

THE STRAITS TIMES

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Feb 24, 2008

Visitors brave heat, snaking queues to catch last day of Singapore Airshow

By Teh Joo Lin

UNWILLING to buy a \$20 ticket to watch the jets fly at the Singapore Airshow, Mr Teo decided to park his lorry by the road and plane spot from the nearby Changi coast.

But he ended up with a ticket of another sort when he returned after the flying display to find his vehicle missing.

The authorities had towed his 10-foot lorry.

'Of course it was not worth it,' said the self-employed man, who declined to give his full name.

While Mr Teo had a rough afternoon, some 50,000 people who paid to visit the Singapore Airshow on its last day did not have it easy either.

They braved sweltering heat, snaking queues and slow traffic to be part of the inaugural show, which closed after six days on Sunday with \$18.9 billion worth of deals sewn up.

More than 30,000 trade visitors and over 90,000 aviation buffs passed through the turnstiles, said the show's organisers, Singapore Airshow and Events.

Among the visitors were President S R Nathan and celebrity Zoe Tay, wife of airforce fighter pilot Lieutenant-Colonel Philip Chionh.

Judging from the crowd's cheers, gasps and eager picture-snapping when LTC Chionh and his fellow Black Knights roared past in their F-16s, the earlier inconveniences had been forgotten.

On Saturday, the first of two days that the show was open to the public, traffic snarls and other crowd-related congestions led to some complaints.

But with about 80 buses to ferry visitors to and from the site, the situation improved markedly on Sunday, though there remained problems.

Aircraft technician Generale Virgelito, 25, said after the flying display, he queued for an hour before he boarded a shuttle to the Pasir Ris bus interchange.

Other jams cropped up near security checkpoints, where people walking to the viewing site came to a standstill and stared, slack-jawed, at the aerial acrobatics overhead.

Read the full story in Monday's edition of The Straits Times.

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