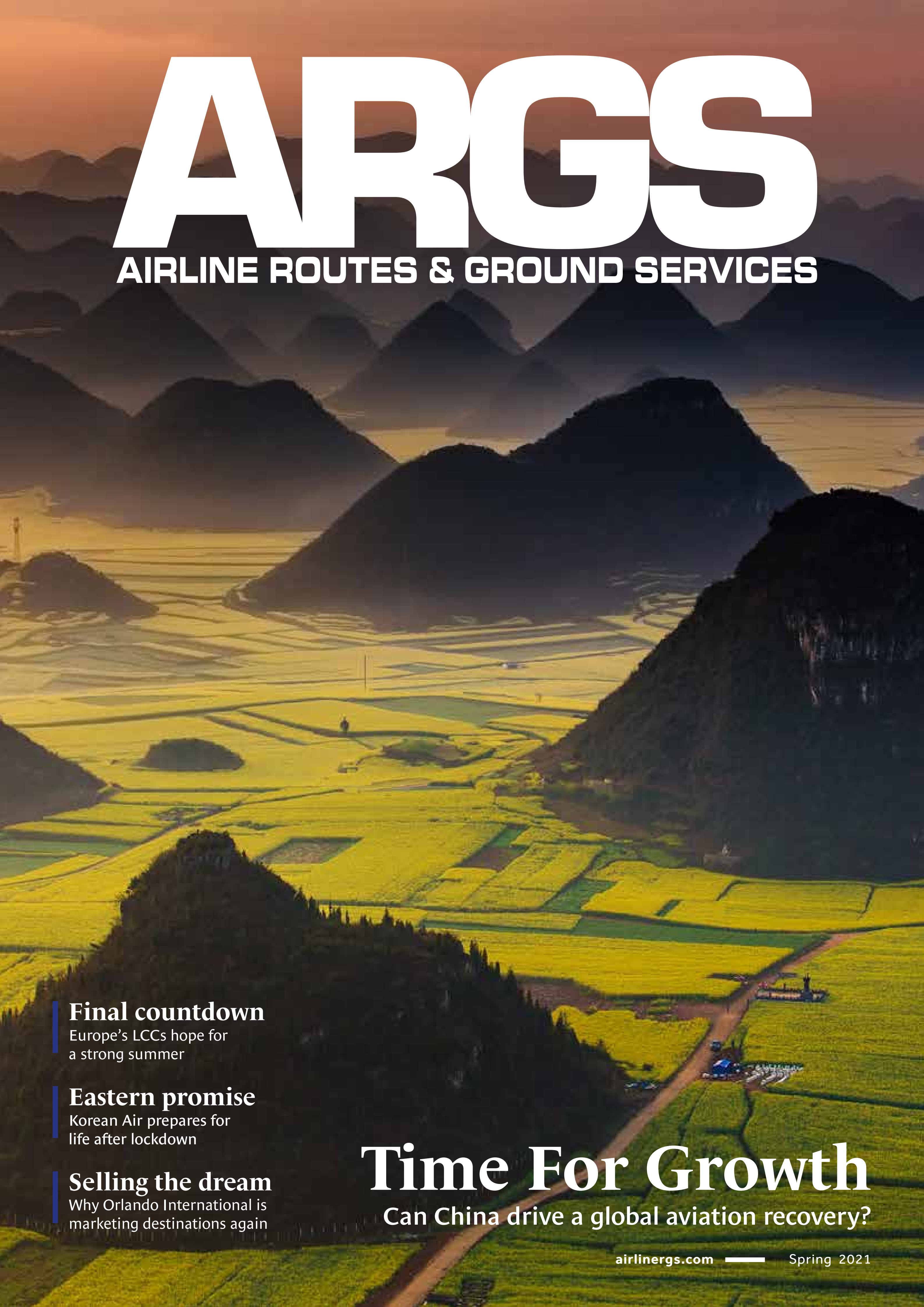


ARGS

AIRLINE ROUTES & GROUND SERVICES

Final countdown
Europe's LCCs hope for a strong summer

Eastern promise
Korean Air prepares for life after lockdown

Selling the dream
Why Orlando International is marketing destinations again

Time For Growth

Can China drive a global aviation recovery?


Global
Outreach
It all begins at Miami International Airport,
Florida's Global Gateway:
• Among the Top 3 Gateways to the USA and the Leading Airport Connecting the Americas.
• The USA's #1 International Freight Hub and the #1 Airport for International Passengers to Florida.
• New Air Service Incentive Program – ASIP6 – now available.
MIA
MIAMI INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT
MIAMI-DADE COUNTY
www.miami-airport.com
iflyMIA
marketing@miami-airport.com
Photo Courtesy: Felipe Galvez

Editor's NOTES

Edward Robertson
ed@evaint.com

I don't want to tempt fate, but it is beginning to feel like there is a note of optimism in the aviation industry regarding the Covid-19 pandemic.

Vaccine programmes are rolling out across the world and, providing countries administer them effectively, we should see both an increase in international flights and more confident travellers in time for the summer.

As a result, airlines are planning to resume services in volume and easyJet CEO Johan Lundgren (page 4) is now ready to do so just as soon as possible.

Further afield, Korean Air has retrained staff in the downtime to ensure they are ready to meet new demands and challenges (page 20), while United Airlines' Scott Kirby is confident that commercial aviation will return to normal quicker than currently predicted (page 24).

Ground handlers are also keen to see flights ramp up and have developed new practices to ensure they can deal with the demands of Covid-19 on a day-to-day basis, as our story shows on page 44.

This is not to say we are out of the woods quite yet.

Our technology feature on page 40 shows how both Boeing and Airbus have been forced to reconfigure operations during the pandemic while Emirates boss Sir Tim Clark has also warned many airlines still face considerable financial difficulties (page 16).

Meanwhile, an analysis of the Asia-Pacific region on page 26 shows that there is still work to be done in recovering traffic numbers. And of course, if the region's commercial aviation sector is to recover it is likely that it will be driven by China, which is home to 1.4 billion people and offers huge potential both to the area and the rest of the world (page 30).

But with news that Orlando International Airport is once again marketing destinations and the dream of visiting them (page 36) it does feel like there are reasons to be optimistic – something we've all been dreaming about recently.

James Sheridan
Chairman
james@evaint.com

Parveen Raja
Publisher
parveen@evaint.com

Humza Raja
Sales Manager
humza@evaint.com

Charlotte Willis
Office Manager
charlotte@evaint.com

Gemma Keen
Events Coordinator
gemma@evaint.com

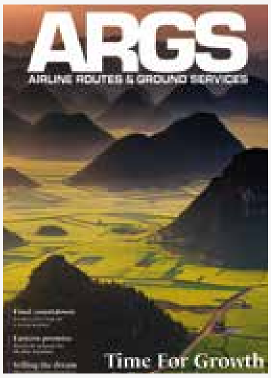
Alpha Diallo
Graphic Designer
alpha@evaint.com

Shobhana Patel
Head of Finance
finance@evaint.com

Salam Raja
Producer
salam@evaint.com

Contents

SPRING 2021



Issue 35 2021
www.airlinergs.com

Join the conversation
Twitter: @args_eva
Linkedin: /args-magazine

Advertising opportunities
Contact Humza Raja on
+ 44 (0) 20 8253 4005
humza@evaint.com

Address changes and subscriptions:
charlotte@evaint.com

ISSN 2516-8002

EVA INTERNATIONAL MEDIA LTD
EVA INTERNATIONAL MEDIA LTD
PUBLISHERS & EVENTS SPECIALISTS

Published by:
EVA International Media ltd
Boswell Cottage
19 South End, Croydon
London, CR0 1BE, UK

Tel: +44 (0) 20 8253 4000
Fax: +44 (0) 20 8603 7369

www.evaintmedia.com

Printed by:
The Manson Group Limited
St Albans, Hertfordshire
AL3 6PZ, United Kingdom

Distributed By:
Central Mailing Services
59 60 Gravelly Industrial Park
Tyburn Road, Birmingham,
B24 8TQ, UK

04 **Airlines**
EasyJet boss Johan Lundgren is hoping Europe's vaccination programme will open up its skies in time for the summer

08 **Airlines**
Norwegian is reassessing its European programme after closing down its long-haul operations

12 **Airlines**
Cirium considers the changes airlines must make in order to be fit for purpose in a post-Covid-19 world

16 **Airlines**
Emirates boss Sir Tim Clark warns many airlines still face a struggle for survival as Covid-19 continues to bite

20 **Airlines**
Korean Air staff have been busy preparing for operations once flights resume in serious numbers

Contents

24 **Airlines**
United Airlines' Scott Kirby is optimistic about the future of aviation once the pandemic subsides

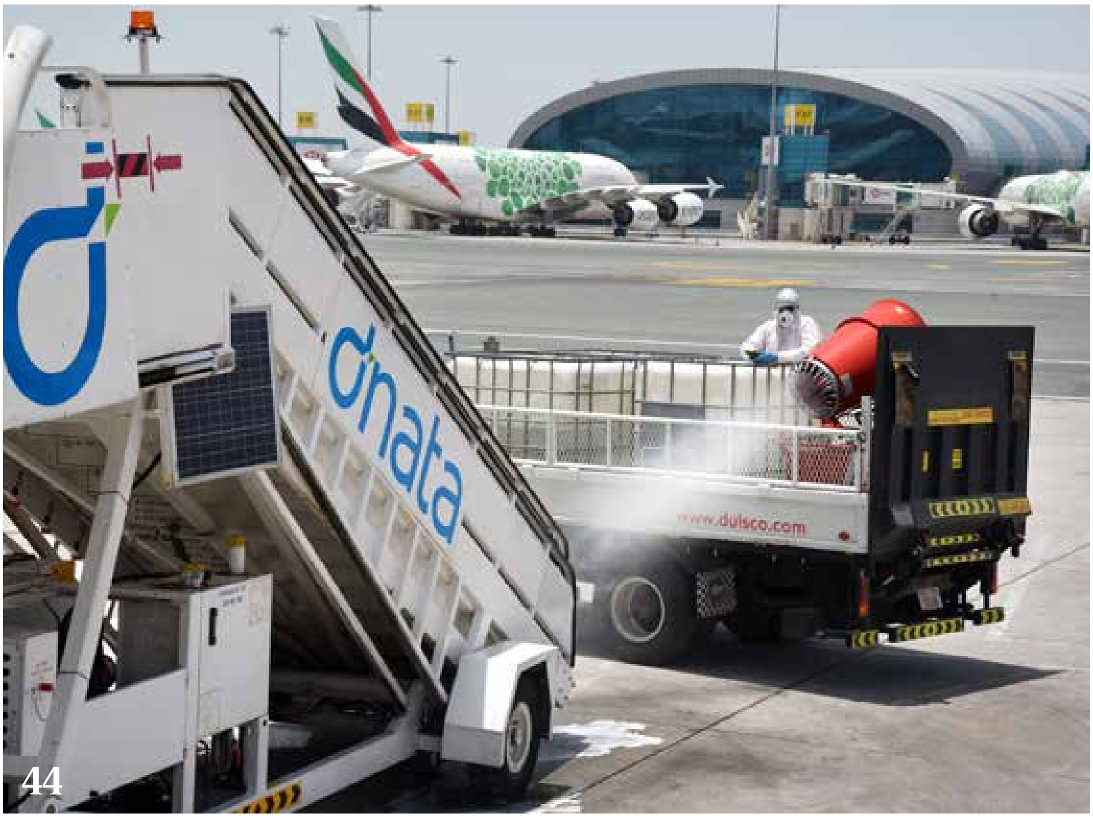
26 **Route development**
Asia-Pacific is still feeling the impact of Covid-19 in its aviation market

30 **Route development**
China will be the engine for aviation growth as travellers start flying again

36 **Airports**
Orlando International Airport explains its marketing plans as Americans return to the skies

40 **Technology**
Both Boeing and Airbus rethink operations as the Covid-19 pandemic continues to impact their businesses

44 **Ground handlers**
Ground handlers around the world continue to develop new ways of dealing with the pandemic



Divining an uncertain future

The future may be unclear, but easyJet's Johan Lundgren is still making plans for it, whatever shape it takes.

By Edward Robertson

Perhaps the most frustrating thing about the Covid-19 global pandemic is that once we seem to have a handle on it, the virus throws us another curveball.

Whether that takes the form of new variants, vaccine-rollout problems, new government regulations that often question logic, or people's reactions to the situation, life doesn't feel much clearer than a year ago when Covid-19 went from regional issue to global problem.

So when asked during an online CAPA Live interview in February about recent Eurocontrol predictions that aviation traffic levels in June could still be depressed by as much as 70 per cent compared with 2019, easyJet CEO

Johan Lundgren

Johan Lundgren is keen to make the point that the only certainty the future holds is uncertainty.

He says: "There are a number of scenarios out there, but let's be very clear: nobody knows. Nobody knows if it's going to be more or less than some of the stats you're mentioning. Of course, it's interesting to look at the scenarios, and some of them are based on some underlying assumptions that could well be true, but the fact is that this could change in a few weeks' time."

However, Lundgren believes that should the rollout of the vaccination programme across his European markets be judged a success by June, then the relaxation of governmental restrictions on flying will be met with a boom in the market.

"We can be very positively surprised if there is a positive continuation of the vaccination programme," he adds.

"It is most important that governments come out with a plan as to how they're going to unwind these restrictions that are in place, so we can look forward to a good summer because we know that there is underlying demand out there. This is not a question about demand, this is all about the restrictions that are in place."

Lundgren says a combination of the LCC's

Sustainability is key to aviation's growth

Keeping the future sustainable

EasyJet's boss is urging governments to avoid the temptation to tax aviation more in a bid to make the industry more sustainable.

Speaking in an interview during the February CAPA Live event online, CEO Johan Lundgren says sustainability remains a core concern for an industry that has been largely grounded during the Covid-19 pandemic.

However, while clearer skies might mean cleaner skies, he believes that when aviation returns introducing new taxes which increase costs with the aim of reducing demand would be a mistake.

