

AirAsia and Skyports explore air taxi feasibility

Companies to discuss vertiport infrastructure

AVIATION

KUALA LUMPUR: Skyports Infrastructure and AirAsia Advanced Air Mobility (AAM) unit of AirAsia Aviation Group Ltd have signed a letter of intent (LoI) to explore the development of air taxi infrastructure in Malaysia.

The partnership is important to establish a fully operational vertiport network and develop a practical and integrated network of vertiports in the country, said a joint statement from AAM and Skyports yesterday, *Bernama* reported.

The partnership will draw on AirAsia's aviation expertise and experience, as well as its on-ground market knowledge and networks while Skyports brings to the table its portfolio of designing and building take-off and landing infrastructure for eVTOL passenger aircraft, the statement said.

"Skyports Infrastructure is instrumental in advancing regulatory development across markets, through close collaboration with local regulatory bodies and standards-setting organisations," it said.

The collaboration will focus on joint feasibility studies to integrate air taxi vertiport infrastructure, identify potential vertiport sites, and develop operational requirements and frameworks to implement a network.

AirAsia Aviation Group Ltd's chief safety officer and head of AAM Capt Ling Liong Tien said the partnership would accelerate a review of the infrastructure, including verti-

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Capt Ling Liong Tien



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cal take-off and landing platforms, and strengthen the group's potential as a zero-emission ultra-short-haul air travel provider in South-East Asia.

"AirAsia has revolutionised commercial air

travel for the past two decades and we look forward to working with Skyports to put us ahead of the curve and shape the future of autonomous aviation in the region.

"Following the announcement of our venture into the urban air taxi service earlier this year, we have been working around the clock to explore its feasibility in Malaysia," he said.

Meanwhile, Skyports head of Asia Pacific Yun-Yuan Tay said the collaboration highlights AAM's development and interest in the country and the wider Asia-Pacific region.

"With partners like AirAsia, we will be able to take concrete steps towards the realisation of a safe, efficient and fully-integrated air taxi network to bring real benefits to the people and communities it serves," he pointed out.

AirAsia had made known its plans to lease 100 Vertical Aerospace VX4 eVTOL aircraft from Avolon, its drone training programme over the past year, and extended drone-related training to high-technology-related sectors recently.