



*International Civil Aviation Organization*

ICAO

**Eleventh Meeting of the Air Traffic Management Sub-Group  
(ATM/SG/11) of APANPIRG**

Singapore, 2 – 6 October 2023

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

**OPERATIONAL TRIAL OF 20NM LONGITUDINAL SPACING ON  
ATS ROUTES L642 AND M771**

(Presented by Hong Kong China)

**SUMMARY**

This paper presents a progress update on the initiative raised by Hong Kong China in ATM/SG/9 in 2021 regarding capacity optimization on ATS routes L642 and M771. In the Second Meeting of the South Asia, Indian Ocean and Southeast Asia ATM Coordination Group (SAIOSEACG/2) and the Eleventh Meeting of the South China Sea Traffic Flow Review Group (SCSTFRG/11) conducted in 2023, all concerned States/Administrations, including China, Vietnam and Singapore expressed their full support in implementing reduced 20NM longitudinal spacing on L642 and M771. To facilitate implementation of the initiative, all concerned States/Administration have agreed to commence an operational trial on the application of 20NM longitudinal spacing on L642 and M771 in September 2023 to gain the early benefits.

**1. INTRODUCTION**

1.1 Hong Kong China is committed to optimise the capacity of ATS routes within the Hong Kong Flight Information Region (FIR), including major trunk routes (MTR) L642 and M771 in the APAC Regions and has been closely collaborating with all concerned States/Administrations within the region and IATA to achieve the goal of this initiative. As the pandemic situation is subsiding with air traffic rapidly recovering in the APAC Regions, Hong Kong China, together with the States/Administrations concerned, has kicked start trial operation of 20NM longitudinal spacing on L642 and M771 to meet the traffic resurgence and the strong air traffic growth in the long run.

**2. DISCUSSION**

2.1 Hong Kong China has completed a comprehensive evaluation on optimisation of longitudinal spacing between aircraft operating along L642 and M771 from 50NM to 20NM within Hong Kong FIR. It is concluded that the capacity of L642 and M771 would be doubled at least after implementation of the enhanced spacing. More aircraft would be able to operate at optimum cruising levels and achieve better fuel efficiency while maintaining flight safety. IATA has welcomed and expressed their full support.

2.2 Subsequent to the SAIOSEACG/2 and SCSTFRG/11, States/Administrations concerned have worked diligently to further progress the initiative and agreed to commence the trial application of 20NM longitudinal spacing along L642 and M771 in late September 2023. This trial operation will allow concerned States/Administrations and IATA to jointly gather valuable operational information and experience to assess the operational benefits and effectiveness of the proposed 20NM longitudinal spacing and provide relevant feedback with a view to determining the way forward.

2.3 The trial operation of 20NM longitudinal spacing on L642 and M771 is a crucial step towards optimising airspace and air traffic capacity within the APAC Regions. The full support of all concerned States/Administrations have marked a significant milestone to this initiative.

### **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) seek progress updates from States/Administrations concerned (i.e. China, Vietnam, Singapore and Hong Kong China) regarding the regional initiative;
- c) encourage States/Administrations and IATA to share their experience; and
- d) discuss any relevant matters as appropriate.

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