



*International Civil Aviation Organization*

ICAO

**Eleventh Meeting of the South China Sea Traffic Flow  
Review Group (SCSTFRG/11)**

Bangkok Thailand, 04 – 06 July 2023

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**Agenda Item 2: Review of the Current and Planned CNS/ATM Capabilities and Identifying  
Associated Reduced Horizontal Separation**

**PROGRESS UPDATE ON CAPACITY OPTIMISATION ON AIR 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 air routes L642 and M771. In the Second Meeting of the South Asia, Indian Ocean and Southeast Asia ATM Coordination Group (SAIOSEACG/2) 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. In order to facilitate implementation of the initiative, Hong Kong China proposes concerned States/ Administrations to conduct an operational trial in Q3 2023.

**1. INTRODUCTION**

1.1 Hong Kong China is committed to optimising the capacity of air routes within the Hong Kong Flight Information Region (FIR) and the APAC Regions, including major trunk routes L642 and M771. The plan to enhance capacity of L642 and M771 through reducing the longitudinal spacing between aircraft operating along the two routes 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 achieving this goal. As the pandemic situation is subsiding with air traffic gradually recovering in the APAC Regions, Hong Kong China urges States/Administrations concerned to expedite the implementation of 20NM longitudinal spacing on L642 and M771 to get prepared for the traffic resurgence and the more robust air traffic growth in the longer 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 the Hong Kong FIR. It is concluded that the capacity of L642 and M771 would be increased by 200% after implementation of the enhanced spacing. It is also envisaged that more aircraft would be able to operate at optimum cruising levels and achieve better fuel efficiency. IATA has already expressed their full support for this initiative. After the Tenth Meeting of the South China Sea Traffic Flow Review Group (SCSTFRG/10) in 2022, Hong Kong China continued the efforts to pursue this initiative through proactively communicating with concerned States/Administrations.

2.2 As discussed in the Tenth Meeting of the APANPIRG ATM Sub-Group (ATM/SG/10) meeting in October 2022 and in a side meeting during the Second Meeting of the South Asia, Indian Ocean and Southeast Asia ATM Coordination Group (SAIOSEACG/2) in March 2023, all concerned States/Administrations, including China, Vietnam and Singapore, expressed their full support in the implementation of 20NM longitudinal spacing on L642 and M771. This was a significant step towards achieving the ultimate goal of this initiative.

2.3 Subsequent to the SAIOSEACG/2, States/Administrations concerned have worked diligently to progress the initiative. Meanwhile, Hong Kong China is fully ready to implement the 20NM longitudinal spacing on L642 and M771. To speed up the progress of implementation in the APAC region, Hong Kong China has proposed to concerned States/Administrations, i.e. Sanya China, Singapore and Vietnam, to conduct a trial operation on L642 and M771 in Q3 2023. This trial implementation will allow concerned States/Administrations and IATA to gather valuable operational data and experience to assess the operational benefits and effectiveness of the proposed 20NM longitudinal spacing and provide valuable feedback with a view to determining the way forward.

2.4 The implementation 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 in SAIOSEACG/2 meeting marked a significant milestone to this initiative. In this regard, Hong Kong China will continue the on-going collaboration with all concerned States/Administrations and keep up the momentum and efforts in the aim of implementing the initiative as soon as practicable.

### **3. ACTION BY THE MEETING**

3.1 The meeting is invited to:

- a) note the information contained in this paper;
- b) seek progress updates from States/Administrations concerned (i.e. China, Vietnam, Singapore and Hong Kong China) regarding the regional initiative;
- c) seek continual support from States/Administrations concerned (i.e. China, Vietnam, Singapore and Hong Kong China) and IATA to conduct trial operations as proposed in 2.3 above;
- d) encourage States/Administrations and IATA to share their experience; and
- e) discuss any relevant matters as appropriate.

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