Lundgren says: "The point is not to reduce flying, the point is to make sure that aviation has less impact on the environment.

"To only look at the demand side on this and say: 'Well, we should introduce taxes,' or: 'We should make it more expensive for people to fly,' is an awful, awful way of looking at it because it drives social inequality.

"It means that you go back to the days before the deregulation in the middle of the '90s, when flying was something that was available to wealthy and privileged people.

"Companies such as ours have allowed millions and millions of families and people to enjoy this product and service that weren't there before."

Lundgren also argues more taxes would only lower load factors, so making flying less efficient and a less green form of transport.

However, he admits that the ongoing pandemic will have an impact on the industry's work to become more sustainable as airlines focus their financial resources on surviving the ongoing and ever-changing rules that can see lockdowns and travel bans introduced with little to no notice.

Lundgren says: "This is the danger with the pandemic because it has removed, clearly, funds from the industry to invest into new technology that was so desperately needed.

"You see that some of the commitments that some airlines have made (to sustainability) have been withdrawn throughout this."

However, he adds airlines need to remain focused on increasing their sustainability not just for the sake of the environment and the industry, but also for their own bottom line.

"We know that customers coming out of this crisis are going to pay more attention on these things," he says.

own research in its top five markets and his previous experience of crises, ranging from 9/11 to the 2008 global financial crash, show that the leisure market will be the first to recover, followed by visiting friends and family, while business travel will be last.

With domestic flying also remaining more popular than international travel, he adds the airline will have to be both patient and nimble, not just to react to market demand but also to government restrictions.

"We want to wait as long as we possibly can before we start operating them (flights), putting them on sale, getting the crew in and start looking at the capacities versus demand," Lundgren says.

He believes this job will be made easier by the very nature of being an airline, especially if some countries are quicker to lower restrictions than others.

Lundgren adds: "We know that, for instance, if there are big variances between countries then there will be restrictions that are tighter and harder in one country than another. But the beauty of having an airline is you can move your assets.

"You can fly to different places, you can fly to where demand is. It's fair to say that the early indications of the demand that we're seeing for the summer is into the big, traditional holiday resorts, where people recognise that there's an infrastructure in place."

Business travel growth

Lundgren is also positive that although it might be last, the business travel market will return in strength as people become increasingly disillusioned with video conferencing and human nature reasserts itself.

"When it comes to establishing new relationships; when it comes to talking with more than one person; if you want to have a creative debate; if you want to start looking into complexities or if there are difficult decisions that needs to be made, meeting in person is far superior," he says.

"People and humans are social creatures; they want to meet and they want to travel. They want to establish those relationships, so I don't believe for a moment that there is going to be a structural shift of any significance. I'm sure there will be some changes but, don't forget, there will also be general underlying growth."

Lundgren adds easyJet will also be well

"We have turned every stone in this company and looked underneath it to see how we can be more efficient and how we can be more productive."

Johan Lundgren
easyJet CEO

placed to take advantage of the markets upon their return having undertaken the largest cost-out programme in its history during lockdown.

With a combined focus on right-sizing the company and increasing productivity, the airline also put many of the crew on part-time contracts in order to avoid mass staff redundancies.

He says: "We have turned every stone in this company and looked underneath it to see how we can be more efficient and how we can be more productive.

"If the cost isn't generating revenue or driving a superior customer satisfaction experience that, in its turn, drives more revenue, then it should go."

Legacy management

Lundgren argues this should also put the airline in a good position to grow at the expense of the competition, which is unlikely to be rival LCCs as easyJet only has a 3 per cent route overlap with Wizz Air, while Ryanair is 15 per cent at most. He adds: "The big overlap sits with the legacy carriers. We know there are retrenchments there and we are absolutely going to take the opportunity to grow when the demand is there and when the opportunity arises."

And while the future might remain unclear, Lundgren does have a plan for it. He adds: "We plan to have the flexibility to be able to grow, definitely take (market) share and definitely build on the opportunities we have.

"But we've also got to face the reality that there might be some time here with some suppressed demand, and that's what you've then got to work out and see what you're going to do to come out of this in the best financial way that you possibly can."

Of course, there must be more detail to easyJet's plan than this but, with the future continuing to remain as uncertain as it does, it will likely be a while before the fine print becomes apparent.

> ***"We've also got to face the reality that there might be some time here with some suppressed demand"***
>
> **Johan Lundgren**
> easyJet CEO

End of the American Dream

With aviation suffering from the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, Norwegian has cancelled its long-haul programme in a bid to survive

By Edward Robertson

Norwegian's decision to drop its entire long-haul network in order to focus on short-haul, European flights comes as it seeks to simplify its business and reduce its level of debt.

In 2019, the airline was operating a fleet of 156 Boeing aircraft, including 37 787 Dreamliners, 18 737 Maxs and 101 737-800s. However, a spokesman says all long-haul routes have long since come to an end, including all flights from the UK to the US and South America, flights from France, Italy, Spain and Norway to the US as well as Norway-Thailand.

The spokesman added while it is hard to quantify exactly how many long-haul flights were operating in 2019 and 2020,

Jacob Schram

in 2019 alone the LCC operated 18,528 transatlantic flights.

Since 2019, the number of aircraft in the airline's fleet has dropped to 131 and the spokesman says Norwegian is already in conversation with lessors regarding the spare aircraft, as well as having plans to sell any it owns that are now surplus to requirement.

Of the aircraft that Norwegian plans to keep, in February this year it was operating eight 737s, down from a total of 15 in the last three months of 2020.

The new plan will see the airline continue to operate initially 50 narrowbody aircraft on both domestic Norwegian routes as well as international ones across the Nordics and to key European destinations.

However, the spokesman is remaining tight-lipped about the exact nature of the new short-haul programme, revealing only that Norwegian would operate routes that show strong demand.

The airline is then planning to operate an additional 20 narrowbody aircraft in 2022.

Meanwhile, the long-haul programme will end thanks not just to the ongoing situation which has seen the airline's Dreamliner fleet

"2020 was an exceptionally difficult year"

Just the briefest of glances over Norwegian's fourth quarter results in 2020 reveal the extent of Covid-19's impact on the airline's fortunes.

As the report states: "The pandemic continues to have a negative impact on the aviation industry. Demand was severely affected by changing travel restrictions and the continued spread of Covid-19 across Norwegian's key markets."

The statement adds that of the current fleet of 131 aircraft, an average of 15 were operational in the last three months of the year, between them carrying 574,000 customers.

The passenger numbers equated to a 92 per cent decrease year on year while capacity measured in available seat kilometres (ASK) was down 96 per cent and passenger traffic measured in revenue passenger kilometre (RPK) was down 97 per cent.

Despite the considerable reduction in ASK, the airline was unable to boost load factors, recording 52.4 per cent for the entire period and down 32.5 percentage points compared to 2019's figure.

While Norwegian might have been able to alleviate some of the pain by reducing operating expenses before leasing and depreciation by 82 per cent, the net loss for the airline was NOK 16.6 billion ($1.95 billion).

Norwegian CEO Jacob Schram says: "2020 was an exceptionally difficult year for the aviation industry and for Norwegian. Consequently, the fourth quarter results are as expected.

"Unfortunately, many of our employees are furloughed or have lost their jobs, partly due to the company's decision to cease long-haul operations.

"Despite the difficulties the pandemic has caused, there is a great fighting spirit and engagement within the company, and together we will build new Norwegian when we exit the reconstruction processes.

"Now, we are doing everything we can do to emerge as a more financially secure and competitive airline with an improved customer offering, and as soon as Europe begins to reopen, we will be ready to welcome more customers on board."

Nor has 2021 started off looking any better. New figures released by the airline show that in January, 74,224 customers flew with the airline, a 96 per cent decrease year on year. Reflecting the anticipated bad figures, ASK was down 98 per cent while the load factor was just 35.9 per cent, down 45 percentage points on the previous January.

In January, 74,224 customers flew with Norwegian, a decrease of 96 percent compared to the same period last year. The capacity (ASK) was down 98 percent, and the total passenger traffic (RPK) was down by 99 percent. The load factor was 35.9 percent, down 45 percentage points.

Jacob Schram, CEO of Norwegian, said: "The pandemic continues to have a negative impact on our business as travel restrictions remain. We are doing everything in our power to come out of the examinership as a stronger, more competitive airline and we look forward to welcoming more customers on board as travel restrictions are lifted."

Norwegian operated eight aircraft on average in January, mainly on domestic routes in Norway. The company operated 96.8 percent of its scheduled flights in January, whereof 90.4 percent departed on time.


Norwegian's Dreamliners have carried passengers for the last time

grounded, but also because of the extreme uncertainty over future demand.

Norwegian CEO Jacob Schram says: "I am pleased to present a robust business plan today, which will provide a new start for the company. By focusing our operation on a short-haul network, we aim to attract existing and new investors, serve our customers and support the wider infrastructure and travel industry in Norway and across the Nordics and Europe.

"The Covid-19 pandemic has profoundly affected the entire aviation industry. Travel restrictions and changing government advice continue to negatively influence demand for long-haul travel, and Norwegian's entire Boeing 787 Dreamliner fleet has been grounded since March, 2020.

"Future demand remains highly uncertain. Under these circumstances a long-haul operation is not viable for Norwegian and these operations will not continue.

"The consequence of this decision is that the board of directors of the legal entities employing primarily long-haul staff in Italy, France, the UK and the US have contacted insolvency practitioners. Norwegian will continue to assess profitable opportunities as the world adapts and recovers from the impact of Covid-19.

"Our short-haul network has always been the backbone of Norwegian and will form the basis of a future resilient business model.

"Our focus is to rebuild a strong, profitable Norwegian so that we can safeguard as many jobs as possible.

"We do not expect customer demand in the long-haul sector to recover in the near future, and our focus will be on developing our short-haul network as we emerge from the reorganisation process."

The company overhaul will also see a focus on the finances, with its debt expected to be reduced to NOK20 billion ($2.37 billion) while as much as NOK5 billion ($590 million) in capital will be raised through a combination of a rights issue to current shareholders, a private placement and a hybrid instrument.

Schram added the airline has also reinitiated a dialogue with the Norwegian government about possible state participation based on the new business plan.

Should it win both private and public support, we must hope that Norwegian has a strong future. Covid-19 has caused several European airlines to collapse and while the number of carriers that have suffered this fate is not as high as some have predicted, the loss of any more airlines should be considered very sad indeed, especially when a vaccination programme is being slowly rolled out across the continent.

iPort

Departure Control Systems

A state-of-the-art Departure Control System with the best Total Cost of Ownership in the industry

BEST TOTAL COST OF OWNERSHIP IN THE INDUSTRY

LOW COST AIRPORT CONNECTIVITY MODEL

FAST IMPLEMENTATION

INTUITIVE & EASY TO USE

SHORT TRAINING TIME

WIDE RANGE OF SELF-SERVICE OPTIONS

WEB BASED APPLICATION

CONTINUOUS DEPLOYMENT

GROUND HANDLING IT SPECIALISTS

info@res2.eu | +31 (0) 85 130 36 60 | www.iport.aero

Res2

Reshaping aviation

Reconfigured fleets, improved demand forecasting and increased operational flexibility will all be key in driving the world's post-Covid-19 commercial aviation industry, says Cirium CEO Jeremy Bowen.


Jeremy Bowen

The worst year in aviation history might be behind us, but government-enforced lockdowns and border closures continue to restrict movement and reduce demand for commercial aviation worldwide.

Earlier this year, Cirium's *Airline Insights Review* revealed the pandemic had rewound global passenger airline traffic to levels last seen in 1999. A staggering 21 years of aviation growth was wiped out in a matter of months.

This led to more than 40 commercial airlines ceasing or suspending operations in 2020 around the world,

while we witnessed the profound impact of the well-oiled flight scheduling system thrown into chaos. The year closed with two thirds of the world's passenger fleet still grounded – some of which will never take off again – and those aircraft in service are flying significantly fewer hours.

However, there are some silver linings. Carriers welcomed the opportunity to return newer aircraft to the skies, particularly those which have an excellent range such as the Airbus A320neo aircraft and the recently reapproved Boeing 737 Max. In fact, at the end of 2020, only 10 per cent of A320neo aircraft were in storage.

So, what about the future? At the IATA 2020 annual general meeting held online in November 2020, it was predicted that the number of flying passengers would not return to 2019 levels until 2024. That is one of the more optimistic scenarios.

Until Covid-19 vaccines are rolled out more widely, the airlines will be impacted for some time – particularly as the pandemic continues to halt international travel. Airlines are already finding new ways to try and re-grow air travel through building traveller confidence with safety measures and communications and offering testing strategies.

