BUDGET AIRLINE COMPLAINTS IN TAIWAN SOAR AS OPTIONS INCREASE

News / Airlines

The Civil Aeronautics Administration (CAA) received 480 complaints against low-cost carriers (LCCs) from January to October this year, more than double the number during the same period last year, according to a recent United Evening News report.

The budget airline industry has been booming in recent years in Taiwan, with 19 low-cost carriers now serving Taiwan and expanding their routes to neighboring countries, but complaints have increased as consumers have more choices to travel for less.

There were 980 disputes between airlines and passengers in the first 10 months of the year, according to the CAA, and 480 of them involved LCCs, a big jump from the 180 recorded against LCCs in the first 10 months of 2014, the report said, citing CAA statistics.

Topping the list of passenger complaints has been ticket refunds, with 60 percent of passengers

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dissatisfied with strict rules set by budget airlines, while 30 percent of the complaints arose from flight delays or cancellations.

Other gripes against LCCs involved lost baggage, frequent changes in quoted fares, luggage allowance policies, and aircraft changes. The CAA said many LCCs have set rules that can be hard to understand for customers, and it has asked budget airlines to explicitly outline booking terms and conditions so that potential travelers can easily navigate different policies.

Hsu Yueh-ling, an associate professor in Kainan University's Department of Air Transportation, suggested, meanwhile, that travelers buy travel inconvenience insurance to ensure a smoother journey, according to the report.

The Consumer's Foundation said LCCs have had a positive impact on the tourism industry, but acknowledged that travelers might face delays and cancellations and suggested that budget airline customers give themselves time between segments of their itineraries.

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