

New APTRA report majors on regulatory challenges



“We encourage others to join forces with us” - APTRA President Sunil Tuli

Asia Pacific Travel Retail Association (APTRA) has identified the key regulatory challenges across the region that have the greatest impact on the industry in its latest Advocacy Report and Heat Map.

The report, published on July 17, is the second quarterly report in a new service launched exclusively to members in April 2020.

While the majority of government relief measures for COVID-19 in aviation are weighted towards airports and airlines, APTRA is prioritizing its focus on formal recognition of the travel retail industry’s dynamics.

APTRA President Sunil Tuli said: “APTRA is relentless in our mission to ensure our industry voice is properly considered in relief and stimulus measures and also in any proposed operational changes from government that could impact sales, for example carry-on luggage restrictions.

Unified industry voice

“Advocacy is a huge task in Asia Pacific. Without a regional body such as the EU in Europe, we have to target every government on an individual basis. We are grateful for the support of members who have already added their political influence and we encourage others to join forces with us. We’re all fighting the same battle and a unified industry voice is by far the single most impactful strategy for success, as demonstrated by ICAO giving its support for the reopening of retail in their guidelines

published in June.”

With so much government attention focused on managing the COVID-19 crisis, the pace of policy development has been slower than reported in Q1. However, alongside its focus on COVID-19, APTRA is monitoring current and emerging policy movements in other areas of interest:

Indonesia: Following the implementation of a single-use plastic ban in Bali in 2019, Jakarta has imposed a city-wide ban on single-use plastic by July 2020. This issue is expected to continue in several Asia Pacific countries.

Taiwan: The Health Ministry released its amendment to the Tobacco Hazards Prevention and Control Act for 60-day public consultation. Proposals include enlarging the graphic health warning from 35% to 85%, in addition to a tobacco flavor ban.

Singapore: Sugar regulation moves from policy formulation to policy adoption stage for packaged drinks with high sugar content.

Singapore: Tobacco plain packaging regulation was implemented on July 1, 2020.

Looking ahead to the second half of 2020, policy discussion continues to develop on track and trace in tobacco, although the World Health Organization has postponed its 2020 Meeting of Parties until November 2021 to discuss its Protocol to Eliminate Illicit Trade in Tobacco Products.

For members of APTRA, this advocacy report on policy issues and threats across the region is a valuable tool that many companies do not have the resources to facilitate themselves, said Tuli.

Christina Oliver, Executive Director of APTRA, concluded: “If you are not yet a member of APTRA, now more than ever is the time to be part of a proactive collective industry body.”