



**WORKING PAPER**

**ASSEMBLY — 41ST SESSION**

**ECONOMIC COMMISSION**

**Agenda Item 36: Economics of Airports and Air Navigation Services – Policy**

**INTRODUCTION OF AIRPORT TOTAL QUALITY SCORE PROGRAM (ATQS)**

(Presented by Saudi Arabia supported by the Arab Civil Aviation Organization (ACAO) States<sup>1</sup>)

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

This paper aims to share Saudi Arabia's experience in improving each touchpoint in the passenger journey and enhancing passenger experience by establishing an Airport Total Quality Score program (ATQS) conducted by the General Authority of Civil Aviation of Saudi Arabia in 27 airports and request the assembly to note the relevance of the program. The program has four key service quality components that were defined to improve quality of passenger services provided: Operational Performance Standards, Services and Facilities Quality Evaluation, Passenger Satisfaction Survey and Passenger Complaints. Since Saudi Arabia is targeting 330 million passengers a year by 2030, the program has been established to enhance passenger experience and improve service levels and operational efficiency.

**Action Required:** The Assembly is invited to:

- Note the Pillars of ATQS presented by Saudi Arabia.
- Request the council and Secretary General to study the Pillars of ATQS presented by Saudi Arabia, note the relevance of it, and consider the feasibility of providing a template for use of Member States that wish to incorporate such a program.

<i>Strategic Objectives:</i>	This working paper relates to Strategic Objective — <i>Economic Development of Air Transport</i>
<i>Financial implications:</i>	Not Applicable
<i>References:</i>	Annex 9 – Facilitation (Fifteenth Edition, October 2017)

<sup>1</sup> Algeria, Bahrain, Comoros, Djibouti, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco, Oman, Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, Sudan, Syrian Arab Republic, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates, and Yemen.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 One of the objectives of the General Authority of Civil Aviation of Saudi Arabia (GACA) is to ensure high-quality experience and fair treatment to passengers & cargo customers. The function of Quality and Passenger Experience sector was established in September 2017, and it is responsible for achieving this strategic objective. The Quality and Passenger Experience sector is responsible for proposing initiatives that improve passengers' experience, establishing standards and service level agreements, evaluating the operational performance standards, resolving passenger complaints against air carriers and airports, managing all the communication channels with passengers and receiving all complaints and suggestion from the passengers.

1.2 Saudi Arabia has completed corporatized 27 airports in early 2022 and ensured that the provisions of Annex 9 continue to be implemented. Given the increased growth of total annual passenger traffic from 50 million in 2011 to 103 million by 2019, an Airport Total Quality Score program (ATQS) has been established based on Saudi Arabia passengers' needs. It has four key service quality components that were defined to improve quality of passenger services provided: (i) Pillar One: Operational Performance Standards (weight 40%); (ii) Pillar Two: Services and Facilities Quality Evaluation (weight 35%); (iii) Pillar Three: Passenger Satisfaction Survey (weight 25%); (iv) Pillar Four: Passenger Complaints (weight -5%). Saudi Arabia is targeting 330 million passengers a year by 2030; therefore, airports were classified into five types for definition of minimum targets for each standard: (i) Type 1: total annual passenger traffic with more than 15 million; (ii) Type 2: total annual passenger traffic between 5-15 million; (iii) Type 3: total annual passenger traffic between 2-5 million; (iv) Type 4: total annual passenger traffic with less than 2 million; (v) Type 5: domestic airports.

