

**EMBARGOED UNTIL AFTER DELIVERY  
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**SPEECH BY MR NG CHEE MENG, MINISTER FOR EDUCATION (SCHOOLS) AND  
SECOND MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT, AT THE CHANGI AIRLINE AWARDS 2017,  
ON THURSDAY 27 APRIL 2017, 7.20PM AT ST. REGIS HOTEL**

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Mr. Liew Mun Leong, Chairman, Changi Airport Group,  
Friends in the Aviation Community,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

1. Good evening.
2. Let me first take this opportunity to congratulate everyone working at Changi Airport for winning the Skytrax Best Airport Award for the fifth consecutive year. Your efforts have made Changi Airport the hub of choice for the international flying public.
3. My warmest wishes also to Singapore Airlines on its 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year. Together with Changi Airport, you have grown into an internationally recognised name, and Singaporeans are proud to call you one of our own.

**Excellent air connectivity is a necessity for the Singapore economy**

4. In 2016, Singapore ranked first among “globalisation hotspots” in the DHL Global Connectedness Index. We were found to have the most intense international flow of trade, capital, people and information relative to our internal economic activity.
5. One major enabler is Changi Airport’s superior connectivity. Changi connects Singapore to more than 382 cities in 89 countries. This helps make Singapore a preferred business and logistics hub for many MNCs, and our local companies to ply their goods and services easily to all corners of the world.

## **Strengthening Changi as an Air Hub**

6. Hence, amidst emerging global trends of protectionism, we must remain steadfast in our vision for Changi to be an open air hub welcoming of all carriers. This is also vital if we are to maintain our position as a leading air hub.

- It will enable us to ride on the strong growth in Asia. By 2030, Asia is projected to be home to two thirds of the global middle class. Trade and people flows to and from Asia will grow significantly.
- Growing our air connectivity is also important. We must ensure the good links not only with established economies, but also with the high-potential markets of tomorrow.
- As noted by the Committee on the Future Economy, Singapore is well-placed as a gateway to the fast-growing Asia-Pacific region.

7. **Our efforts in growing new city links are paying off.**

- Last year, Changi established eight new links.
- We established another gateway to the ancient Silk Road, when West Air started flying from Changi to Urumqi with a stopover at Chongqing.
- We also established a third link to continental Africa, when Air Mauritius began flying direct three times a week.
- I am happy that Singapore is one of the few international cities directly connected to these fast-developing regions and their hinterlands.

8. **To enable continued growth in Singapore's connectivity, we will need to invest in new capacity.**

- As many of you know, Terminal 4 will open later this year. It will be able to welcome another 16 million passengers per year.
- In a decade or so, Terminal 5 will open. T5 provides an even bigger increase in capacity.
- We are also committed to increasing capacity in the skies. To manage air traffic safely and efficiently in the Singapore Flight Information Region, CAAS already employs Automatic Dependent Surveillance-Broadcast technology (or ADS-B for short).
- To improve coverage and enable aircraft separation distance to be reduced safely, CAAS is working with Aireon to implement space-based ADS-B.
- CAAS is also looking to implement space-based Very High Frequency (VHF) communications using low-earth orbit satellites.

### **Building an Airport for the Future**

9. Changi must also continue to innovate in service offerings, and personalise its services to meet the expectations of different types of travellers.

10. **For example, the number of “*bleisure*” travellers is growing.**

- These travellers blend business and leisure travel. To them, physical amenities such as conducive workspaces, rest pods, and fast internet connections are important.
- Another of this group’s characteristic is their need to optimise time at any destination.
- A smartphone app, linked with intelligent beacons around the airport, can help them make the most of their time.
- It can deliver flight updates and boarding reminders. It can also provide personalised culinary and sightseeing recommendations that will fit comfortably into their itineraries.

- I am glad that CAG is exploring such technology.

11. **We will also see more DIY travellers.** Such passengers piece together their own itineraries, and facilitate their own flight transfers. This can be highly stressful.

- To meet the needs of growing DIY traffic, CAG kick-started Changi Connects with like-minded airline partners.
- More than half a million DIY passengers have connected to flights seamlessly without stepping out of the transit area.
- Before Changi Connects, they would have had to exit the airside, collect their bags themselves, and check-in to their connecting flight.

12. **I am also pleased to see that CAG has embarked on a second partnership with STB and Royal Caribbean to enhance fly-cruise through Singapore.**

- When their first collaboration took off in August 2015, the number of overseas fly-cruise visitors exceeded the annual target by over 40 per cent.
- I am confident that this new partnership will further establish Singapore as a regional fly-cruise hub.

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13. **Travellers to Changi can also soon easily add on a trip to the Riau Islands.**

- CAG, the Singapore Cruise Centre, and the ferry operator Majestic Fast Ferry, have worked together to introduce new services between Tanah Merah Ferry Terminal and Batam.
- When the bus shuttle service between Changi Airport and Tanah Merah Ferry Terminal starts later this year, travellers to Changi will find it even easier to connect to ferry services.

**14. In time to come, travellers will also be able to take advantage of fly-rail services, which will connect Changi with the Kuala Lumpur-Singapore High Speed Rail.**

- We are currently studying how to accommodate fuss-free and seamless transfers between the HSR station in Jurong East and Changi.

### **Enhancing Capabilities in Air Cargo**

15. But Changi is not just an air hub for passengers. It is ranked among the top 10 largest airports for international air cargo traffic.

16. I encourage the Changi airfreight community to enhance their capabilities. The air freight industry is changing rapidly.

- E-commerce has fundamentally changed the way we trade. Every 7<sup>th</sup> online purchase today is a cross-border transaction.
- Demand for cargo services will increase as e-commerce penetrates new markets. Freight must reach a wider range of destinations more quickly.

**17. In this regard, I am happy to note that DHL Express opened its new Hub at Changi Airfreight Centre last October.**

- Spanning 26,200 square metres, it is one-third larger than the previous hub.
- More impressively, it boasts the industry's first fully automated express parcel-sorting and processing system in Southeast Asia and the Southwest Pacific, allowing shipments to be processed six times faster.

**18. We have also made plans for a new dedicated industry zone at Changi East, to be developed in tandem with Terminal 5.**

- This will accommodate the future growth of the air cargo, aviation logistics and MRO community.

## **Conclusion**

19. Runway 3, Terminal 4, Jewel Changi, Terminal 5, the future Changi East Industry Zone as well as CAAS' efforts to enhance air traffic management - they are all testaments of our determination to continue to be one of the world's leading air hubs.

20. Collectively, they will ensure that Singapore has the international air connectivity to allow us to continue to make a good living, and ensure our strategic relevance to the world. They will offer even more exciting opportunities for the aviation industry, and create more good jobs for Singaporeans.

21. On this note, I thank all of you for contributing to Changi's growth, and hope you will continue to partner us in our journey.

22. I also extend my congratulations to the winners of this year's Changi Airline Awards.

23. Thank you.

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