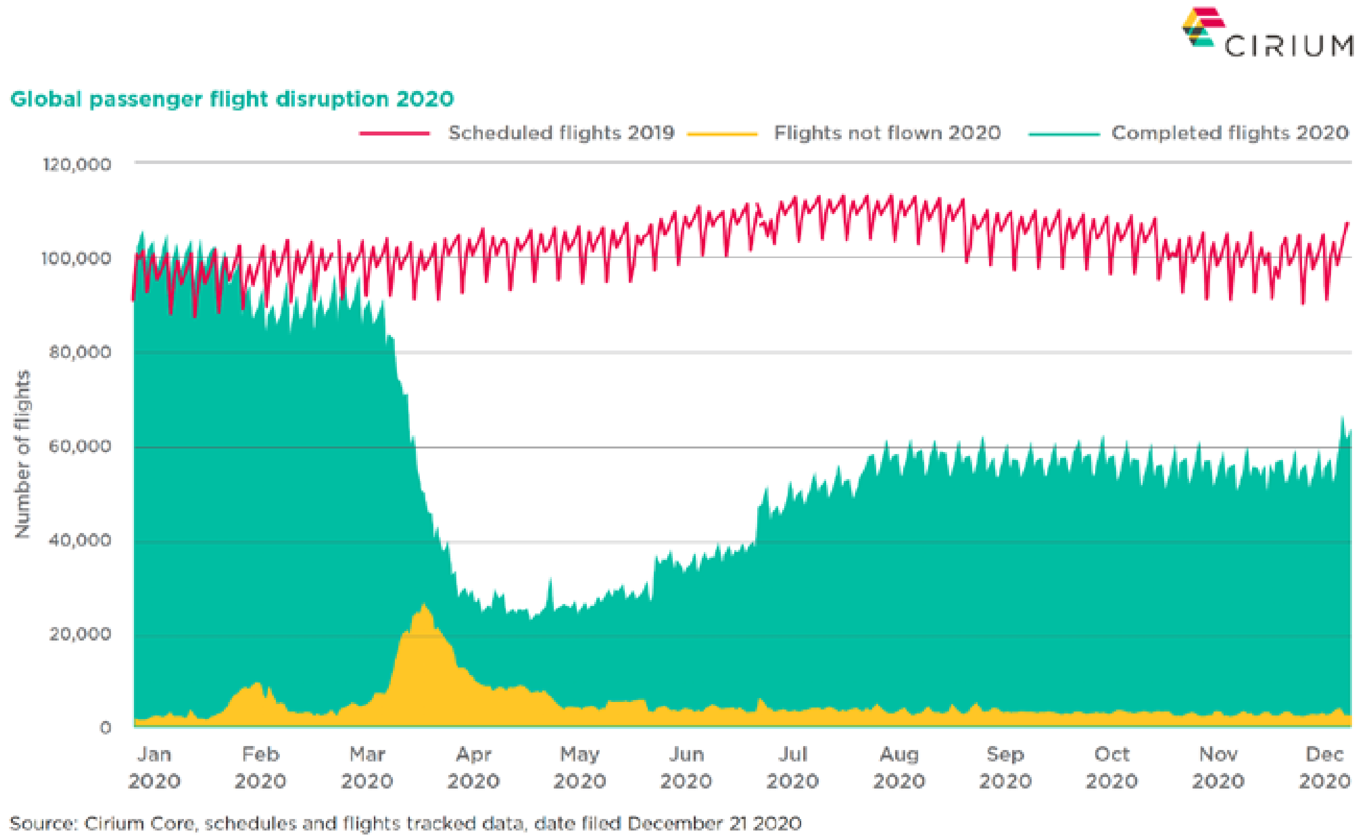
What the pandemic does enable is the opportunity for the carriers, especially the major ones, to try new things without upsetting the boat too much. For example, retiring and reconfiguring aircraft, uncovering new ways to forecast travel demand and adopting more flexible flight scheduling methods.

Retirement and reconfiguration

First, the sudden demise of certain aircraft types in 2020 is one of the most visible effects of the pandemic on aviation – and the trend is set to continue.

For the A380, in particular, the outlook in 2021 remains bleak. Many airlines have already declared the aircraft too large for their current needs, while Airbus has announced it will cease production completely. Only Emirates remains committed to the A380, announcing new aircraft deliveries.

Operators struggle to fill larger aircraft as demand for long-haul travel continues to stand at a halt, while such aircraft are generally less efficient per seat than next-generation twin-engine rivals such as the Airbus A350 and the Boeing 787 Dreamliner. However, some aircraft types in storage



will be converted to freighters. At least 70 aircraft conversions happened in 2020 and this is expected to increase in 2021 to approximately 90. The trend is largely driven by the strong growth in e-commerce, helped by customers making their purchases online.

In addition, more than 150 commercial jets were used for cargo in 2020, albeit the aircraft did not undergo a physical conversion. Many of these aircraft are being used in cargo networks to replace the temporary loss of cargo capacity until long-haul passenger networks recover.

Improved demand forecasting

Before the pandemic, airlines relied on historical bookings data to forecast travel demand, although this saw carriers operating flights with empty seats. The impact of Covid-19 exacerbated this inefficiency as historical bookings were no longer comparable.

In Q4 2020 alone, bookings were down 78 per cent compared to the same period in 2019. Adding to the unpredictability, the summer period saw 40 per cent of bookings being made at the last minute – as little as one to three days before travel.

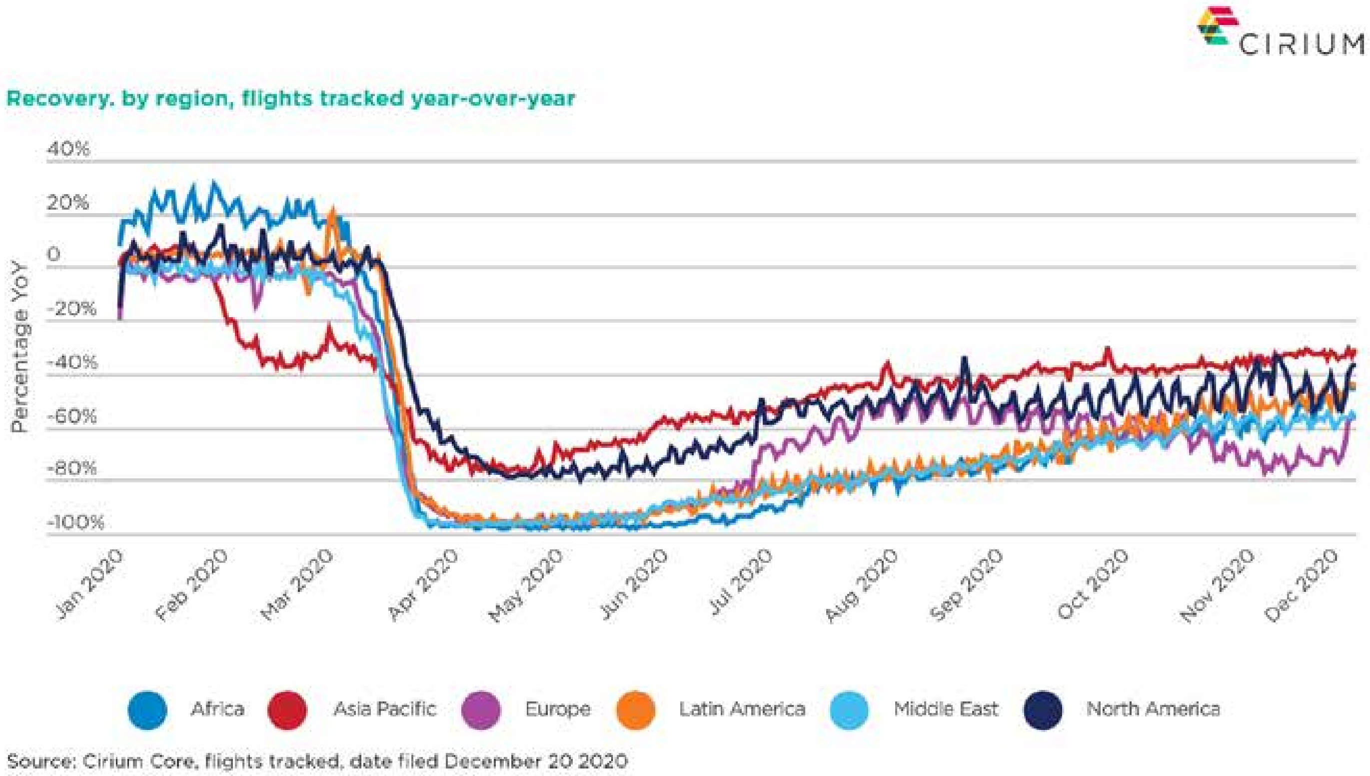
New indicators are needed instead, such as travellers' online interactions, social media activity and their sentiment – these can be monitored around global real-world events and trending activity. Signals using artificial intelligence (AI) can automate the information for airlines to understand where flight activity may increase.

Such indicators were used by airlines as a secondary source previously but are now becoming primary indicators to predict future travel demand and develop pricing strategies.

Airline operational flexibility

In a pre-Covid world, most travellers would book flights between six and 12 months ahead. This long-range booking window has fallen to just six to eight weeks, so airlines must be able to react much more quickly when it comes to demand pricing and equipment use.

The increased volatility of flight scheduling and booking numbers must also be met with dynamic approaches to aircraft and crew rostering and there is a clear need for closer cooperation between network planning departments and scheduling.



The transition might prove challenging but dynamic flight scheduling will help break down the legacy silos which continue to exist between commercial planning network teams and revenue management. In the months ahead, airlines will thrive on operational resilience and seamless collaboration.

Other trends Cirium has identified include greater consolidation of airlines, particularly in the Asia-Pacific, where more domestic competitors will merge or be acquired. Merging airlines usually leads to a stronger single entity and, against the backdrop of the pandemic, this increased level of resilience might just prove to be an important asset.

Meanwhile, the implementation of AI technology will accelerate and automate the traveller experience. Real-time proactive information for travellers, including notifications and alerts, will become more critical than ever.

With so much uncertainty for passengers around flying during Covid-19, the onus is on airlines to communicate more effectively about the status of flights automatically and improve the customer experience.

But AI is not just about alerts and notifications. It has huge potential to streamline the entire travel experience, from the minute the passenger leaves their front door.

In the post-Covid world, we should expect to see more emphasis on a touchless airport and in-flight experience – and so we're likely to see new technologies come into use as airlines seek to improve the experience of flying.

Lastly, the leasing sector is likely to take on an even greater role as the financial struggle for airlines prevails. In 2020, leasing companies pushed past the 50 per cent ownership share of the global fleet for the first time and the trend is set to continue.

Sale-and-leasebacks in particular are an immediate source of cash – something airlines desperately need in these challenging times.

One thing we know for sure, is that aviation has a proven record of resilience. At Cirium, we are confident the industry will weather this difficult period and emerge in better shape – with younger, more fuel-efficient aircraft – gradually navigating its way to recovery in the years ahead.

Cash in or cash out

The news surrounding Covid-19 may be improving but airlines still face a battle to survive, the Emirates boss believes

By Edward Robertson

As 2021 gathers pace, there is an air of unease remaining over the aviation industry as the Covid-19 pandemic continues to bite.

When the virus first became a global issue, aircraft around the world were grounded, creating very real concerns that countless airlines would be forced out of business.

However, by CAPA's own estimation, only about 30 airlines closed down for good thanks to a combination of government backing and some strong investment activity.

While this may be a relief to the industry, Emirates president Sir Tim Clark is warning that the situation is even more precarious this year, as despite vaccinations being rolled out globally there is little to indicate when commercial aviation may resume again at any significant level of activity.

Speaking in a one-on-one interview in the online CAPA Live event in February, he says: "The problem is that the airline industry and all the associated aerospace sectors ... have had a year of this now.

"Last year people thought that, one, there would be an end in sight; and two, that they would supplement the cash requirements of non-operating by debt provision or by state aid or whatever it was, to a point where they could get through, certainly for the first quarter of this year. Well, that hasn't happened.

"It looks as though it's going to go on for longer; and therefore you see the cries from the heart, from a number of entities within our industry, as well as the players in the industry saying: 'We're going to run short of cash very quickly. You need to understand this.'"

Fundamentally flawed

However, Clark adds while the pandemic has had a very real, and very alarming, impact on the aviation industry, he believes Covid-19 has been a catalyst for any airline failures, as opposed to the fundamental cause.

He says: "I'm not sure it's the right time to start thinking about whether your business model is fit for purpose. If it was fit for purpose prior to the pandemic, then it's probably going to be fit for purpose post pandemic.

"If there was a fundamental problem prior to that, then there's no point blaming the pandemic for the fact that you failed. It was going to happen anyway, perhaps now sooner rather than later."

This is not to say that staff at Emirates have not used the downtime of the last year to fine tune the business, with a lot of work focusing on how best to manage the supply chain that allows the airline to operate.

Which is just as well. Despite the initial optimism that Clark says he felt when Covid-19 vaccines were created, new mutant variations of the virus and problems with vaccination programmes around them mean: "We're not going to see capacity return to the levels I'd hoped in July and August. I think that might only happen in the last quarter of this year."

And it is this continued delay to earning serious cash that may yet spell the

> ***"I'm not sure it's the right time to start thinking about whether your business model is fit for purpose."***
>
> **Sir Tim Clark**
> CEO, Emirates

Dubai International Airport acts as a super hub for Emirates

demise of many airlines, even the ones that were originally well placed to survive the ongoing commercial trauma caused by few to no customers. In which case, he believes governments will be forced to step in again with the required money.

Clark says: “There is an obligation to ensure this sector survives and there’s no point worrying about state aid or who gets what. First thing – get it (aviation) going and keep it healthy and active as it’s so important to the global economy and deal with the rest afterwards.”

He is also confident that the consumer demand will be there once aircraft are allowed to return to the skies again.

“My view is that once we are through this, demand for air travel will return and consumer confidence will return,” Clark says.

“It may be slightly more finessed in the sense that people may be smarter about what they actually want. Their aspirations will be the same, but how they get the aspirations may be slightly different.”

Instead, Clark is more concerned about how the world’s airlines will initially meet the demand when it returns, as many aircraft have been mothballed during the pandemic while both Boeing and Airbus will take time to get production levels of new aircraft up and running again.

“So if you take this all together, there is likely to be a shortage of capacity principally in the medium and long-haul markets,” he says. “And given that the capacity … and the demand … will be very strong in multiple segments, there could be a supply and demand issue.”

Even though this could create monopolies on routes which Clark believes would be of benefit to an airline with the scale Emirates enjoys, he is hopeful that rival airlines will be ready and waiting to pick up the slack as quickly as possible.

He adds: “It’s far better to have healthy competition and that the carriers that are doing a good job in all the geographical sectors of the world can continue to operate. It serves no purpose for one carrier to dominate and price gouge or whatever; that is short-term thinking. It’s not healthy thinking and it doesn’t do anybody any favours.”

Emirates plans

Despite his pleas for a strong global aviation market, Clark admits the airline, which has about 250 aircraft in total and is still flying to 104 of its pre-pandemic 142 destinations, is well placed to meet demand once aircraft are permitted to return to the skies in serious numbers.

He says: “From a predatorial point of view, a competitive point of view, we have a very large fleet, which, unlike other carriers, (we have not) discarded or retired or put into mothballs.

