need to base decisions on the data and the science, which would give governments very good reason to relax or remove the restrictive measures that they continue to have in place for people who are travelling internationally.

I think there is a shift in the shape of the industry. Typically, domestic travel,

which has recovered pretty much complete now, and we will get back to where we were in 2019 or indeed in some markets above that. But domestic markets normally account for about one-third of all RPKs, international two-thirds. What we're clearly seeing is that there's a greater shift in recovery, and potential growth in the domestic markets than there is in international markets. So there's still quite a long way for us to go.

We shouldn't in any way downplay the crisis as airlines continue to face a crisis. The continuation of the crisis is largely caused by government restrictions on international travel. And again, you can see that we're optimistic that once those restrictions are relaxed—or indeed removed—we will see a swift bounce-back in terms of demand. Clearly, the industry has lost significant growth, which will make recovery and repair of balance sheets a focus for all airlines. And that will take some time.

I think you're likely to see a more cautious industry as we come through this crisis and go into recovery mode. The recovery in international travel can only really start when the



**Willie Walsh**  
Director General & CEO  
International Air Transport Association (IATA)

government restrictions on travel are either relaxed or removed. We've had to be ready for that, and we need to be prepared now.

*Edited excerpts from the media briefings of the IATA's eighth Director General*



## PAL returning 22 of its 92 aircraft

Philippine Airlines (PAL) is returning 22 aircraft, mostly Airbus and Boeing jets, to lessors as it pursues a financial restructuring programme to survive after the coronavirus pandemic decimated global travel. The flag carrier has filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy in the US which will allow it to continue operations and generate fresh capital.

The company is not expecting a return to pre-pandemic levels until 2024 to 2025. The carrier will return 22 aircraft to lessors. Philippine Airlines will end with 70 aircraft after cutting about a quarter of its fleet of 92 planes.

The flag carrier has negotiated with Airbus for the postponement of the delivery of 13 narrow-body Airbus aircraft, with an option to cancel several orders beyond 2026 to 2030. It will pursue a financial restructuring plan.

The proposed rehabilitation plan will cut US\$2 billion in borrowings. It includes US\$505 million in long-term debt-equity and debt financing from its majority shareholder, PAL Holdings and US\$150 million of additional debt financing from new investors. PAL Holdings is partly owned by Japan's ANA Holdings.

# How much money have airlines lost so far in 2021?

Financial losses for the global airline industry have been sequentially smaller in Q2 2021 but growing corporate optimism for the next 12 months is not shared by all as the Covid-19 delta variant undermines the economic reopening and travel in many regions.

Airlines collectively lost US\$6.9 billion in the April-May 2021 period compared to US\$14.4 billion in Q1 2021, according to data from the International Air Transport Association (IATA).

Leading the recovery were the US carriers, with an aggregate net profit of US\$96 million – the

benefit of a huge domestic market with one of the highest coronavirus vaccination rates in the world. Every other region had remained in the red, with European airlines absorbing US\$4.6 billion in losses.

The global airline body had earlier in 2021 forecast a US\$48 billion loss for member airlines in 2021. In Q2, global passenger revenues declined by 50 per cent compared to pre-crisis levels, with North American airlines again leading the way with a revenue decline of 49 per cent. Cargo continues to be a saviour for passenger airlines, with revenue up 72 per cent from the 2019 level on the strength of strong demand and yields.



## Demand for air travel picks up in India

The demand for air travel has picked up since India's civil aviation authorities have allowed airlines to operate up to 85 per cent of their pre-Covid-19 capacity domestically.

The carriers expect the air traffic to be back to pre-pandemic levels by the end of 2021 as the airfare cap has been removed facilitating travellers to start flying more. With Canada and the US, home to thousands of Indian expats, easing their travel restrictions for Indians, the airline market is gradually opening up.

The increase in capacity will enable airlines to operate more flights and push up passenger loads significantly. Officials forecast bookings to increase by over 25 per cent by September-end 2021.

