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For immediate release

CAAM ENHANCES AIR NAVIGATION EFFICIENCY AND OPTIMISES FUEL USE THROUGH DIRECT ROUTE OPERATIONS

PUTRAJAYA - The Civil Aviation Authority of Malaysia (CAAM) continues to strengthen Malaysia's air navigation capabilities through the implementation of Direct Route Operations (DRO), an initiative projected to deliver annual fuel savings exceeding RM17 millions across the Kuala Lumpur and Kota Kinabalu Flight Information Regions (FIRs). This is a key step supporting the progressive development of the Free Route Airspace (FRA).

The implementation of DRO reflects CAAM's commitment to enhancing operational efficiency, improving airspace capacity, and advancing environmental sustainability in line with global aviation priorities established by the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO).

The implementation of DRO enables aircraft to operate on more direct flight paths, commonly referred to as shortcut routes, thereby reducing overall flight distances and optimising fuel consumption. This initiative is particularly timely amid ongoing global fuel price volatility, where operational efficiencies play a critical role in supporting airlines to mitigate cost pressures while simultaneously advancing environmental sustainability in line with global aviation priorities established by ICAO.

Fuel constitutes a significant share of airline operating costs, typically ranging between 20% and 30%, and can increase further during periods of fuel price volatility. In this context, operational initiatives such as DRO are increasingly important in helping airlines mitigate cost pressures while maintaining efficient operations.

Within the Kuala Lumpur FIR, the implementation of ten optimised routes is anticipated to yield annual savings of approximately RM1.66 million, subject to prevailing fuel price conditions. Meanwhile, the Kota Kinabalu FIR is projected to deliver higher potential savings, exceeding RM15.4 million annually, driven by the adoption of more efficient and shortened routing structures.

Beyond operational efficiencies, the implementation of DRO delivers direct value to both the travelling public and the environment. Shorter and more efficient routing can contribute to reduced flight times and improved schedule reliability, enhancing the overall passenger experience. Concurrently, decreased fuel burn supports a reduction in carbon emissions, reinforcing ongoing efforts to lower the aviation

sector's environmental footprint. This underscores CAAM's commitment to delivering safe, efficient and sustainable air travel for Malaysia.

The initiative is underpinned by Performance-Based Navigation (PBN), which enhances flight predictability and operational precision. This enables more efficient fuel planning and reduces the need for tactical interventions by air traffic controllers, thereby improving overall air traffic management performance.

DRO has been fully implemented within the Kuala Lumpur FIR, while operational trials are currently underway in the Kota Kinabalu FIR as part of a phased and structured deployment approach.

As Malaysia progresses towards full FRA implementation, CAAM will continue to expand DRO capabilities and introduce User Preferred Routes (UPR), further enhancing flexibility, efficiency, and sustainability in the nation's airspace management.

This initiative is particularly timely amid ongoing global fuel price volatility, where operational efficiencies play a critical role in supporting a resilient and sustainable aviation sector. It also underscores CAAM's ongoing efforts to ensure a safe, efficient, and sustainable aviation ecosystem, in line with international best practices and national aviation development objectives.

About Civil Aviation Authority of Malaysia

The Civil Aviation Authority of Malaysia (CAAM) is the national aviation regulator, entrusted with ensuring the safety, security, and efficiency of Malaysia's civil aviation sector. CAAM provides comprehensive safety and security oversight of flight operations, aviation personnel licensing, and is responsible for the provision of air navigation services and air traffic management across Malaysian airspace. Operating in accordance with international standards set by the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), CAAM is committed to fostering a safe, sustainable, and forward-looking aviation ecosystem through regulatory excellence, innovation, and strategic collaboration.

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