“The airplanes are being kept in an advanced state of readiness for operations as soon as we need them.

There is a view that there will be a stripping out of capacity over the next two or three years. Capacity has been taken out and will not be replaced."

Furthermore, Clark believes Emirates' longer term planning, which includes moving to more fuel-efficient aircraft as its Airbus A380s are slowly phased out, will mean it still has a network 30 per cent bigger in the number of cities served by 2035.

He adds the plan remains largely unchanged and also rests on Dubai International Airport remaining key to the strategy as the airline's super hub.

Clark says: "There was never any suggestion that the business model and the centrality of the super hub (in Dubai) that we created would alter in any way. In many respects, it got larger, more focused, and as we grew the hub, the unit cost of operating the hub fell. It got the benefits of scale to the level that we have at the moment."

Which leaves Clark and the airline feeling optimistic about the future, despite the dialling up of the current threat level to airlines globally as the pandemic continues to bite.

He is also confident that new sectors will emerge in the market as a result of the pandemic and that Emirates is well placed to benefit from them. It is simply a matter of time, and factors beyond his control, that will allow the serious resumption of service.

Clark says: "How and when these airplanes come in will be a question of managing where we think demand is likely to be in the countries and whether the manufacturers are in a position to deliver at the pace and numbers that we want."

Which, under the current circumstances is about as optimistic as you can get, especially when there are many airlines out there that may yet have closed down by the end of this year.

"It serves no purpose for one carrier to dominate and price gouge or whatever; that is short-term thinking."

Sir Tim Clark
CEO, Emirates

Emirates' partnership with Qantas is in 'deep freeze'

Shifting alliances

Alliances face a crossroads as the Covid-19 pandemic forces airlines to re-evaluate their business strategy from top to bottom.

Speaking in a CAPA Live interview online in February, Emirates president Sir Tim Clark believes the repercussions from the current crisis are yet to be fully understood, let alone felt.

And when it comes to alliances, he argues that the changing global environment will either force more airlines to join them out of economic necessity or, alternatively, abandon them as they seek more nimble models of cooperation with their rivals.

Clark says: "In times of distress and difficulty, the aviation community has had a habit of forming clusters to protect itself from the trading conditions across the global economy. We've seen that in the past.

"On the other hand, there may be a view that perhaps the dominance of the way the alliances work may not be fit for purpose in the new way of doing things."

He adds instead of choosing the safety blanket of size that alliances offer, a strategic rethink among airlines, coupled with Airbus and Boeing's increasing focus on the creation and production of long-haul, twin-jet aircraft could create new opportunities.

Clark says: "These (aircraft) change the needs for carriers which hitherto had allowed their geographical markets to be controlled by others. They now have the ability to move to the city pairs that they originally shared value with.

"And do I see a little bit more of that? Yes. Prior to the pandemic, it was already being talked about. And that's not to say that there won't be groupings, but I would suggest that those groupings may span alliances, that they may involve players in other parts of the world. Qantas is a OneWorld member, they work with us."

However, Clark admits the current working relationship with Qantas is undergoing a "deep-freeze situation" as the Australian airline has cancelled its entire international operation currently, while its domestic programme undergoes regular upheaval as Australian states close their borders to one another whenever Covid-19 outbreaks strike.

He adds: "But the relationship, I hope, will not change. It's always been a very good one, hopefully profitable for both sides."

Similarly, Clark is hopeful of working with local rival Etihad, with cargo potentially providing an inroad to a closer relationship, providing competition rules allow and neither brand is diluted by the other.

Picking up the pieces

Cargo might have helped Korean Air navigate the Covid-19 pandemic so far, but staff are preparing for new ways of working in the future

By Edward Robertson

Perhaps one of the hardest things about living through the Covid-19 pandemic has been working out what to do with all the excess time available.

Whether it is passing the endless hours at home during lockdown or running a business that can no longer perform its key functions, trying to fill in the downtime in a meaningful way has proved to be a challenge even for the most productive of people.

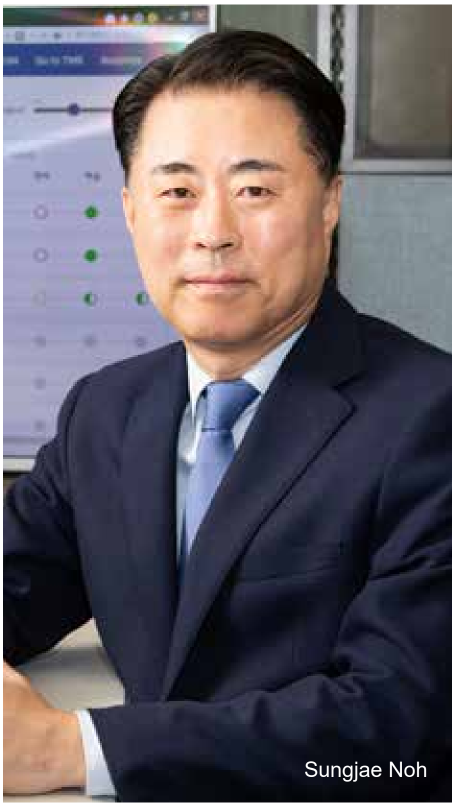
A particular problem for airlines has been while the present remains so uncertain, the future is not much clearer, thanks to governments still ready to impose flight restrictions should new waves of Covid-19 occur, while IATA has predicted passenger demand in 2021 will be half that of 2019.

While this might mean route development programmes are largely on hold, airline staff are finding new ways of ensuring that once international commercial aviation resumes, they will be ready and waiting to welcome passengers to the post-pandemic travel world.

One such airline that embodies this philosophy is Korean Air, which has just released its tentative 2020 financial results which show it still made an operating profit of KRW238.3 billion ($219 million) from KRW7.4 trillion ($6.8 billion) in sales.

Despite the initial good news surrounding an airline making a profit in such a difficult year, the airline's president Keehong Woo says the

Cargo has been a key revenue generator for Korean Air


Sungjae Noh

success was largely down to cost cutting and cargo sales rising by 66 per cent due to increased global demand for anything from Covid-19 diagnostic kits to automobile parts.

The passenger side of the business did not fare nearly so well; sales fell by 74 per cent since the start of the pandemic.

Handling Covid-19 on the ground

But what does this mean on the ground? Korean Air managing vice president airport customer service Sungjae Noh says the impact has been heavily felt by all employees.

He adds: "Due to the pandemic, it has been an unprecedented, disastrous year for everyone, but especially for those in the travel industry. The demand dropped sharply and our 2020 international flights were reduced by about 61 per cent and capacity by around 82 per cent.

"Sadly, Incheon Airport, one of the largest Asian hubs, is no longer bustling with people; it is very quiet but hopefully this will soon improve as people start travelling again."

Noh adds Covid-19 started becoming a serious problem in South Korea from February 2020 and was felt most profoundly in May, when the airline was operating as few as eight flights a day to any one of 24 cities.

This is a considerable drop on the 150 international flights to 108 cities Korean Air would have operated on a normal day, although the situation turned out to be far more complex than simply cutting capacity as the airline responded to each country's new laws.

Noh says: "In addition, travel restrictions and requirements were surprisingly different and inconsistent, which created chaos for airlines and customers."

Safety in the time of Covid-19

However, the airline got to work on preparing for the future and prioritised a 'Care First' programme to emphasise safety measures introduced throughout the passenger journey.

This included teaming up with Incheon International Airport to work on a number of practices including temperature checks both on arrival at the airport and on boarding the aircraft, social distancing throughout both environments and plexiglass screens at check-in and service desks.

The airline has also introduced a Covid-19 test centre at the airport, promoted an enhanced self check-in system to travellers and introduced a back-to-front boarding system on its aircraft.

Noh says: "Korean Air has overcome crises before in its 50-year history, we are resilient and in the past we have turned these challenges into opportunities.

"Health and safety standards and protocols have become critical and we will maintain the highest standards of cleanliness, whilst continuing to invest in technology and discover opportunities for innovation."

Future thinking

Future innovations under discussion with Incheon currently include the introduction of biometric technologies, including biometric check-in, while talks with IATA could lead to the introduction of its Travel Pass.

Nor has the work been limited to the passenger experience, Noh says, with the business itself also feeling the effects of the changes.

He adds: "During the pandemic Korean Air has successfully restructured the organisation to better focus on the core aviation business and strong cargo operation. In particular, Korean Air is committed to transporting Covid-19 vaccine and medical supplies safely across the world."

The airline's initial results show this has been achieved by raising KRW1.1 trillion ($880 million) worth of capital through new shares, a move it was hoping to repeat in March 2021 with the aim of raising a further KRW3.3 trillion ($2.6 billion).

Korean has also sold its inflight catering and duty-free business unit to South Korean private equity fund Hahn & Company for KRW981.7 billion ($864 million).

However, perhaps the most interesting move is Korean Air's acquisition of local rival Asiana Airlines for KRW1.8 trillion

Korean ramps up ground handling Covid-19 safeguards

While Korean Air has been doing all that it can to make the customer travel experience safer, it has also focused on ensuring rampside staff adopt new practices.

Managing vice president airport customer service Sungjae Noh says although ramp operations for passenger flights were reduced by 61 per cent in response to the global pandemic as governments closed down airspace, cargo increased by 2.5 per cent in 2020.

He adds the closed airspaces brought a fresh set of issues for staff to handle, further compounded by a spate of bad weather.

Noh says: "As many international flights were suspended it was challenging to secure enough parking areas for grounded aircraft. To manage the situation, following discussions with the airport authority, we secured additional parking space to accommodate all the grounded airplanes.

"In addition to the Covid challenges we also experienced unusually harsh winter weather and typhoons in the summer in Korea, which further hindered our fleet operations as we had to tie up all the grounded jets to prevent any damage."

Once the immediate problems were solved, new ways of working were introduced with Korea Airport Service, an outsourcing company for Korean Air's ramp operations, ensuring all staff wore personal protective equipment (PPE) when entering the aircraft and that their temperatures were regularly checked too.

The ramp bus and staff areas were disinfected frequently, while the disinfectant used on aircraft interiors was strengthened. Monthly cleans were carried out on a daily basis, with even higher levels of cleanliness applied to aircraft that had carried any passengers with a suspected Covid-19 case.

Noh added Korean Air has also provided more education and training opportunities in time for when operations resume fully.

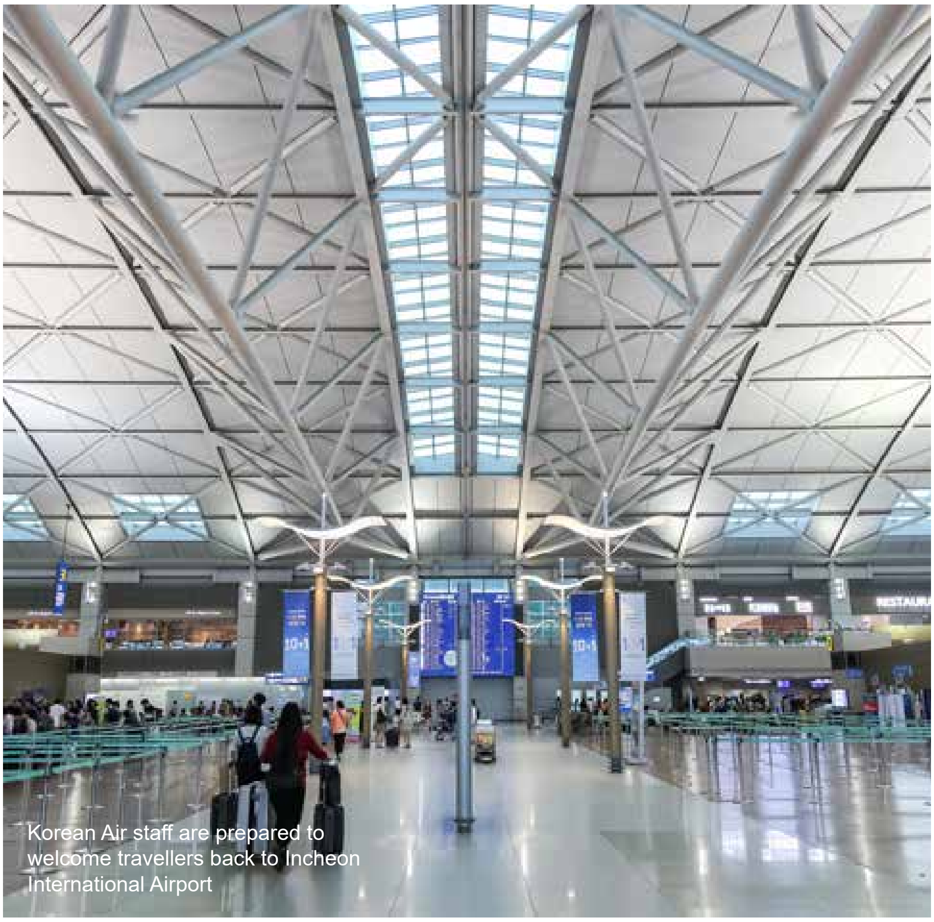
($1.6 billion), with regulatory approval expected this year.

Providing the deal is given the go-ahead, more than 80 aircraft will be added to Korean's own fleet of more than 150 aircraft and give it the lion's share of the South Korean domestic and international markets.

Noh says: "Recently Korean Air announced the acquisition of Asiana Airlines, a bold move that will further enhance the competitiveness of the Korean aviation industry with more streamlined route operations and lower costs."

And we can be sure that, should the deal go through, Korean Air staff will be more than ready to navigate the much larger airline towards a happy landing.

After all, they have had the time on their hands to be fully prepared and presumably, like the rest of the world, will be pleased of the opportunity to do something positive in anticipation of a brighter future.



Korean Air staff are prepared to welcome travellers back to Incheon International Airport

United thinking

United Airlines boss Scott Kirby is questioning Covid-19 aviation dogma, from mass airline consolidation in the US to the return of business travel

The ongoing Covid-19 pandemic is unlikely to lead to a rash of consolidations among American airlines, the boss of United Airlines believes.