There has been an uptick in passenger growth in the previous months and business travel has also started to slowly grow, according to rating agency CRISIL Infrastructure Advisory. According to it, air traffic in the domestic sector will not be back to pre-Covid-19 levels before March 2022.

## EK to implement IATA Travel Pass on all routes

Emirates Airlines is the first carrier to implement the International Air Transport Association's (IATA) Travel Pass solution on six continents. It has rolled out this digital health pass to customers at all its destinations. Following successful trials in April on select routes from its Dubai hub, EK gradually expanded the IATA Travel Pass pilot to customers on 12 routes in June.

It has now signed a contract with the global airline body to implement the solution across its global network. Currently available to EK customers travelling from 50 cities, the roll-out across all 120-plus Emirates destinations is expected to be completed by October. IATA Travel Pass will help it deliver smooth journeys and contactless experiences for customers while enabling its airport teams to handle document checks efficiently and in compliance with regulatory requirements. Passengers are being provided with a one-stop-shop to demystify, manage and process these credentials through a secure automated process.

## EK's 78 weekly flights to the US from October

Emirates Airlines is scheduled to increase its flight schedule to the US from October with more runs by its A380s. Emirates will have 78 weekly flights to 12 destinations in the US with an increase in weekly flights for Boston, Dallas, New York, San Francisco, Seattle and Washington DC. EK has already restored pre-Covid-19 daily flight frequencies to Chicago, Los Angeles and on the routes connecting Athens-Newark and Milan-New York.

The carrier is planning to further supplement its capacity for the winter season in line with customer demand and travel trends. By early December, Emirates will have restored more than 90 per cent of its pre-Covid-19 flight frequencies to the US.



## Tatas win bid to acquire Air India

India's largest conglomerate Tata Sons will regain control of Air India as it takes over 100 per cent of the government's stake in the national carrier, marking the end of a protracted struggle to sell the airline.

The Mumbai-based conglomerate placed a winning bid of Rs 180 billion (\$2.39 billion), of which Rs 27 billion (\$350 million) will be paid in cash and the remaining Rs 15.3 billion (\$2.03 billion) will be absorbed from the over Rs 60.0 billion (\$7.97 billion) debt the airline had as of August 31, 2021, said a report in Indian Express.

The government, in 1953, had taken control of the airline from the Tata Group, which founded the carrier as Tata Airlines in 1932. Tatas Pvt Ltd, a unit of Tata Sons, the holding company for the conglomerate, will acquire 100 per cent of Air India, said Secretary, Department of

Investment and Public Asset Management, Tuhin Kanta Pandey. 'Welcome back, Air India,' tweeted Ratan Tata, Chairman Emeritus, Tata Sons. "While admittedly it will take a considerable effort to rebuild Air India, it will hopefully provide a very strong market opportunity to the Tata Group's presence in the aviation industry".

"On an emotional note," Tata's statement said, "Air India, under the leadership of Mr J R D Tata had...gained the reputation of being one of the most prestigious airlines in the world. Tatas will have the opportunity of regaining the image and reputation."

Air India has 12,085 employees — 8,084 permanent, and 4,001 contractual. In addition, Air India Express has 1,434 staffers. In the next five years, about 5,000 permanent employees will be retiring.

## Turkish fleet intact in 2021

Turkish Airlines, one of the world's largest carriers by destinations served, had been flying to 325 airports globally before the coronavirus pandemic. The Turkish carrier has a diverse set of aircraft and it relies on all types of narrow-bodies and wide-bodies to fly its massive global network. The carrier has invested heavily in keeping its fleet young and agile. The fleet has an average age of seven years. The fleet

includes 66 Airbus A321-200s, 38 A330-300s, 40 Boeing 737-800s and 33 777-300ERs. In total, the carrier operates a fleet of 309 aircraft today, only 10 per cent of which are currently in storage. Turkish has added dozens of 737 MAX and A321neo to bolster its narrow-body fleet into the future. For now, the pandemic has done little to knock THY off its throne as the most connected airline.