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Another Low Cost Carrier takes off from Singapore Changi Airport

Singapore's fifth flag carrier, Tiger Airways, took off on its maiden flight from Changi Airport today. Tiger Airways is the second Singapore-based low cost carrier (LCC) to start operations at Changi Airport, the first being ValuAir which launched its first flight in May this year. With Tiger Airways joining Changi Airport's family of airlines, the Singapore airport is now served by 73 airlines with more than 3,500 flights to over 160 cities in more than 50 countries.

A send-off ceremony was organised for Tiger Airways' flight to Bangkok, Thailand. Mrs Lim Hwee Hua, Minister of State for Finance and Transport, was at Changi Airport to officiate the send-off ceremony.

Mrs Lim said at the send-off ceremony, "With the arrival of LCCs, both Singapore and our regional neighbours can look forward to greater opportunities for travel. This is a huge, but not well tapped travel market". She added, "We intend to be at the forefront of partnering low cost carriers, to ensure that we cater to their needs and business models".

"Singapore is also committed to pursuing more liberal air services agreements with countries in the region, so as to promote the proliferation of such air services. With a more liberalised air services regime in the region, the potential multiplier effects on regional economies would be tremendous, and will bring about economic growth and social integration for the region," said Mrs Lim.

Tiger Airways recently signed an agreement with the Civil Aviation Authority of Singapore (CAAS) to use the low cost terminal to be built at Changi Airport, making it the launch customer for the terminal. The new terminal will be ready in early 2006, and will not have aerobridges, so as to help budget airlines pare costs down. The single-storey and compact building design will eliminate the need for lifts, escalators and travellators.

While the low cost terminal is designed to meet the needs of LCCs, the needs of travellers have not been forgotten. Travellers can find services such as money changers, duty-free shopping, food & beverage outlets, and a shuttle bus service that will connect them to the existing terminals. There will also be ramps to make it easier for the less ambulant individuals to move about within the air-conditioned terminal.