Speaking at the online CAPA Live event in March, the carrier's CEO Scott Kirby says when the crisis first struck, he thought certain airlines could be open for acquisition as they fell on financial hard times.

However, the reaction to the crisis with airlines accessing finance means he now believes they are far safer commercially than could have been expected, so reducing the need for consolidation.

Kirby says: "We've been able to raise so much liquidity, not just through the government but through the private capital markets, that no one has a liquidity issue. Everyone is going to survive.

"The reason I thought it would happen earlier is because the choice would be something even worse and no one is faced with that choice today, and so I don't think there'll be any major consolidation here in the US, but I guess we'll see.

Having raised more than $26 billion in liquidity and cutting cash burn, Kirby is also bullish about the future. In particular, he argues that United is prepared to defend its market share against LCCs, which in the past have sought to take advantage of any problems that cause mainline carriers to pull back from the market, particularly if they lead to an increase in oil prices.

He says: "One of the analysts wrote last week ... that when times are tough, the network carriers push back from the table and leave the table scraps for the low cost carriers, and everyone is happy. I can promise you, United Airlines is not doing that."

Kirby says instead the airline is preparing to take delivery of 94 narrow body aircraft in 2022 and 2023 that can start working on its domestic programme.

"Compare that 94 aircraft to the fleet size of some of those other airlines and that'll give you a scale of what we're planning to do," he adds."The growth plan was working great at United before."

Like many others in aviation Kirby also believes the domestic and leisure markets will be the first to recover and the airline will be able to take advantage of this thanks to its decision to get rid of change fees on economy and premium cabin tickets for flights, initially in the US or to Mexico or the


Scott Kirby

Caribbean. Further down the line the policy will be spread out to all international travel originating in the US.

However, Kirby does not subscribe to the theory that long-haul travel will take considerably longer to bounce back.

He says: "It is true that the leisure and domestic market is going to be the first to recover. But I will bet you dollars to donuts that in 2023 long-haul international is going to be outperforming domestic by a very wide margin. It's just a timing issue."

Kirby is also questioning the accepted wisdom that the Covid-19 pandemic will be particularly deadly for the business travel market, largely thanks to the belief that the use of videoconferencing tools like Zoom during the lockdown will continue to be popular even when the skies reopen.

He says: "Business travel is not transactional. It's about relationships. This is a question about human nature instead of technology and human nature has not changed.

"I've been fond of saying the first time someone loses a sale to a competitor who showed up in person is the last time we'll do a sales call on Zoom, and that's going to be true."

"Business travel is not transactional. It's about relationships. This is a question about human nature instead of technology and human nature has not changed."

Scott Kirby
CEO, United Airlines

Surviving the waves

Asia-Pacific is still feeling the impact of Covid-19 on its commercial aviation sector more than a year after the region was the first to be hit by the pandemic and ensuing response

By Edward Robertson

About a year on from the outbreak of the Covid-19 virus in China and its initial spread in the Asia-Pacific region before travelling across the world, and the region's aviation sector remains depressed.

Preliminary traffic figures for January, 2021, released by the Association of Asia Pacific Airlines (AAPA), show that the tighter border restrictions imposed by governments across the world continue to curtail international flights.

Indeed, the only glimmer of hope to be seen is in the growing air cargo demand as world trade begins to pick up momentum again.

"The uneven roll-out of vaccinations across the world will only delay the full reopening of borders."

Subhas Menon
director general, AAPA

AAPA director general Subhas Menon says the latest figures show that in the first month of the year, a total of 1.3 million international passengers flew with an Asia-Pacific airline, just 3.9 per cent of the 33.5 million passengers who flew with the same carriers in January 2020.

Offered seat capacity was 12.1 per cent of the January 2020 volume, while the international passenger load factor averaged 27 per cent for the month, a significant 54 percentage point decline from the 81 per cent achieved in the corresponding month last year, before international aviation felt the full impact of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Air cargo activity was more positive, with demand measured in freight tonne kilometres (FTK) having grown by 0.3 per cent, despite freight capacity levels falling by 25 per cent year on year thanks to the decline in passenger belly-hold space.

Menon says: "Renewed efforts to contain Covid-19 through lockdowns and border restrictions have again affected international passenger demand, which remains close to a standstill.

"The uneven roll-out of vaccinations across the world will only delay the full reopening of borders."


Both Qantas and Air New Zealand have seen operations suffer

He argues that the crisis remains a serious threat to airlines, adding: "In this extremely challenging operating environment, airlines are struggling to survive.

"While some airlines are receiving financial support, further assistance would be needed for most airlines to stay afloat, given that international borders remain largely shuttered."

Menon adds that as well as fighting to survive now, many airlines have one eye on the future to ensure that when travellers are ready to return to the skies, so carriers will be ready to receive them in a post Covid-19 world.

He adds: "Meanwhile, the industry is working with several stakeholders to prepare the ground for the sustained resumption of air travel, notably on contactless digitalised tools and passenger facilitation protocols to ensure a safe and seamless journey for travellers."

Closed corridors

One of the key hopes for restarting international aviation has been the establishment of travel corridors between two countries, allowing citizens of each free travel between the nations in question.

It has long been thought New Zealand and Australia could pioneer the practice, having both controlled their Covid-19 outbreaks through stringent lockdowns and the closing of their borders to all but a few outsiders.

However, speaking at the release of Auckland Airport's half-year results for the period ending December 31, 2020, CEO Adrian Littlewood says he is not expecting to see any such measures introduced this year.

He adds: "Although the government remains committed to restarting two-way, trans-Tasman travel, and we support this, for the purposes of this underlying earnings guidance we have assumed there will be no material quarantine-free, two-way Tasman travel during the remainder of the 2021 financial year. It also assumes no further lockdowns of an extended duration during the period."

The launch of the travel corridor would have been a considerable boost for the country's largest airport, having seen its total number of passengers for the six-month period fall by 73.4 per cent to 2.8 million, compared to the same period in 2019.

The drop in numbers was largely thanks to the 96.8 per cent fall in international travellers with transits included, to just 187,003, while the domestic market has remained a little more stable, having decreased by 44.6 per cent to 2.6 million.

Comparisons of Auckland Airport's plight with Sydney Airport, Australia's largest gateway, across the Tasman initially tell the same story, with its 2020 full-year total passenger numbers down by 74.7 per cent year on year to 11.2 million.

However, Sydney kept a firmer grip on international travellers with a 77.5 per cent fall in the total number, while the domestic sector saw a drop of 72.9 per cent.

Sydney Airport CEO Geoff Culbert says: "The recovery won't be linear, but our experience shows that when restrictions are eased and borders come down, people are keen to travel.

Sydney saw passenger numbers fall by three quarters at its airport

"With the vaccine rolling out, we are cautiously optimistic that 2021 will see the industry begin to recover. We take great confidence from our financial and operational response to Covid-19, which puts us in a strong position to manage through to the recovery and make the most of it when it arrives."

Airline issues

Any such recovery would be music to the ears of both country's flag carriers, Qantas and Air New Zealand, with the former being particularly hard hit in both its domestic and international markets.

Qantas group CEO Alan Joyce says in the last six months of 2020 when a second wave of Covid-19 struck the state of Victoria, the airline was forced to suspend "virtually all of our international flying and 70 per cent of domestic flying".

As a result, the 2021 half-year results to the end of December, 2020, reveal the airline suffered an underlying loss before tax of AUS$1.03 billion, following a 75 per cent fall in revenue to AUS$6.9 billion.

While a recovery in international aviation would be of considerable help to the airline, Joyce does not expect any resumption in the sector until the final quarter of the year.

He adds: "Throughout the pandemic, we've updated our assumptions on international travel restarting.

"Since the start of this year, we've seen: a huge surge in Covid cases around the world; new strains emerging and a shift from herd immunity as the threshold for opening borders to fully vaccinated.

"As a result, we're now planning for international travel to restart at the end of October this year, in line with the date for Australia's vaccine rollout to be effectively complete."

Meanwhile, Air New Zealand CEO Greg Foran says that while "Covid-19 will continue to impact the aviation industry for some time to come", he adds the carrier is in a better position than some thanks to its strong domestic market.

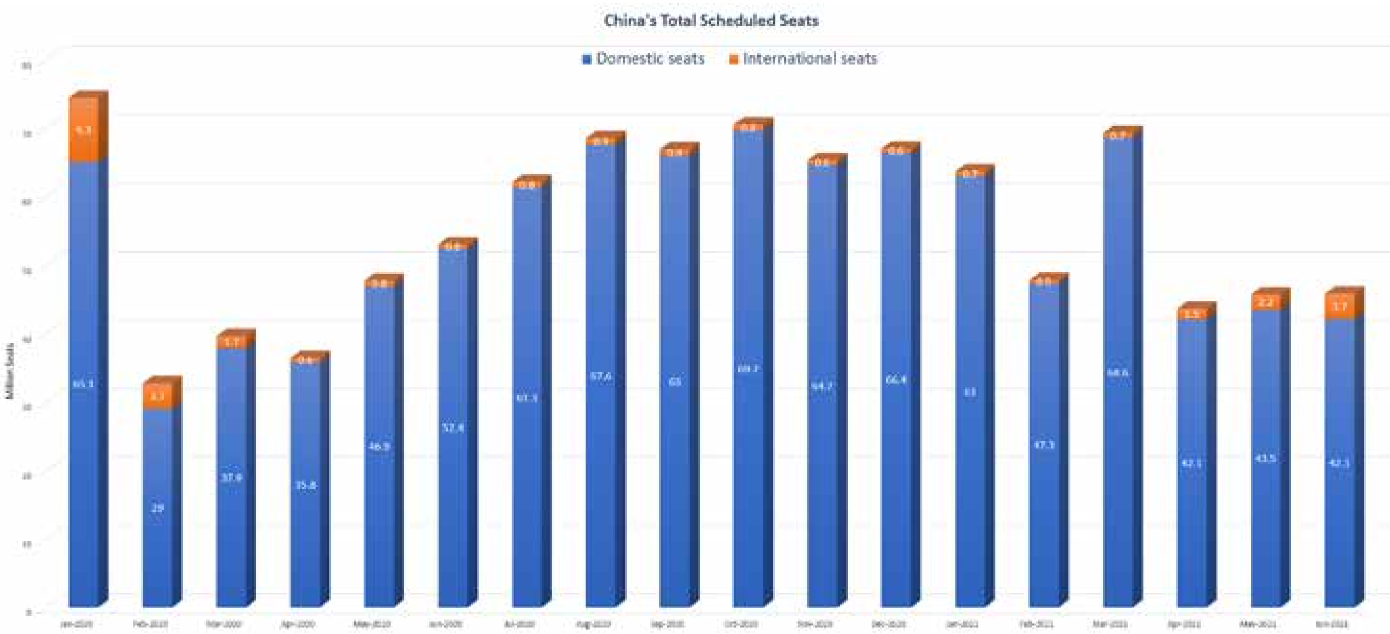
He says that in the last six months of 2020, domestic capacity was at 76 per cent of pre-Covid-19 levels, thanks to robust domestic tourism and the return of business demand. Cargo is also up 91 per cent year on year.

Foran adds: "We are one of the few airlines globally that has seen this level of passenger recovery and we know that is driven by our core strength on the domestic market.

"For the six months to 31 December, 2020, we operated 1,800 flights, moving four million passengers around the country and saw strong signs of corporate demand recovery as the economy started to ramp up following the second lockdown in August 2020.

He is also confident that as vaccination programmes roll out across the world, so barriers to international travel will gradually come down.

Which is what the whole of the Asia-Pacific region needs. We all know the vaccination programmes spell the best chance of recovery for the global aviation market but, as AAPA's Menon says, whether or not they come quickly enough to help the region's ailing airlines remains to be seen.



China key to global growth

China may have seen the first cases of Covid-19, but with a recovery in aviation now looking apparent the world needs it to bounce back strongly from the pandemic

By Edward Robertson

While it seems unlikely the World Health Organisation (WHO) will ever name the country responsible for the Covid-19 pandemic, it is known that the first cases were reported in China.

From there it has spread across the world and while different countries' populations have suffered to different extents from the lethal virus, it is fair to say the global aviation industry has been severely impacted.

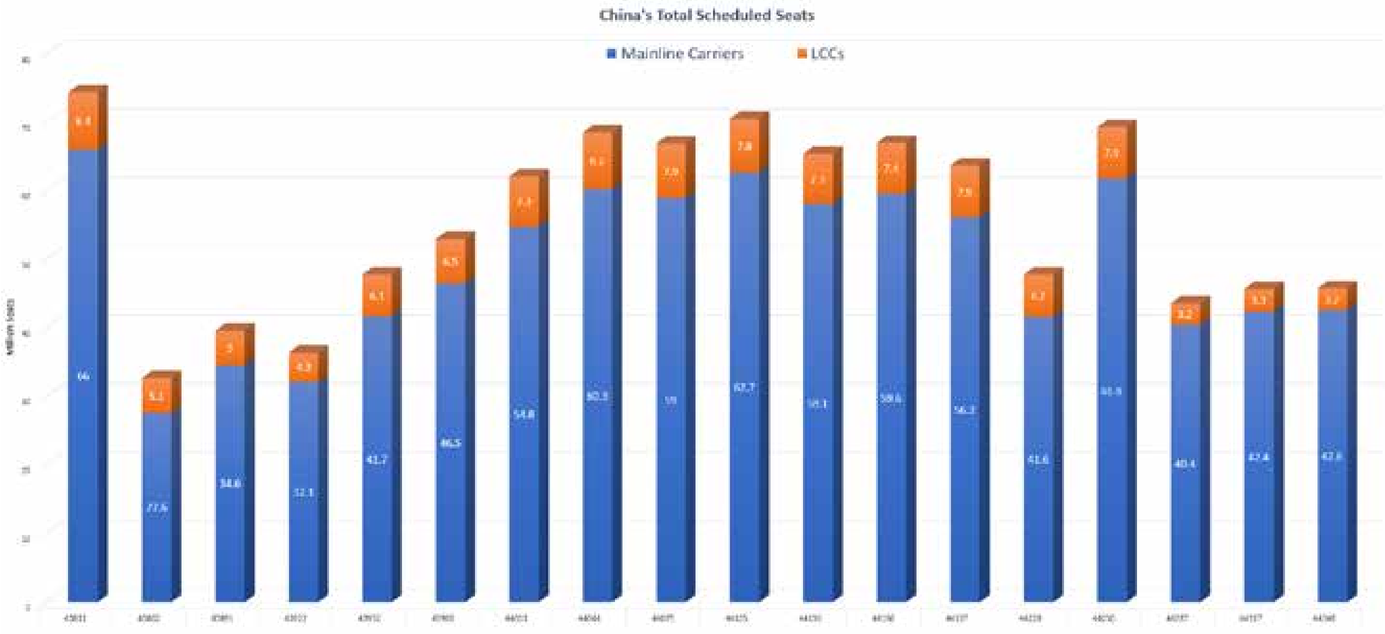
Aircraft have been grounded by airlines forced to pull routes in response to government decisions to ban arrivals from other countries, often with little or no warning.

