

MASRA Unveils Crucial Details of MAS Boeing 737 Deal and Airline's Tumultuous Decades.



Shah Alam, Selangor Aug 24, 2025 ([Issuewire.com](https://www.issuewire.com)) - The Malaysia Airlines System Retirees Association (MASRA) hosted an exclusive and crucial discussion today at Kelab Shah Alam Selangor, Section 13, Shah Alam. Titled "UNVEILING THE UNTOLD: THE MAS BOEING 737 DEAL & THE AIRLINE'S TUMULTUOUS DECADES," the event provided an unprecedented look into the elusive figures and strategic rationale behind this significant acquisition, which had long remained shrouded in mystery.

The Strategic Imperatives of the Boeing 737 Acquisition

The discussion shed light on the hard facts and figures surrounding Malaysia Airlines' (MAS) purchase of 30 Boeing 737 aircraft. This new order complements the 25 Boeing 737 800 aircraft ordered in 2017, marking the beginning of Malaysia Aviation Group's (MAG) transition to the MAX fleet/era.

The acquisition is valued at US\$9.5 billion (RM40 billion) and includes an option for 30 more aircraft. The 2025 deal, encompassing a total of 60 aircraft (30 from the new order plus the previous 30), aims to accelerate the replacement of older aircraft, enable more efficient operations with an expected 12% to 30% saving on fuel, and prepare for future regional growth. **The purchase is a crucial part of the**

airline's modernisation strategy.

MASRA President Shulhameed Bin K Marican expressed his support for MAG's decision, viewing it as a positive step for the national carrier to move forward. He believes the deal can help the airline regain its five-star status from the 1990s. He also emphasized that the total of 60 new aircraft is still considered a small number compared to the fleets of other global airlines.

Regarding the funding, attendees gained insight into the true funding mechanisms behind this multi-billion-dollar deal. Investment, Trade, and Industry Minister Tengku Zafrul Abdul Aziz confirmed that the purchase was a corporate move funded by the company's own coffers, not public funds. Aviation expert Dato Dr. Amir Khan explained that the down payment can be negotiated to less than 10%, with the remainder paid in instalments, similar to buying a house. The purchase is not expected to financially burden MAG or the government.

Shulhameed added that there is a resale value for the old aircraft being replaced. The average age of the current Boeing 737 fleet is 12.7 years, and by the time the new aircraft arrive in 2029, the old fleet will be 16 or 16.7 years old.

The timing of the purchase is also crucial, as manufacturers are struggling to keep up with current demand due to a post-pandemic exodus of skilled workers from the industry. According to Shulhameed, if MAG does not order now, it may not get the aircraft. Dato Dr. Amir Khan noted that buying later could force the airline to lease aircraft at a higher price.

Airworthiness and Safety of the Boeing 737s

The event also addressed concerns about the safety of the Boeing 737 aircraft, particularly in light of the two catastrophic crashes of the 737 Max 8 model in 2018 and 2019. Shulhameed Marican assured the public of the aircraft's airworthiness, stating, "This particular aircraft is the most audited aircraft since the incidents, from Boeing and then to the FAA (the US' Federal Aviation Administration)".

He noted that since the incidents, the aircraft has not experienced any problems. Dato Dr. Amir Khan, an Aircraft Licensed Engineer with Malaysia Airlines, echoed this sentiment, confirming that the software issues (Maneuvering Characteristics Augmentation System - MCAS) have been fixed.

Shulhameed, a former airline pilot and trainer, also praised the high standards of Malaysia Airlines pilots, noting that their licences are recognised globally due to their mastery of English. He believes that with highly skilled pilots, there is no reason for concern.

MAS's Enduring Journey and the Need for Transparency

The discussion also touched upon Malaysia Airlines' journey, from its five-star status in the late 1990s to its recent challenges. The airline faced significant hurdles with the rise of Low-Cost Carriers (LCCs) and frequent leadership changes. The tragic incidents of MH370 and MH17 and the COVID-19 pandemic further exacerbated its struggles. However, in the post-pandemic era, passenger traffic demand has surged, and the airline has reported some profits after more than a decade of losses.

Shulhameed emphasised the importance of transparency in the airline's management, stating, "For too long, the true cost and strategic intent behind such monumental decisions within our national airline have been hidden... Today, we pulled back that curtain, offering the transparency the public deserves".

He also openly admitted that Malaysia Airlines needs a businessman with good leadership and people skills.

Distinguished Speakers Share Invaluable Insights

The event featured prominent speakers who are intimately familiar with Malaysia Airlines operations and history.

Shulhameed Bin K Marican, President of the MAS Retirees Association, is a former airline pilot who was trained by Malaysia Singapore Airlines and joined MAS in October 1972. He flew Boeing aircraft, including the B737, on international routes and retired from MAS as General Manager of Flight Operations, having managed 5,000 cabin crew.

Dato Dr. Amir Khan, an Aircraft Licensed Engineer with Malaysia Airlines and CEO of AB Consulting, uniquely combined extensive industrial experience with academic rigour, holding an MBA and PhD in Management from Cranfield University, UK. His diverse career at Malaysia Airlines spanned numerous disciplines, including Internal Audit, HR Organisational Development, Corporate Planning, and leading two airlines as CEO. He commented, "The future viability of Malaysia Airlines hinges not just on new aircraft, but on understanding the foundational decisions of its past".

The event, which concluded today, marked a significant step towards greater transparency and understanding of the pivotal decisions that have shaped Malaysia Airlines. The insights shared by these seasoned veterans offered invaluable context to the airline's journey, setting a precedent for future dialogue on its ongoing evolution and strategic direction.

About The Malaysia Airlines System Retirees Association (MASRA)

The Malaysian Airlines System Retirees Association (MASRA) stands as a venerable organisation, now 35 years old, dedicated to serving the needs of former employees of Malaysia Airlines. Beyond its core mission of fulfilling its members' requirements, MASRA actively contributes its wealth of expertise to the aviation industry, particularly to Malaysia Airlines (MAS) and Malaysia Aviation Group (MAB). This contribution leverages the deep knowledge and experience accumulated by its retirees over decades in the airline sector. To ensure its sustainability and further support its initiatives, MASRA presently operates both a company and a cooperative, strategically established to generate revenue for the association. This multi-faceted approach underscores MASRA's commitment not only to its members' welfare but also to the broader aviation community and its own long-term financial health.

For further details on the event, this press release, or information pertaining to the event, kindly contact Gunaprasath from Emjay Communications at gunaprasath@emjaycommunications.net / send a WhatsApp message to +60179203544.



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Source : The Malaysian Airlines System Retirees Association (MASRA)

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