

## **PROBE: Application for commercial flight permit rejected by Mavcom, says Liow**

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SUASA Airlines Sdn Bhd has committed multiple offences in violation of the Civil Aviation Act, including carrying paying passengers on a "demonstration flight".

Transport Minister Datuk Seri Liow Tiong Lai said this was a severe offence as Monospace Sky Airlines, said to be operated under SuasaAirlines, had yet to receive its full licence to fly.

"This is a serious offence as it is a matter of national safety and security. The ministry views this very seriously," he said yesterday. He said the airline has yet to receive a full licence to fly, as its application for an Air Service Permit (ASP), which was required to transport fare-paying passengers on commercial flights, from the Malaysian Aviation Commission (Mavcom) was rejected.

"They were not supposed to fly- a commercial flight, as they only applied to the Department of Civil Aviation (DCA) to fly technical and demonstration flights, for which they have been given approval.

"However, Mavcom has received complaints from the public that it (Monospace Sky Airlines) was running a commercial flight, ferrying passengers to Langkawi," said Liow.

He was speaking to reporters on the sideline of the International Civil Aviation Organisation-World Customs Organisation Joint Conference on Enhancing Air Cargo Security and Facilitation here yesterday.

Monospace Group founder Datuk Seri Jessy Lai was quoted in a Chinese daily as saying DCA had allowed the flight to operate on Friday. However, companies must obtain both an Air Operator's Certificate (AOC) from DCA and either an ASP or Air Service Licence (ASL) to operate a scheduled commercial flight.

If an airline obtained only an AOC, it could only operate private or chartered unscheduled flights without being able to sell seats to the public.

On Friday, Monospace Sky Airlines launched its maiden flight from Subang to Langkawi. It was reported that the airline had invited local personalities to board the inaugural flight to promote its brand.

"Let the investigation take its course. We hope the airline will explain its stand on the matter ," said Liow, adding that the company had also used the "Monospace Sky Airlines" brand on its aircraft, but it was registered under the "Suasa Airlines" name, which was another violation of the law that would be investigated.

Mavcom also advised consumers against making flight arrangements with Suasa Airlines and Monospace Sky Airlines to avoid any inconvenience.

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