So it seems ironic that while China might be to blame for the ongoing situation, it is also to China we must turn in the hope of kick-starting a renewal in the international commercial aviation industry.

This is largely thanks to the size of its market, driven by a population of 1.4 billion, as OAG senior analyst John Grant argues in a webinar held in February entitled 'Does China hold the key to air recovery'.

He says: "It is going to be the Chinese international airlines that will drive the capacity and create the demand and build that demand. We are all in the hands of the Chinese; they hold the key to the recovery and there's no doubt about it."

While the news might sound good, Grant



adds that a resurgent Chinese market will initially benefit Chinese carriers as the rest of the world looks on.

He says: "It is going to be very hard for international carriers to begin to rebuild the presence and networks back into China, particularly the long-haul carriers who will have been so badly damaged over the last year."

Midas Aviation partner Becca Rowland believes when the market does return, Chinese travellers are likely to have new priorities and are more likely to travel in smaller groups in private tours.

Money spent in the destination will remain high, and she believes they are likely to spend more time in a destination to fully absorb it.

Institute for Aviation Research founder and president Dr Zheng Lei agrees, adding it is likely to be younger and more experienced Chinese travellers who will kick-start the market with safety, and hygiene now in the time of Covid-19, being key concerns.

Grant adds: "This has a considerable impact on destination marketing organisations and suppliers in those markets in terms of what they offer and how they position themselves to what is the largest outbound market in the world."

Once international travel resumes, Lei believes the first countries to feel the benefits will include Thailand, Japan, South Korea, Vietnam, Indonesia and Hong Kong, which are all well known for offering a warm welcome to Chinese tourists while also often being cheaper than a domestic break.

He adds: "The only problem is Covid, if those countries can get the pandemic under control and come up with some arrangement with the Chinese government, we may yet see quite a rapid recovery."

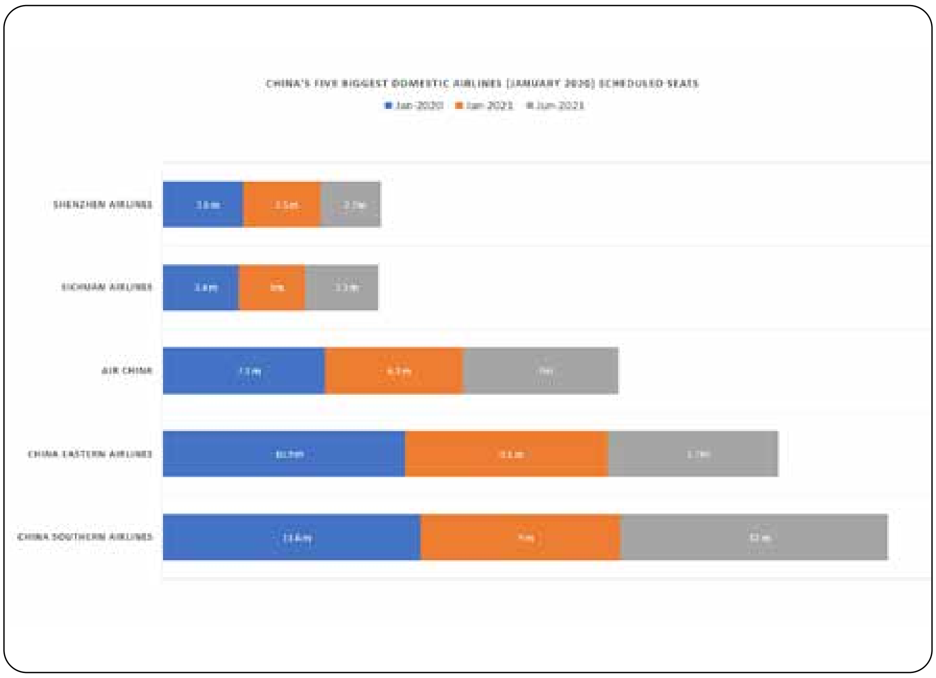
The data released by OAG to *ARGS* certainly suggests that there is room for considerable growth for international capacity among Chinese carriers.

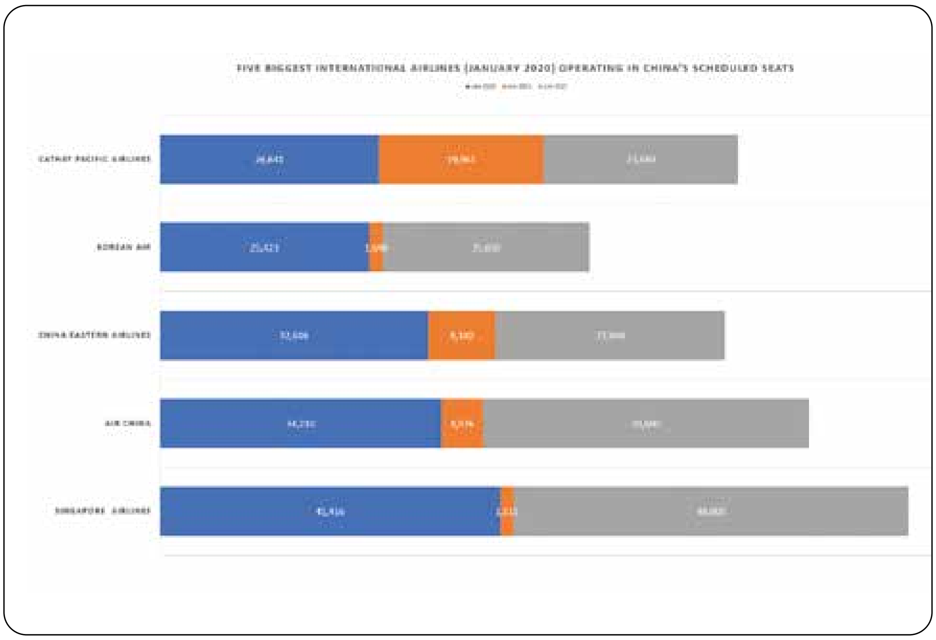
Having offered a total of 9.3 million international seats in January 2020, the last month before Covid-19 began to bite, the figure dropped as low as 500,000 in February 2021, is at 700,000 in March and predicted to grow by another 3 million by June.

Much of the decline was caused by the Civil Aviation Administration of China's (CAAC) decision to ban airlines from operating more than one weekly flight per route during the pandemic, although such precautions are beginning to ease now.

However, both Lei and Grant agreed that, further afield, both Europe and the US will see a lot of routes previously operated by Chinese carriers discarded, with tier two cities particularly likely to feel the impact.

Lei says: "Many of those routes may not be sustainable after the Covid period because the demand for those routes even before





"Airlines were suffering financially and while previously they used profits to subsidise those routes, after Covid they have to be very cautious and they might reduce the level of network."

Dr Zheng Lei
founder and president, Institute for Aviation Research

Covid was not that strong.

"Airlines were suffering financially and while previously they used profits to subsidise those routes, after Covid they have to be very cautious and they might reduce the level of network."

In fact, he adds cargo could prove to be a serious boon for those working in route development with those airports handling large quantities of it for instance Amsterdam Schiphol Airport, likely to hold on to more routes and flights simply because of the value they can add through it.

Meanwhile, on the domestic front both Lei and Grant are also in agreement that Chinese carriers also face considerable difficulties.

The number of domestic seats available in China has dropped from 65.1 million in January 2020 to a low point of 35.8 million in April last year.

Although it has since risen to a peak of 69.7 million in October, by January the number had dropped to 65 million and current OAG data shows that only 42.1 million scheduled seats are predicted to be on offer come

June, a third less than the recent peak and nearly 10 million less than in June 2020.

Grant says some of those seats would have been on board aircraft previously serving international routes and while the airlines might be pleased to see their aircraft in operation, he adds domestic travel is typically three times less profitable than international.

He adds: "China Southern Airlines said that their domestic services were profitable but the margins are wafer thin compared to the normal services and they can't sustain this level of domestic capacity. They've got to start putting capacity back into the international market."

Lei adds domestic services in China are also under further threat as the country's high-speed rail network grows and connects more cities, so increasing competition and driving down pricing.

He says: "The domestic market should have provided them with some cash flow but that can't be relied upon. The future for the biggest Chinese airlines ... is more the international markets. It's good they have a strong domestic market to support them but to be profitable now it is the international markets (that they must target)."

Even when international services do resume in any great number, Grant also warns that the days of super-efficient, one-hour connections at long haul hubs will be a memory for a while as not just China, but the world's airlines chop and change their schedules at the last minute according to demand.

He adds: "One hour connections are probably not going to be possible for long haul to long-haul flights in the short term and probably the medium term due to some major traffic flow and scheduling issues that are going to be felt around the world.

"There are thousands of connections that are going to be compromised as a result of future health checks and other requirements."

So while the future remains unknown, we can be sure that both Chinese and other airlines face considerable changes in order to operate efficiently in the post-Covid-19 landscape. And, if the speakers on the webinar are to be believed, we must surely hope that Chinese airlines find a way to cope in order the drive the global resurgence in aviation.

HNA Group undergoes restructure having gone into administration

The HNA Group could yet re-emerge as a smaller, more profitable airline operator having gone into administration in February.

Speaking in a webinar held in February entitled 'Does China hold the key to air recovery' OAG senior analyst John Grant says the group, which originally started with Hainan Air 20 years ago but has since grown to own or part own a number of airlines like Beijing Capital Airlines and Air Changan as well as ancillary businesses, was "the golden boy of Chinese aviation for some time".

He adds: "It was five star with a very high profile, very good service levels and it positioned itself almost as a western airline in China with the latest aircraft types, rapid expansion and, of course, HNA was part of a larger conglomerate of travel and related industries."

However, Grant argues HNA's expansion six or seven years ago which saw the acquisition of ancillary businesses like catering companies or ground handlers, and not necessarily at the cheapest price, was a mistake.

He adds: "The bubble has burst. It was already looking like it had over expanded and was overreaching its network."

"It actually highlights one of the greatest challenges for the Chinese airlines: international regional services for them within three or four hours are extremely profitable, (for instance to destinations like) Taiwan, Japan, Thailand and South Korea.

"But they and other Chinese airlines have blown their brains out operating from China to European destinations with very low yielding traffic and, eight months of the year, with very low load factors. It (the HNA Group) almost believed its own advertising and rhetoric on how big and successful it would be.

"This was coming, it's a great shame but now, if ever, is a good time to reshape your business, adjust your network and be ready for when the recovery comes."

Institute of Aviation Research founder and president Dr Zheng Lei is also confident that, having gone into the Chinese version of the US Chapter 11 arrangement, the airline will return to the skies in a slimmed down version with a greater focus on its core airline business.

"HNA may restructure and chop some unprofitable long-haul routes," he adds.

Selling the dream again

Orlando International Airport is marketing destinations as it prepares to welcome back travellers in a post-Covid-19 world

By Edward Robertson

Of the many known unknowns facing the commercial aviation industry, perhaps one of the greatest is understanding how consumers will react to returning to the skies once international flights are allowed to resume in acceptable numbers.

While evidence from last summer suggests a great deal of pent-up demand, there are likely to be as many people who will still need persuading to board an aircraft.

Although many aviation executives will be concerned to highlight the safety of international air travel, the boss of Orlando International Airport believes the consumer's concerns over safety are no longer as key an issue as they were when the pandemic first struck.

This is largely because of the work the airport, and others around the world, have done not only to ensure that the 2021 travel experience is a safe one, but also to tell people the changes.

As a result, Orlando International Airport CEO Phillip Brown believes the best way to encourage people to book a flight is to revert to more traditional


Phillip Brown

measures and once again focus on the destinations and experiences that are available, but which might have fallen off many consumers' radars.

He says: "It's not the safety, because by now I think people are coming to assume that you are safe because otherwise, why are you advertising to them?"

With this in mind, Brown says Orlando's advertising campaigns are once again destination based. The approach is also based on his belief that the leisure travel market will be the first to bounce back – in considerable numbers.

This will be followed by the visiting friends and relatives (VFR) markets while business travel, Brown argues, will be the last to return and not just because of the new-found convenience of virtual meetings.

He says: "From a business standpoint now, businesses are keenly aware of liability and the risk to employees; they're not promoting much travel."

However, Brown believes even this could help drive the leisure market as people who were used to travelling for work will book more leisure trips to fill the gap in their lives.

Outbound opportunities

So it is the leisure market Orlando has begun to target again, although not necessarily the inbound one, despite the airport being a gateway to some of Florida's biggest tourist attractions, including both Walt Disney World and Universal Studios.

Brown says with a limited marketing


Orlando's South Terminal Complex is on track to open in 2022

budget thanks to the ongoing pandemic, efforts have been focused on people living within two hours' drive of the airport, accounting for about two thirds of the state's 21.7 million inhabitants.

