

## MAS improves working conditions for stewardesses

**PUTRAJAYA:** Malaysia Airlines has further relaxed its conditions on stewardesses, a move seen to be in line with the country's policy to review all laws and regulations that discriminate against women.

MAS stewardesses can now have three children, and those at the supervisory level can opt for ground jobs after 45 years of age.

Another benefit for MAS stewardesses is an increase in gratuity payment for those who retire after 40.

These are among the new provisions included in the MAS terms of service for its cabin crew following negotiations between its management and the Malaysian Airlines System Employees Union (Maseu).

Transport Minister Datuk Seri Chan Kong Choy said the letter of exchange between MAS and the union on better benefits for stewardesses was signed on May 3.

"With this latest revision, the benefits provided by MAS for its cabin crew are the best in this region. Some airlines do not even allow their stewardesses to become pregnant at all," he told reporters at his office yesterday.

The review, he said, was undertaken by MAS and the union following pressure by several non-governmental organisations, including the All Women's Action Society, the National Council of Women's Organisations and the Women's Development Collective.

The revised provisions are:

- Stewardesses are now allowed to have up to three children. Under the current collective agreement, they cannot have more than two.

- Stewardesses who are in a supervisory capacity are now allowed to perform ground duties after 45 years of age. Currently, only those selected by the management are allowed to do so while the rest have to retire after 45.

- Gratuity payment for stewardesses who retire after 40 has been raised from RM800 for every year of service to RM1,000.

"We hope the new provisions will give the MAS cabin crew incentive to further raise the standard of their performance so that the airline can maintain its good record in this



category,” Chan said.

The minister said it would be good if MAS and the union could discuss the possibility of allowing stewardesses who opt to have more than three children to work on the ground instead of retiring.

MAS, which currently employs 2,150 stewardesses, is one of the few airlines in the region that allow stewardesses to have children and to serve until they are 40, and 45 for those at supervisory level.

Maseu president Alias Aziz said the move was a good starting point to improve the dignity of women.

“This is a timely and much-appreciated move,” he said.

MTUC Women's Committee chairman Noorlaila Aslah said she still found the new provisions discriminatory.

“Why should stewardesses be singled out? What about the unpaid leave issue during pregnancy?”

“At 45, you can’t fly. You get ‘grounded’ and this is still an issue,” she said.

Former MAS stewardess Beatrice Fernandez, whose suit against the airline and the union highlighted the discriminatory rules, said the new provisions were still against the constitution and were not addressing the issue.

Fernandez lost a 14-year court battle against the airline for dismissing her after she refused to resign when she became pregnant.

However, Women, Family and Social Development Minister Datuk Seri Shahrizat Abdul Jalil described the new provisions for the stewardesses as “an improvement.”

“I have forwarded the views (from the women's groups) and I have also listened to MAS and Chan,” she said.

Emphasising her stand against all forms of discrimination, Shahrizat said the union should however be practical.

“I think they (the union) should accept (the new provisions) because MAS could reject these totally, but it has taken our request into consideration,” she said.

“When they (stewardesses) signed up, they knew the limitations,” she said, pointing out that employment as an air stewardess included the demands and the flying hours required of them.

“This is an improvement. We must be realistic,” she said.

[Printer Friendly](#) | [Email This](#)

**More News:** [Nation Headlines](#)

Go

**[Accommodation In Malaysia](#)**

Amazing Places To Stay In Malaysia. Compare Prices and Book Online.

**[Cheap Flights To Malaysia](#)**

Super Deals on Flights to Malaysia. Fly For Less and Book Online.

**[Flight attendant training](#)**

Want to learn how to fly? Choose from one of our many schools.

**[Flight Training](#)**

Resource on Flight Training. Focus your Search!

---

**More @ [The Star Online](#):**



[News](#) · [Business](#) · [Sports](#) · [Entertainment](#) · [Lifestyle](#) · [Technology](#) · [Education](#) · [Archives](#)  
[Classifieds](#) · [Directory](#) · [e-Cards](#) · [Motoring](#) · [Property](#) · [Jobs](#) · [Kuali](#) · [Sitemap](#)

Copyright © 1995-2005 [Star Publications \(Malaysia\) Bhd](#) (Co No 10894-D)  
Managed by I.Star.