

## No serious 5G danger for flights in Malaysia



By Adrian David - January 19, 2022 @ 4:35pm



The Civil Aviation Authority of Malaysia (CAAM) has not received any reports from airlines operating within Malaysian airspace of the 5G interference to flight operations from mobile applications. - NSTP/AHMAD IRHAM MOHD NOOR.

KUALA LUMPUR: There is no serious danger of the 5G telecommunications technology posing a threat to airline operations in Malaysia.

It is learnt that the Civil Aviation Authority of Malaysia (CAAM) has not received any reports from airlines operating within Malaysian airspace of the 5G interference to flight operations from mobile applications.

The New Straits Times also learnt that the real danger would arise only for auto-pilot landing (during inclement weather) but such a system was only available in the country at the Kuala Lumpur International Airport in Sepang.

Almost all aircraft landings, it was learnt, were manually landed by pilots.

It was also learnt that there were no scheduled local flights out of Malaysia to the United States at the moment.

Clarifying this, Civil Aviation Authority of Malaysia chief executive officer Capt Chester Voo Chee Soon said that they were closely monitoring developments through their safety reporting system.

He was responding to global news reports today that major international airlines were rejigging or cancelled flights to the United States, in the past 24 hours, following the 5G wireless rollout by companies like AT&T and Verizon.

The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) has also warned that potential 5G interference could affect height readings that play a key role in bad-weather landings on some jets and airlines, with the Boeing 777 as among models initially in the spotlight.

Voo said that CAAM was communicating with the civil aviation industry on safety awareness through the issuance of Safety Information (SI) documents.

"Our communication plan also includes gathering response from the civil aviation industry and the needed training in the event of harmful interference.

"In addition to that, effective safety surveillance and oversight will be carried to ensure compliance.

"CAAM is working closely with airline operators on a comprehensive reporting system in the event of any occurrence," he said.

On the feasibility of airlines coexisting with the 5G services, Voo said that it could, but with a comprehensive mitigation plan and risk assessment.

"Aviation is a highly regulated industry with safety and security as the top priority. CAAM will continue to ensure all safety concerns are addressed with the right approach and communication plan.

"Moving forward, in the event of future expansion and change in bandwidth, continuous collaboration and communication with the relevant agencies will be carried out to ensure highest level of safety in operations," Voo said.

Voo added that CAAM was monitoring closely the 5G bandwidth allowance in Malaysia within aircraft approach and departure paths that are determined based on altitude and distance from active runways.

He explained that the aircraft radio altimeter works in the range of 4.2-4.4 GHz and in Malaysia, its C-band for 5G was in 3.4-3.6 GHz.

"It is also important to note that Malaysia's 5G frequency separation in the C-band is similarly practised in Europe and Singapore," said Voo.

Meanwhile, it is understood that the Malaysian Communication and Multimedia Commission (MCMC) are of the view that the radio altimeter worked in the range of 4.2-4.4 GHz.

The 5G in the US operates in the C-band which has a 3.7-3.98 GHz bandwidth, much different from countries like in Malaysia which has a C-band of 3.4-3.6 GHz.

Reports claimed that 5G transmitters would adversely affect some radio altimeters, crucial to navigation systems of aircraft.

Radio altimeters give precise readings of the height above the ground on approach and help with automated landings, as well as verifying the jet has landed before allowing reverse thrust.

Unlike a barometric altimeter that provides altitude above mean sea level, radio altimeters provide precise height information by measuring radio waves emitted by the aircraft and bouncing them off the ground.

Radio altimeters function in conjunction with forward-looking radar and other sensors, and are primarily used during low-visibility landings.

They are part of an aircraft's ground proximity warning system, providing an alert when a plane descends below a certain point or is too close to the ground.

News reports said prominent airlines from Japan, India, and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) have suspended flights to airports across the United States after expressing concern over the deployment of 5G.

Emirates, Air India, Japan Airlines, and All Nippon Airways cancelled flights to New York, New Jersey, San Francisco, Los Angeles, Chicago, Houston, and Seattle, among other US cities.

The reports quoted that the world's largest operator of the Boeing 777 was Dubai's Emirates, which said it would suspend flights to nine US destinations from Wednesday (Jan 19), the planned date for the deployment of 5G wireless services.

Emirates flights to New York's JFK, Los Angeles and Washington DC, however, it said, would continue to operate.

Japan's two major airlines, All Nippon Airways and Japan Airlines, said they would curtail Boeing 777 flights.

ANA reportedly said it was cancelling or changing the aircraft used on some U.S. flights. JAL said it would not use the 777 on US mainland routes until safety was confirmed.

Korean Airlines said it had switched away from 777s and 747-8s on six US passenger and cargo flights and expected to also change planes used on another six flights.