Following a survey in November last year, which saw more than 102,000 people take part, the airport has been able to drill down and market directly to communities where up to 55 per cent of the residents can be potential travellers.

Brown says: "Orlando's always looked at as a destination, but we always like to remind airlines that people really do live here and we do like to travel.

"We've been pushing those destinations that people want to get away to ... without having to cross borders."

He adds one example of this is a new route introduced by Hawaiian Airlines in March this year – a twice-weekly, direct service connecting Honolulu with Orlando.

Following the introduction of the route, the Airbus A330-200 used on the flight has average load factors of 88 per cent departing Orlando and 65 per cent on the return leg, despite Hawaii making stringent demands on arriving passengers to ensure they are Covid-19 safe.

Brown says: "There's pent-up demand for people to go places."

All this has allowed Orlando Airport to start rebuilding passenger numbers that bottomed out on April 15, 2020, when a total of 1,579 departing passengers were recorded, representing a 99 per cent decline in passenger numbers year on year.

Since then, Brown says travellers have been returning and it has now been confirmed that in November and December last year, and January this year, the airport has been the busiest in the US in terms of screened departing passengers, but not including connecting passengers.

While this might appear to be good news, even on the airport's busiest days, passenger numbers are about 40 per cent down from what would normally be expected.

International issues

And while the domestic market might be proving itself a useful source of business for the airport, the same cannot be said for the international market where circumstances are much more out of Brown's control.

He says: "Our challenge with the international market is that we're not allowed to receive at this point flights from the UK or the EU because of presidential proclamations that have been carried over (by newly-elected President Joe Biden) and Canada has some pretty severe restrictions."

Instead, he adds the airport has had "some buoyancy" with Latin American and Mexican markets, which are now recovering from the introduction of new testing requirements in January by the US government.

Brown also believes that once transatlantic travel returns, there will be strong demand as people return to leisure destinations while the airport may see some benefit from the way airlines have restructured in the face of the global lockdown.

For instance, he argues Virgin Atlantic's decision to consolidate operations at Heathrow Airport, having pulled out of Gatwick Airport, should give Orlando International its first connection with London's primary gateway.

Brown says: "That will allow for a lot of connections from a lot of different places, so I think we'll continue to focus on that."

Looking further afield, he adds: "There is going to be some renewed interest in the Far East. We had worked pretty diligently on our eastern service and there's still that potential, not only from a leisure standpoint but probably from a business standpoint."

Which is just as well, as every passenger that returns to the skies and has a positive experience will undoubtedly share it with their own family and friends.

Which will help everyone in aviation reduce the number of known unknowns and hopefully allow the industry to revert to what does it best: selling the dream of travel on board an aircraft, the safety of which is once again a given in the consumer's mind instead of a cause for concern.

Virgin Atlantic has pulled out of Gatwick Airport

South Terminal on track for 2022 opening

Orlando International Airport's South Terminal Complex is still on track to open in 2022, albeit with four fewer piers than originally planned.

CEO Phillip Brown says the airport had originally hoped to have 19 piers in the new facility, but has now downgraded the plan to 15 piers as part of a cost-cutting exercise in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic which has seen $5 million sliced off the payroll alone.

However, despite the impact of the pandemic, he is still confident the complex will open in February next year in time to catch US Spring Break celebrations and which is one of Orlando's busiest times, as this year is already showing.

Brown says: "We're hopeful that we'll be busy in the spring of 2022 and we're watching anxiously as we try and estimate what it looks like for spring, 2021. We've had some good signs from a couple of carriers and I believe that there is going to be increased traffic for the spring break (this year)."

Of course, he adds, lessons have been learnt and the South Terminal Complex will incorporate new processes as a result of the pandemic.

Brown says: "Technology will lead the way as we're trying to focus more on contactless processing, but that's going to be a gradual process as we look at installing systems."

He adds the impact would be most likely felt by departing passengers in the form of contactless bag drops and ticketing systems, while those arriving should be able to benefit from picking up their bags before passing through immigration. This should be quicker than the usual sequence, which is the other way around.

Brown says: "The thing with the South Terminal Complex is that we had to build it with a lot of flexibility. What we have, essentially, is a design that allows us to be flexible and accommodate changes in regulatory protocols."

Making a loss

With the world's airlines still mostly grounded, the impact of the pandemic on the world's two biggest aircraft manufacturers remains profound

By Edward Robertson

Boeing has seen a 24 per cent drop in annual revenue following a combination of Covid-19, the grounding of the 737 Max and changes in airlines' commercial widebody programmes.

The aircraft manufacturer has seen a fall in revenues from $76.6 billion in 2019, to $58.2 billion in 2020, while it also revealed a total backlog of $363 billion, including more than 4,000 commercial aircraft.

Revealing the results, Boeing president and CEO Dave Calhoun says: "2020 was a year of profound societal and global disruption which significantly constrained our industry.

"The deep impact of the pandemic on commercial air travel, coupled with the 737 Max ground, challenged our results.

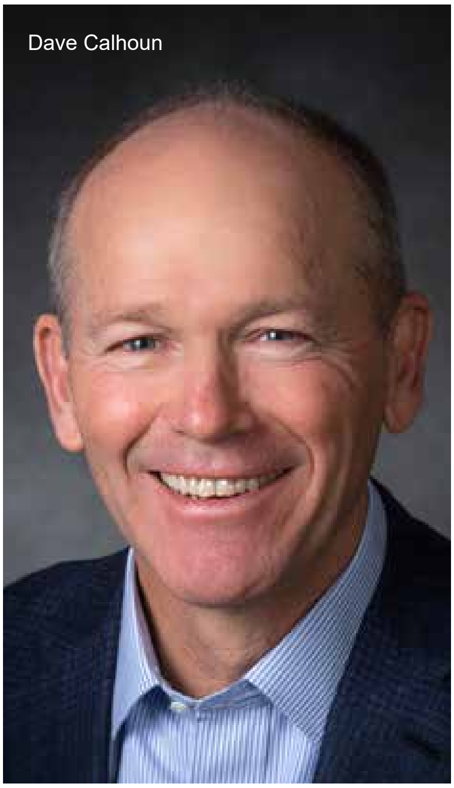
"While the impact of Covid-19 presents continued challenges for commercial aerospace into 2021, we remain confident in our future, squarely focused on safety, quality and transparency as we rebuild trust and transform our business."

Calhoun adds the return of the 737 Max to service following the FAA's granting of approval in January was "an important step".

He says since the permission was granted, Boeing has delivered more than 40 new aircraft while a further five airlines have since returned the type to service, with 2,700 hours of revenue flights since flown and about 5,500 total flight hours.

Calhoun is also predicting the first 777X delivery will take place in late 2023, three years later than originally hoped, thanks to an updated assessment of global certification requirements, the company's latest assessment of Covid-19 impacts on market demand and discussions with airline customers over delivery dates.

He adds Boeing is also continuing to transform the business with five key areas of focus: its infrastructure footprint, overhead and organisational structure, portfolio and investment mix, supply


Dave Calhoun

health chain and operational excellence. The overhaul is being done with the intention of preserving liquidity, improving performance and adapting to a new market in the post-Covid-19 era.

Regional recoveries

Despite the heavy impact of recent events on the aircraft manufacturer's results, it remains upbeat regarding the future with Southeast Asia and Latin America and the Caribbean singled out as two markets with strong futures.

In its 2020 Commercial Market Outlook (CMO), Boeing predicts that Southeast Asia alone will need 4,400 new aircraft at a cost of about $700 billion as the market is set to become the world's fifth largest by 2039.

The increase comes off the back of predicted annual growth of 5.7 per cent, much of which will be driven by LCCs thanks to the combination of affordable service and added capacity.

Single-aisle aircraft are predicted to be the main work horses for the growth, with 3,500 needed in the region by 2039. In addition, Boeing is predicting 760 new

"2020 was a year of profound societal and global disruption which significantly constrained our industry."

Dave Calhoun
president and CEO, Boeing

The Asia-Pacific region's fleet will grow by 55 per cent in 18 years

widebodies will commence operations in the region over the same period of time, with one in four of all such aircraft delivered to the Asia Pacific region in the next 18 years, growing the area's fleet by 55 per cent.

Boeing vice president of commercial marketing Darren Hulst says: "Southeast Asia's fundamental growth drivers remain robust.

"With an expanding middle class and growth in private consumption, the region's economy has grown by 70 per cent over the last decade, which increases propensity to travel.
"In addition, governments in the region continue to recognise the travel and tourism sectors as important drivers of economic growth."

Meanwhile, the report also predicts that by 2039, the number of people flying in

South America will overtake traffic flows between Central and North America during the forecast period.

The regional growth will be driven by predicted annual passenger growth of 5.1 per cent with a further 2,360 new single-aisle aircraft valued at £290 billion required to meet the growth.

A further 220 widebody passenger aircraft, and 20 purpose-built widebody freighters, representing a total value of $75 billion, will also be required to serve the region's long-haul needs.

Boeing vice president of sales for Latin America and the Caribbean Ricardo Cavero says: "While the aviation industry across Latin America and the Caribbean has been hard hit by the pandemic, fundamental growth drivers in the region remain strong.

"South America, in particular, has a considerable untapped market potential for air travel expansion driven by economic expansion and a large geographic area best served by air travel."

While Boeing has identified the two regions as key markets for future growth, it is positive about the world's future aviation needs despite the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic and the impact it has having on the world's airlines.

Boeing is predicting that in the next 20 years, there will be a need for 43,110 commercial aircraft globally while air cargo traffic is predicted to grow at an annual rate of 4 per cent in the same period.

The Boeing Market Outlook adds the growth has been impacted by Covid-19. Its prediction for 18,350 commercial aircraft – with a value of $2.9 trillion - aircraft required in the next decade being 11 per cent lower than the prediction made in 2019 in a pre-pandemic world.

The downgrading has had an impact on the total market value of aviation in the next decade, with Boeing now predicting a figure of $8.5 trillion for the period compared to the forecast of $8.7 trillion made a year ago.

Airbus targets 2020 delivery levels

Airbus is aiming to deliver as many commercial aircraft this year as it did last year, when it underwent "the most challenging crisis to hit the aerospace industry".

Speaking as he announced the full year results, CEO Guillaume Faury says a total of 566 commercial aircraft were delivered in 2020, despite much of the world's airspace being closed to commercial aviation as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic.

This generated revenues of €49.9 billion for the year ending December 31, 2020, considerably down from the €70.5 billion generated in 2019 and leading to a net loss of €1.13 billion for the year.

The 566 aircraft delivered last year were about two thirds of the 863 handed over to customers in 2019 and occurred as airlines unable to take to the skies sought to postpone delivery dates.

Of the aircraft delivered, most came from the A320 family, with 446 of the type's variations in total, followed by 59 A350s, 38 A220s, 19 A330s and even 4 A380s.

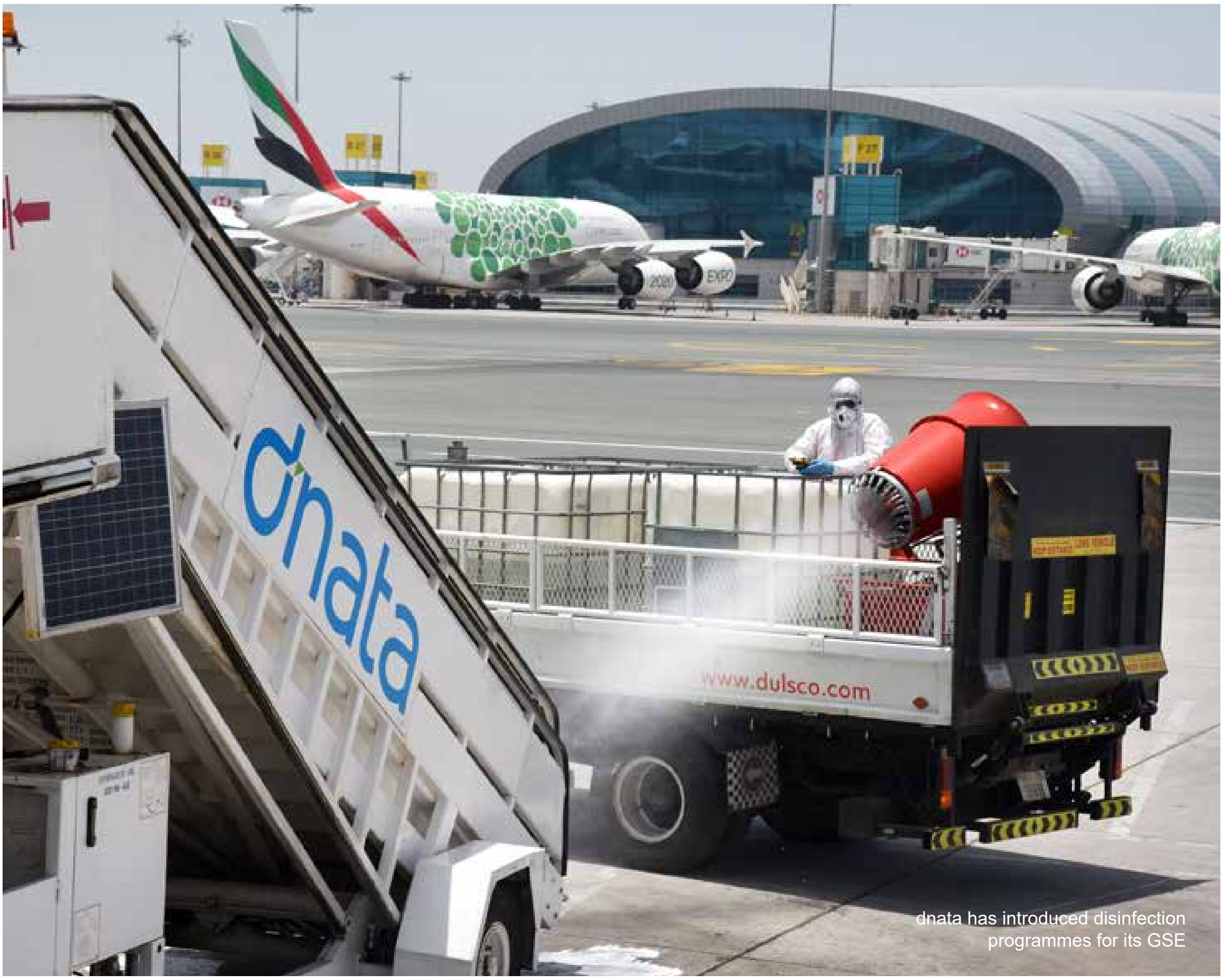
Faury says: "The 2020 results demonstrate the resilience of Airbus in the most challenging crisis to hit the aerospace industry.

