



NEWS BRIEF

IATA Calls for Transparency and Regional Coordination on Proposed Antigua and Barbuda Passenger Charge Increase

23 September 2026 (Miami) - The International Air Transport Association (IATA) is concerned that the proposed USD 10 increase in passenger charges in Antigua and Barbuda could negatively impact the islands' air connectivity and competitiveness. If implemented, every international passenger, including residents, would pay USD 50 on both arrival and departure, adding an additional USD 20 to the cost of a round-trip journey.

Airlines support sustainable funding for aviation oversight and airport infrastructure, including investments planned for V.C. Bird International Airport and Barbuda International Airport. However, stakeholders have yet to receive sufficient information to understand how the proposed increase was calculated, how much revenue it is expected to generate, or how the funds would be allocated among airport development, operations, and aviation oversight activities.

The proposal also comes as OECS member states continue discussions on a harmonized regional funding framework for the Eastern Caribbean Civil Aviation Authority (ECCAA). While the Government has indicated that part of the increase would contribute to ECCAA funding, stakeholders have not received clarity on how the overall increase was determined or how revenues would be distributed among its stated objectives. Advancing a national measure before the regional framework has been fully presented and discussed risks undermining efforts to achieve a coordinated regional approach to aviation funding.

The Caribbean competes globally for visitors, investment, and air service. Any increase in the cost of travel should therefore be carefully evaluated for its potential impact on affordability, destination competitiveness, visitor demand, and long-term connectivity. Passenger traffic in Antigua and Barbuda already declined by 2.6% during the first half of 2026 compared with the same period in 2025.

"It is essential that the government clearly explains the rationale for the proposed increase and how the additional revenues will be used. Any contribution toward ECCAA funding should be advanced through the agreed regional framework, supported by transparent governance and funding mechanisms that ensure revenues collected for aviation safety oversight are dedicated to that purpose and transferred accordingly. This would also facilitate informed stakeholder consultation and maintain confidence in efforts to support aviation development and oversight across the region. Separating the regional ECCAA initiative from proposals for national passenger charge increases would allow each measure to be considered independently and assessed on its own merits," said Peter Cerda, IATA's Regional Vice President for the Americas.

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Notes for Editors:

- IATA (International Air Transport Association) represents over 370 airlines accounting for some 85% of global air traffic.
- You can follow us at [follow us on X](#) for announcements, policy positions, and other useful industry information.
- [Fly Net Zero](#).
- Earlier in 2026, Prime Ministers of participating OECS Member States agreed to pursue a harmonized regional framework to fund the Eastern Caribbean Civil Aviation Authority (ECCAA), the regional organization responsible for aviation safety oversight across much of the Eastern Caribbean. The proposed framework is intended to establish a coordinated approach across participating states, including common legislation, aligned implementation timelines, and a sustainable funding mechanism.
- The ECCAA framework currently under discussion includes a proposed passenger contribution of USD 2.50 on arrival and USD 2.50 on departure for travel to and from participating states.
- The Government of Antigua and Barbuda has proposed increasing passenger charges by USD 10 per arriving passenger and USD 10 per departing passenger.
- Passenger traffic in Antigua and Barbuda declined by 2.6% during the first half of 2026 compared with the same period in 2025.