TRANSFERABILITY OF TICKETS

The issue is subject to individual airlines' commercial policies, but there are many reasons to prohibit transferability. Security and fraud are two of them.

The Issue

Most airlines state that a ticket is not transferable to another passenger, except in cases of force majeure. Some see this as an unnecessary restriction on customer flexibility.

IATA's Position

Ticket transferability is part of an individual airline's commercial policy. As a result, it should be left to them alone to decide on their specific conditions of carriage.

In IATA's Conditions of Carriage, a "model" agreement which airlines can use to construct their own, a ticket is not transferable. IATA supports non-transferability for several reasons:

- In the case of a fully refundable ticket, the argument of transferability is not an issue as the purchaser can opt for a refund if he decides not to travel.
- In the case of partially or non-refundable tickets, passengers that do not travel receive a credit towards future travel on the issuing carrier, subject to a reasonable administration fee. The customer has therefore been able to recover the value of the unused ticket.
- Should ticket transferability be permitted, a significant secondary market could develop, with serious scope for fraud and ticket touting.
- Governments are putting in place ever stricter procedures for the purposes of security and immigration. Many countries now require advance passenger information prior to departure. Failure to comply or errors in data (e.g. submitting the wrong or even misspelled names) results in substantial fines, inhibits the ability of the government to conduct its security protocols and can also result in a passenger being refused travel.

Key Facts and Figures

- IATA Recommended Practice 1724 contains the IATA Conditions of Carriage
- The UK Office of Fair Trading (OFT) has accepted that provisions governing the use of both refundable and non-refundable tickets in case a passenger does not travel, reflected in RP 1724, render transferability a non-issue.
- 24% of passengers worldwide were subject to advance passenger information (API) requirements in 2010, with the number expected to increase as more countries put in place API regimes.

Help reduce fraud and ease compliance with current security procedures by supporting a prohibition on ticket transferability.