"Many uncertainties remain for our industry in 2021 as the pandemic continues to impact lives, economies and societies. We have issued guidance to provide some visibility in a volatile environment.

"Over the longer term, our ambition is to lead the development of a sustainable global aerospace industry."

Faury adds the guidance on the number of aircraft delivered in 2021 is dependent on "no further disruption to the world economy, air traffic, the company's internal operations and its ability to deliver products and services".

Providing these criteria are met, he is also predicting adjusted earnings before interest and taxes (adjusted EBIT) of €2 billion and to break even on free cash flow before mergers and acquisitions and customer financing.



dnata has introduced disinfection programmes for its GSE

Cleaning up in the time of Covid-19

Airports are becoming increasingly well versed in protecting passengers from the virus

The Covid-19 pandemic, and the uncertainty associated with it, has left aviation in an extremely vulnerable position as airlines and stakeholders strive to remain afloat, sums up Joseph Suidan, head of ground operations at IATA.

"The constantly changing and varying local and regional regulations, and the unpredictable flight schedules, are making it difficult for ground handlers to plan the appropriate numbers of resources, supplies and equipment," he says.

Handlers are doing all they can in this complex and unpredictable environment to ensure the safety of the travelling public.

Dnata regional CEO, Asia Pacific Dirk Goovaerts says: "We introduced enhanced sanitisation processes and increased the cleaning of our facilities, including staff facilities. We also introduced split shifts ... to minimise any disruption to our operations."

Dnata supplies its staff with PPE including

masks, gloves and shields. Plastic screens, hand sanitisers and social distancing were all introduced at its check-in desks right from the start of the pandemic.

Goovaerts says: “Check-in is now a longer procedure because we have extra document checks, such as PCR test results.

“We have to work with the airlines, and consider the requirements of different destinations – so the process is now more bespoke. Plus, it can change at any time.”

Transfer passengers are even more complex, he adds. At Singapore Changi Airport, they are subject to more stringent procedures.

“We have to group and escort arriving transfer passengers to a holding area, where they are segregated while they wait for their connecting flight. If you are working with two different airlines, then you also have to make sure the processes of airline A and airline B align,” Goovaerts says.

“The regulator in Singapore is looking at this and the airport is also playing an active role. We all want the few operations we do have to be done properly in order to restore confidence in air travel.”

Dnata has also reduced the capacity of its lounges in order to allow guests to maintain physical distancing. Food is now served as preset individual dining options rather than as a buffet. Plus, the handler has increased cleaning and sanitisation measures, with a focus on high-touch surfaces and lounge employees wear masks and gloves at all times.

Goovaerts says: “We are proactively engaged in early detection, in cooperation with the airport and the regulator. Our front-line staff are tested for Covid every 14 days through the Ministry of Health in Singapore. For some staff involved in aircraft interior cleaning, this has now increased to take place every seven days.”

Resilience

The pandemic is changing the way the industry operates and causing the loss of valuable expertise due to layoffs and furloughs. Constantly changing flight schedules and short-notice cancellations are having an impact on manpower and other resources.

However, Suidan feels that the ground handling community has proven itself resilient and adaptable.

“They have been at the forefront of the crisis – initially with little in the way of formal procedures for doing tasks that have sometimes never been done before; they have faced uncertainty about the future as jobs and work suddenly contracted; and yet they were always there when needed – they have been true unsung Covid heroes,” he says.

Nor are handling companies unaware of the value of their staff. Highlighting the importance of retaining talent in order to secure the recovery of air travel, Goovaerts outlines some of the measures dnata is taking to support its employees.

He says: “In Australia and Singapore we have redeployed over 1,000 people where there were labour shortages or where demand had increased due to Covid. This includes postal duties to handle the rise in e-commerce, while customer-facing employees such as check-in staff have been redeployed as Covid Ambassadors in the community.

“The constantly changing and varying local and regional regulations, and the unpredictable flight schedules, are making it difficult for ground handlers to plan the appropriate numbers of resources, supplies and equipment.”

Joseph Suidan
head of ground operations, IATA

Joseph Suidan, IATA

"In Victoria, Australia, we are helping the government by providing administrative staff to work at testing sites and in hotels." Dnata is also upskilling its staff to prepare them for deployment in different functions going forward.

"This has mostly focused on customer-centric skills and on embracing technology to ensure we have a large pool of staff available who can use the latest technology," Goovaerts says.

"Travel is becoming more device driven and we need our staff to be able to assist passengers if they struggle with that."

Cutting edge

On the technology front, automation of the various passenger verification procedures takes some of the burden off the shoulders of ground handling staff – and could help achieve a globally coordinated, more efficient recovery of the industry.

IATA Travel Pass (ITP) is a mobile app that the association is developing to help passengers manage their travel in line with government requirements for Covid-19 testing or vaccine information. Data security, convenience and verification are top priorities.

"ITP does not store any data centrally," Suidan says. "It simply links entities that need verification (airlines and governments) with test or vaccination data when travel is permitted. It is more secure and efficient than current paper processes used to manage health requirements."

The ITP will include a registry of travel requirements for all destinations as well as testing and, eventually, vaccination centres. It will also enable authorised labs and test centres to securely send test results or vaccination certificates to passengers.

Several carriers are trialling the ITP, including Emirates and Etihad as well as Copa Airlines; Panama's government is the first to participate in the trial.

Other tools include SITA's Health Protect solution, which allows airlines and passengers to submit documents such as test results or vaccination history safely and securely in line with specific government requirements.

Health Protect is compatible with other travel pass or health passport schemes, SITA says. It also incorporates advance passenger processing; passengers without the required documentation, or considered high risk, will be unable to check in.

At the airport, Health Protect integrates with existing passenger processing systems to verify the health status of the traveller at each point in the process using SITA Flex touchless passenger flow monitoring technology.

At Madrid Airport, a facial recognition project is developing into a broader biometric identification programme as the gateway moves towards contactless passenger handling. The technology makes it possible to identify passengers even when they are wearing face masks.

Dnata is also adopting the latest technology as it introduces new services, with a focus on reducing contact points and increasing the confidence of passengers.

Goovaerts says: "Passenger temperature screening was done manually at first but that's now electronically integrated. Another example is the use of dry mist and UV disinfection for aircraft cabins.

"In Asia Pacific, we will also offer the option of disinfecting baggage to give passengers more peace of mind. In Dubai, DUBZ, dnata's baggage technology and logistics company, introduced a home check-in solution that has been expanded to include the PCR test."

These new services are all optional at present, but Goovaerts is keen to stress the importance of considering how changes in customer behaviour – like the increasing use of contactless technology – across other industries could apply to air travel.

Recovery

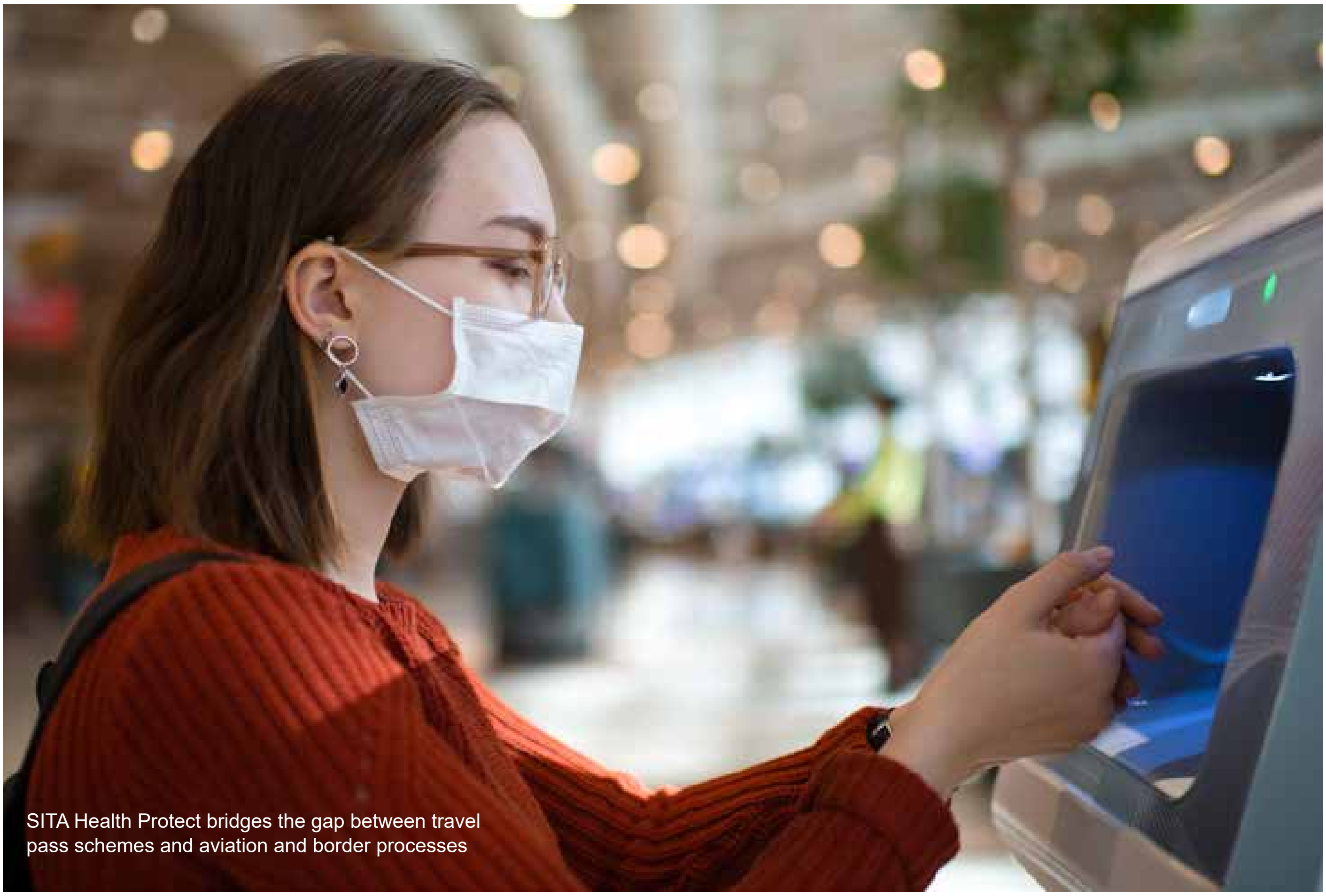
Echoing that view, Suidan describes the current pandemic as "a unique opportunity for our industry to adapt and to collaborate with a passion that will drive transformation".

He adds: "The crisis has really made sure that whatever service is still operating is done in the most efficient way possible. As we restart the industry all efforts should be made to maintain the level of standardisation and simplification that has been achieved for operations under Covid."

It is likely that the recovery will depend upon a combination of vaccination, pre-travel testing, bio passports and alignment between governments. Goovaerts believes it will start gradually with the establishment of 'travel bubbles' (pairs of countries or cities), expanding over time as governments and processes align.

At the time of writing, Changi had in place special travel arrangements for visitors in different categories travelling to or from various destinations; such arrangements are, naturally, subject to change as circumstances develop.

"It's all about restoring confidence levels," Goovaerts says. "We need to work closely with airport operators, governments and airlines; an industry approach is needed."


SITA Health Protect bridges the gap between travel pass schemes and aviation and border processes

Ground ops guidance

"Collaboration has been key in the development of all IATA's ground handling guidance," Suidan says.

The IATA Ground Operations Working Group, as well as the Ground Operations Automation and Digitization and Ground Operations Standards working groups, have led the development on the guidance, which also includes the International Civil Aviation Organization's Council Aviation Recovery Taskforce recommendations.

IATA is also working with the European Organisation for Civil Aviation Equipment and Radio Technical Commission for Aeronautics to develop the best disinfection practices, taking into account the effect of cleaners and disinfectants on the many different materials in an aircraft cabin and cockpit.

IATA's Covid/pandemic-related guidance material for ground operations covers:

- Restart of ground operations
- Ground handling return to service
- Aircraft cleaning and disinfection during and post pandemic
- Ground handling during Covid-19
- Transport of cargo and mail in passenger cabins
- Vaccine and pharmaceutical logistics and distribution

IATA's Airport Handling Manual (AHM) 41st Edition and the IATA Ground Operations Manual (IGOM) 10th Edition include the following guidance that can assist ground handlers during Covid-19:

- New AHM 640 N - Guidance for pandemic management
- New AHM 918 N - GSE storage and return to service
- IGOM 3.7 N - Cleaning and disinfection of aircraft; guidance material available on aircraft cleaning and disinfection during and post pandemic
- IGOM 4.6 N - 4.10; Sequenced procedures for aircraft ground movement to ensure functions and processes are executed safely

A new chapter AHM 1111 provides guidance on how to manage the Ground Ops training programme during and post pandemic and deal with the situation when AHM 1110 (recognised as the industry standard for ground operations training) cannot be met. It also includes training for enhanced aircraft cleaning during pandemic and Covid-19 awareness training.

LIVE A HOLISTIC CULTURAL EXPERIENCE IN ATHENS!

This summer feel privileged and enjoy the Athens Festival with the "Culture Lovair" package!
The "Culture Lovair" package offers to you Airtickets, Hotels and Event tickets at special rates and will be available soon.
STAY TUNED!

BE A CULTURE LOVAIR

ATHENS INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT ELEFTHERIOS VENIZELOS