

Airport security: Why give them special treatment?

QUESTION :

NEW STRAITS TIMES

02/03/2010

I AM amazed and annoyed that some apparently important Malaysians blatantly disregard safety and security even at airports, which are regarded as critical zones throughout the world.

I travelled on Firefly from Kota Baru to Kuala Lumpur on Feb 21 and noticed that one Mercedes Benz and one BMW (with drivers) were parked next to the aircraft parking bays on the tarmac of the Subang Skypark Airport, which is a commercial airport.

The airsite/tarmac of any airport is a high security area and private vehicles are not allowed in for obvious reasons.

The only exceptions are vehicles owned by airport and airline-related operators and these are clearly identified. The drivers of these vehicles undergo specific training and possess additional driving licences issued by the airport authority, that is the Department of Civil Aviation and/or Malaysia Airports Berhad.

There are valid reasons for the stringent procedures.

Firstly, aircraft and passenger safety is paramount and thus, only authorised personnel whose backgrounds have been verified will be allowed entry into the area.

Secondly, the rules and regulations for driving on the tarmac/air-site differ in many ways from those of normal roads and highways.

I am upset and disappointed that certain people are given privileges that disregard international aviation security and safety laws and procedures.

D.T.J., Seremban

FEEDBACK :

NEW STRAITS TIMES

08/03/2010

I REFER to the letters by D.T.J. of Seremban ("Why give them special treatment?" -- NST, March 2) and M.A. of Shah Alam ("Need to tighten rules" -- NST, March 4). I wish to thank them for their concern over two cars that they saw parked at the Subang Skypark Terminal tarmac recently.

The terminal, besides being a commercial airport, is also the fixed base operation for general aviation and private aircraft.

The private vehicles parked at the tarmac belonged to the owner and guest of a private aircraft. It is a standard service to escort passengers to the airside to board their private aircraft, provided they are accompanied by security personnel and parked at designated lots reserved for airside vehicles.

The procedure requires an application for permit and escort service whereby a security check is performed to validate the passengers as the owner and guests of the private aircraft.

Malaysia Airports gives passenger safety and security the utmost priority. Recently, all five of our international airports -- Kuala Lumpur International Airport, Pe-nang International Airport, Lang-kawi International Airport, Kota Kinabalu International Airport and Kuching International Airport -- received the Safety Management Systems certification from the Department of Civil Aviation, making them among the earliest to achieve the certification in Asia.

The certification is a testament to our initiative to ensure the highest level of safety at our airports and to fully comply with the International Civil Aviation Organisation's Safety Management Programme.

Malaysia Airports welcomes feedback for the betterment of service at our airports.

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