



International Civil Aviation Organization

ICAO

**Tenth Meeting of the Air Traffic Management Sub-Group
(ATM/SG/10) of APANPIRG**

Video Teleconference, 17 – 21 October 2022

Agenda Item 6: ATM Coordination (Meetings, Route Development, Contingency Planning)

PROGRESS UPDATE ON CAPACITY OPTIMISATION ON AIR ROUTES L642 AND M771

(Presented by Hong Kong China)

SUMMARY

This paper presents a progress update of the initiative from Hong Kong China raised in ATM/SG/9. States/Administrations involved and IATA worked together over the past year with a view to optimising the capacity of air routes L642 and M771 by reducing the longitudinal spacing to prepare for the recovery of air traffic and anticipated growth in the APAC Regions. This paper encourages closer collaboration among concerned States/Administrations to speed up the implementation while maintaining safe and orderly air traffic flow.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Hong Kong China is committed to the optimisation of the capacity of air routes within the Hong Kong Flight Information Region (FIR), including major trunk routes (MTR) L642 and M771 in the APAC Regions. The plan to enhance the longitudinal spacing between aircraft operating along L642 and M771 was well conceived amongst major stakeholders before the outbreak of COVID-19. Close collaboration among all States/Administrations within the region and IATA is a prerequisite to achieve the goal of this initiative. As the pandemic situation is subsiding with air traffic gradually recovering in the APAC Regions, Hong Kong China urges the States/Administrations concerned to expedite the implementation of 20NM longitudinal spacing on L642 and M771 so as to get prepared for the anticipated, post COVID traffic resurgence in the near future and the stronger air traffic growth in the longer run.

2. DISCUSSION

2.1 A comprehensive evaluation by Hong Kong China for optimisation of the longitudinal spacing between aircraft operating along L642 and M771 from 50NM to 20NM within the Hong Kong FIR was completed in Q2 2022. The study concluded that the capacity of L642 and M771 would be enhanced by 200% after the implementation. It is also envisaged that such enhancement will facilitate operators to achieve better fuel efficiency as more aircraft would be able to operate at optimum cruising levels. This will significantly improve operators' economic performance, and reduce overall carbon footprint. IATA has expressed their full support on this initiative.

2.2 With an additional en-route Air Traffic Control sector for MTR L642 and M771 established in Hong Kong FIR since Q3 2019 and the associated airspace (i.e. the southern portion of the Hong Kong FIR) under full surveillance coverage provided by the ground-based ADS-B, Hong Kong China has been assuring the readiness for the implementation of the proposed 20NM longitudinal spacing requirement on L642 and M771.

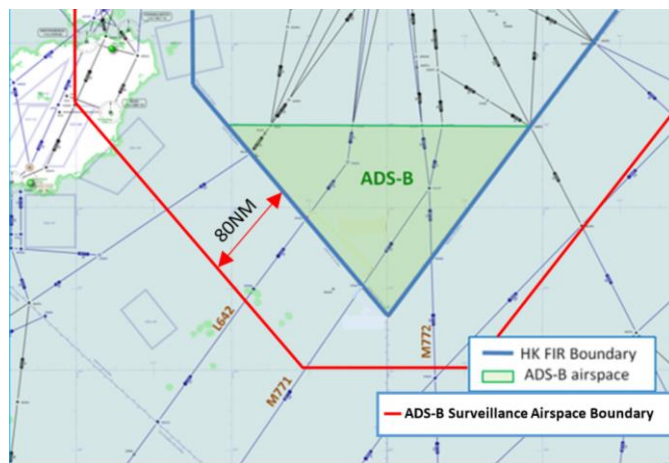


Figure 1: Surveillance coverage of ATS routes L642 and M771

2.3 After the Tenth Meeting of the South China Sea Traffic Flow Review Group (SCSTFRG/10), Hong Kong China continues to play a leading role to progress this initiative and proactively communicate with concerned States/Administrations including China, Vietnam and Singapore. A draft Letter of Agreement (LOA) detailing the requirements for different operating scenarios on the implementation of the proposed 20NM spacing between Hong Kong ATCC and Sanya ACC has since been prepared through close collaboration. A positive response was also received from Vietnam after the meeting. Similar agreement between Sanya ACC and Hochiminh ACC is being worked out before the initiative may proceed to the next stage.

2.4 The implementation timeline proposed by Hong Kong China is Q1 2023. Based on the experience from the enhancement of longitudinal spacing on ATS route A1/P901 from 30NM to 20NM in early 2020, close collaborative effort among States/Administrations was the key to success. Therefore, concerned States/Administrations are urged to adopt a more proactive approach in order to allow the initiative to materialise.

3. ACTION BY THE MEETING

3.1 The meeting is invited to:

- a) note the information contained in this paper and progress of the project;
- b) recognize the importance to speed up the implementation of the 20NM longitudinal spacing along MTR L642 and M771 to get prepared for the anticipated post COVID traffic resurgence in the near future and stronger air traffic growth in the APAC Regions in the longer run;
- c) have States/Administrations concerned (i.e. China, Vietnam, Singapore and Hong Kong China) to confirm Points of Contact (POC) to proceed with further discussion on the proposal mentioned in b);
- d) encourage States/Administrations to share their experience and take initiative to optimise the capacity of other major air routes in the APAC Regions; and
- e) discuss any relevant matters as appropriate.