

Four Key Tourism And Travel Players Join Hands Towards Industry Preparedness And Reopening Of Tourism And Business Event

LANGKAWI, 10 OCTOBER 2021 – Four major players in Malaysia’s tourism, business events and the airline industry, namely the Malaysian Association of Convention and Exhibition Organisers and Suppliers (MACEOS), Malaysian Association of Hotels (MAH), Malaysian Association of Tour and Travel Agents (MATTA) and airlines under the Malaysia Aviation Group (MAG) consisting of Malaysia Airlines, Firefly and MASwings have united in ramping up destination readiness and facilitating Malaysia’s reopening to leisure and business travellers.

Through the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) today, the four key players have pledged to position Malaysia as a safe destination for leisure and business travellers.

Signatories to the MoU were Datuk Tan Kok Liang, President of MATTA, Dato’ N. Subramaniam, President of MAH, and Francis Teo, President of MACEOS and Captain Izham Ismail, Group Chief Executive Officer of Malaysia Aviation Group. The signing ceremony was graced and witnessed by YB Dato Sri Hajah Nancy Shukri, Minister of Tourism, Arts and Culture Malaysia; YBhg Datuk Wira Dr Noor Zari Hamat, Secretary General of MOTAC; Dato' Hj. Zainuddin Abdul Wahab, Director General of Tourism Malaysia and attended by tourism and Business Events industry stakeholders from around ASEAN via a fully virtual platform.

The MoU focuses on combined efforts to be led by the three association giants in the industry and the national airline company to establish a Travel Safe Alliance (TSA) Malaysia. Certified by Bureau Veritas Certification Malaysia, it is a complete ecosystem of safe travel solutions made up of the “Travel Safe” label for travel and tour arrangements, “Clean & Safe Malaysia” label for hotels, and “SafeBE” for Business Events and convention venues. Meanwhile, Malaysia Airlines will continue to be the flag bearer to vouch a seamless, safe and hygienic travel experience in line with its Fly Confidently campaign.

The TSA Malaysia has committed to ensuring appropriate health and safety procedures and processes are in place with globally recognised best practices, procedures, and recommendations related to preventive measures for a safer travel and business environment during and after the COVID-19 pandemic period.

With the vaccination programme gaining traction, and the Government strengthening support for tourism recovery plans in Langkawi and other major destinations, the collaboration is seen as a timely move to facilitate tourism and economic recovery efforts.

Teo agrees, saying: “This collaboration is a key move that will set Malaysia on the path to tourism and business events recovery. TSA Malaysia will provide unequivocal assurance to travellers and business events delegates that Malaysia is safe and ready to welcome international visitors to our shores.”

He added: “For MACEOS, this collaboration and its outcome will strongly position Malaysia as a safe business events destination. It will help us gain the trust and confidence of our international clients and investors who are typically highly risk-averse. Their business decision on whether to choose Malaysia for their next international conference, convention, or exhibition, will be driven by health and safety risks they perceive in Malaysia. Having TSA Malaysia audit and certify our businesses will go a long way in driving up confidence in the market.”

Datuk Tan noted the changing behaviour of travellers due to the COVID-19 experience. He said: “Current travel trends have indicated that travellers are placing a much greater emphasis on safety and hygiene. MATTA members, who are all licensed tour and travel operators, play a crucial role in ensuring that travellers’ safety needs are prioritised at all times whilst still being able to fully maximize their leisure time while they holiday in Malaysia.”.

Dato’ N. Subramaniam reiterated the marketing and branding potential of TSA Malaysia, saying: “MAH was the first in the industry to introduce an independently certified hygiene and safety label for hotels last year in July 2020, with over 130 hotels on the programme now. Our

“Clean & Safe Malaysia” hotel label is the sign to look for -- it is an added assurance given to our guests for a worry-free stay be it for leisure or business.”

“The collaboration with MATTA and MACEOS further amplifies this, providing end-to-end safe travel solutions to travellers, and we are sending a strong message out to the world, that Malaysia is ready, we are ready to welcome everyone back,” he added.

As the country’s national carrier, Malaysia Airlines, together with sister airlines Firefly and MASwings are fully ready to facilitate safe air transportation service to, from and within Malaysia.

Commented Captain Izham Ismail, “This alliance further signifies our commitment and seriousness to bring back confidence in travelling for all travellers that their health and safety are our utmost priority. We pledge to ensure our customers will bring back memorable experience of Malaysian Hospitality across every touchpoint. More so, all our employees on active rosters have been fully vaccinated.

I am delighted to share that we saw a positive trend in forward booking reflecting customers’ confidence in travelling from the recently launched Langkawi Travel Bubble. This positive development has translated to an over 500% increase in our flight booking domestically, the highest recorded booking following the reopening of Langkawi. We believe the development of more travel bubbles with critical markets will help resuscitate air travel at the same time helping boost the socio-economy of the people impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic.”

Malaysia Airlines’ currently flies to 58 countries within its network and via our alliance with **oneworld**® and airline’s codeshare partners, Malaysia Airlines is set to offer superior connectivity once again with seamless journeys to 1,000 destinations across 150 plus countries.