## 2. OPERATIONAL PERFORMANCE STANDARDS (WEIGHT 40%)

2.1 Fourteen standards were established to monitor operational performance standards, which represent the minimum required standards defined for critical passenger touchpoints with a standardized way for measuring, monitoring, and reporting standards. Using time studies and queue analysis and taking into consideration passenger traffic, it has been established a goal of maximum of 26 minutes queue waiting time for outbound passengers and a goal of 30 minutes weighted average of waiting time for inbound passengers, which meet the recommendations of Airport Facilitation Program. Operational Performance Standards were defined and classified into 4 areas:

- i) **Processing Facility:** It has 7 standards which include waiting time at check-in, security control, outbound passport control, inbound passport control, customs control, baggage collection (first bag) and baggage collection (last bag). Each standard has its own targets, sample size and methodology of measurement. For example, waiting time at check-in standard should be measured two hours before departure peak hour. The peak hour is based on daily flights schedule for each terminal and the monthly sample size must be distributed for each terminal based on the traffic. The sample size of waiting time at check-in standard is 0.08 per cent per terminal per month for airports with annual passengers above 3,000,000 with a minimum monthly sample size of 200 for those airports and a minimum monthly sample size of 100 for smaller airports.
- ii) **Asset Availability (%):** The availability of the equipment used by passengers (lifts, escalators, and conveyors) and the availability of all baggage handling systems (Baggage Conveyors, Baggage Carousels, Baggage Screening and Baggage Lift) for departures and arrivals. It is a

metric used to measure the percentage of time an asset can be used. It calculates the probability that the equipment will be available, without being down for preventive maintenance interventions or breakdowns, during a period.

- iii) **Other Key Areas (%)**: delays caused by the airport operator according to the International Air Transport Association delay code (87). It measures the total number of flights delayed by code 87 to the total number of departure flights.
- iv) **People with Reduced Mobility (PRM)**:
  - **PRM assistance time (Arrival)**—measures the time difference between the block time, and medical lift arrival to the aircraft (in case of remote parking) and wheelchair assistance (in case the aircraft is connected with a contact bridge) including both pre-notified and non-pre notified PRMs. **PRM assistance time (Departure)**- measures the time difference between the passenger request for PRM service at check in desk and the arrival time of the service, including both pre- notified and non-pre notified PRMs.

### 3. **SERVICES AND FACILITIES QUALITY EVALUATION (WEIGHT 35%)**

3.1 A Comprehensive Services and Facilities Quality Evaluation was established which includes more than 1,500 items to be measured. Items are evaluated at each touchpoint of the passenger journey. Evaluation is conducted by the General Authority of Civil Aviation officials once a year to evaluate all the airports in Saudi Arabia across all airport touchpoints. Then, airports review the assessment and provide feedback in case of any discrepancies in the evaluated items. Scoring done for each item and the criteria is (0 “not meet”, 1 “partially meets”, 2 “meets expectation” and 3 “exceeding expectation”) and there are 23 categories and each category has a weight. The final score is calculated out of 100 based on weighted category. Following up on the items with lower scores, airports are required to deliver an action plan for improving services provided and availability of services for lower score items.

### 4. **PASSENGER SATISFACTION SURVEY (WEIGHT 25%)**

4.1 Passenger Satisfaction Survey was developed to capture passenger satisfaction by customizing questions that are specific and important to Saudi Arabia passengers and in line with the Airport Council International (ACI). It includes 14 passenger-profiling questions and 40 passenger satisfaction questions. Considering the feasibility of sample collection for each airport, the sample size for each type in quarterly basis is: (i) Type 1: 350; (ii) Type 2: 350; (iii) Type 3: 175; (iv) Type 4: 175; (v) Type 5: 30.

