

# Changi T4 taps tech for greater efficiency

It's less than half the size of T3 but will be able to handle two-thirds the passenger traffic

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Changi Airport's Terminal 4, which opens later this year, may be small – less than half the size of Terminal 3 – but it will be able to handle two-thirds the passenger traffic that the bigger facility can.

This is made possible through extensive use of technology, including self-service check-in and other passenger processes, that not only boosts overall capacity but can also yield up to 20 per cent in manpower savings.

Unlike the other three terminals, for example, T4 offers travellers a start-to-end automated process, from check-in to boarding.

Security checks are centralised instead of being done at the boarding gates and, for the first time at Changi, the new terminal will include a facial recognition system to ensure that the same traveller moves from the first to the last stop. The push to be efficient is critical for Changi, which competes fiercely with other airports in the region, all vying for a share of Asia's fast-growing air travel market, analysts say.

After T4, Changi will have to wait at least 10 to 12 years before the next major capacity injection kicks in, with the opening of Terminal 5.

For now, the focus is on ensuring a smooth opening for T4, Changi Airport Group (CAG) said, adding that the date will be fixed once flight and other tests are done.

The public will get a chance to view the terminal at an open house

from Aug 7 to 20. All 200,000 free tickets to the open house have been snapped up, CAG said.

T4, designed with high ceilings and open spaces, projects a modern, clean look and also promises to be a visual treat for travellers and visitors, the group said. Highlights include a Peranakan-themed heritage zone featuring a six-minute cultural show and a 70m by 5m wall showcasing Singapore's skyline and Asean landmarks, as well as a whimsical animated clip on suitcases being screened before a flight.

At the heart of T4 is a grand-scale kinetic sculpture, Petalroads, spanning 200m.

Ms Poh Li San, vice-president of the T4 project, said during a media preview on Monday: "With T4, we have sought to create an enjoyable

and memorable travel experience for our passengers, from the facilities and services to the environment and the visual treats within."

The terminal was conceived with the vision to rethink travel and push boundaries, she said. Apart from the unique design elements, the team sought to address capacity needs as well as to improve efficiency and manpower productivity.

T4, which will house nine airlines, including the AirAsia group's four carriers and Cathay Pacific, will be able to handle up to 16 million passengers a year, increasing Changi's overall annual capacity to 82 million passengers.

As part of the development of Jewel – Changi's new lifestyle, retail and aviation hub opening in early 2019 – Terminal 1 is also being



expanded to add capacity.

By the time the works are done and T5 is fully developed, Changi should be able to handle about 150 million passengers a year. Till then, and unless there is another growth spurt like the low-cost carrier boom about a decade ago, the opening of T4 should be enough for Changi to maintain its service and operational standards, said Temasek Polytechnic aviation management and services senior lecturer Gary Ho.

Associate Professor Terence Fan, a transport specialist with Singapore Management University, said T4 will also provide "a small-scale laboratory" to test novel technology, designs and processes that could be used in larger scale at T5.

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Above: Changi Terminal 4's departure hall will have self-service check-in kiosks.

Far left: The heritage zone boasts a facade of Peranakan shophouses.

Left: Petal-shaped skylights in the departure hall. The petal theme runs throughout the terminal. ST PHOTOS: STEPHANIE YEOH