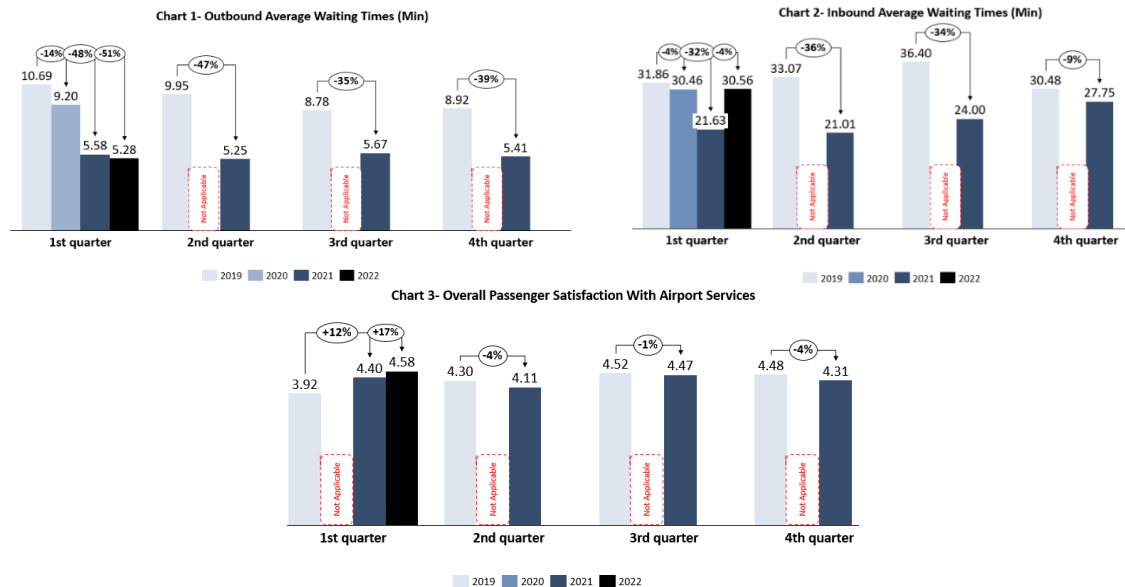
### 5. **PASSENGER COMPLAINTS (WEIGHT -5%)**

5.1 Complaints are categorized to determine the minimum level of service for each category of complaint. There is Service Level Agreements (SLA) between the General Authority of Civil Aviation and the airports to ensure excellent service and evaluate the performance of the airports in dealing with complaints. Four indicators are measured to evaluate passenger complaints: (i) **Passenger Satisfaction (Weight 20%)**: measures the customer satisfaction through questions (How satisfied are you with the solution provided, etc.). (ii) **Complaint Resolution Time (Weight 35 %)**: measures the airport compliance

to the service level agreement in resolving complaints according to the categorization of the complaint. (iii) **First Call Resolution** (Weight 15%): measures the number of complaints that were closed from the first time. (iv) **Number of Complaints Per Million Passengers** (Weight 30%): measures the number of complaints received per 1 million passengers of the year. A tolerance of accepted number of complaints has been defined for each airport based on the annual number of passenger traffic.

## 6. RESULTS

6.1 Chart 1 and 2 show a significant drop in outbound and inbound waiting times for all touch points in all airports in Saudi Arabia in 2020, 2021 and 2022, compared to 2019. In Chart 3 describes overall passenger satisfaction on a scale ranging from 1 to 5, It can be seen that the Passenger Satisfaction Survey results show a slight increase in 1st quarter from 2019 to 2021 and 2022 in passenger satisfaction with the services provided in collected Saudi Arabia airports.



## 7. CONCLUSION

7.1 The ATQS aims to ensure unique experience for all passengers within all airports in Saudi Arabia, while aligning with international best practices for improving the services provided at the airports.

7.2 Post implementing the ATQS, taking into account the application of Annex 9, there was a significant decrease in outbound and inbound waiting times for all airports in Saudi Arabia from 2019 to 1st quarter of 2022 by 39 per cent for outbound and 20 per cent for inbound as a quarterly average on top of other improved quality of air transport infrastructure in the country. General Authority of Civil Aviation started publishing an operational performance standards report on a monthly basis, which led to promote healthy competition among airports as well as promoting transparency of the quality of air transport infrastructure of the country.

7.3 This working paper looks at the progress of Saudi Arabia's experience in improving the passenger experience and the airports infrastructure. This paper aims to request the council and Secretary

General to study the Pillars of ATQS presented by Saudi Arabia, note the relevance of it, and consider the feasibility of providing a template for use of member states that wish to incorporate such a program.

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