

Data-driven Airspace Efficiency Study

Case Study: EU-Asia Interface

Bin (Kevin) Hu – IATA

ATM/SG/14 of APANPIRG



Content

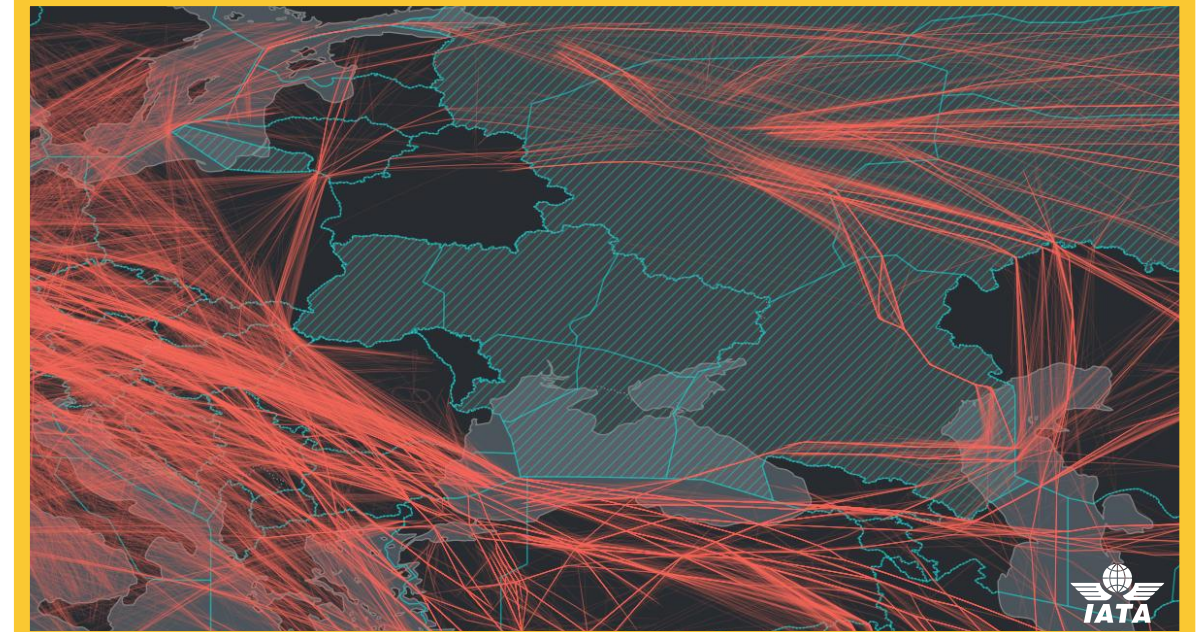
Introduction	01
Case Study and Data-driven Approach	02
Overall Results of Performance Assessment	03
Key Takeaways and Recommendations	04



Airspace Disruption

Impact on airspace connectivity and efficiency

Example : Russia & Ukraine Conflict



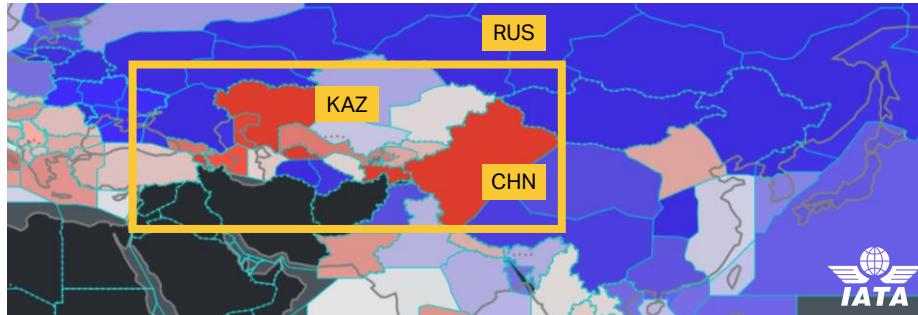
The enlarged view near Ukrainian airspace highlights increased flight activity below Ukraine, contrasted by reduced traffic in the Russian airspace directly above.
(Same dates as previous slides: 8 November 2021 vs. 20 November 2022)

Visualizations of the traffic trajectories before and after airspace disruption

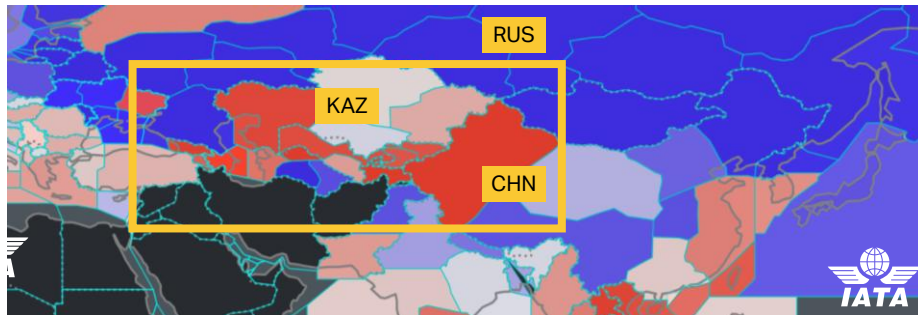
Spillover Effect

Airspaces in Asia experiencing traffic change

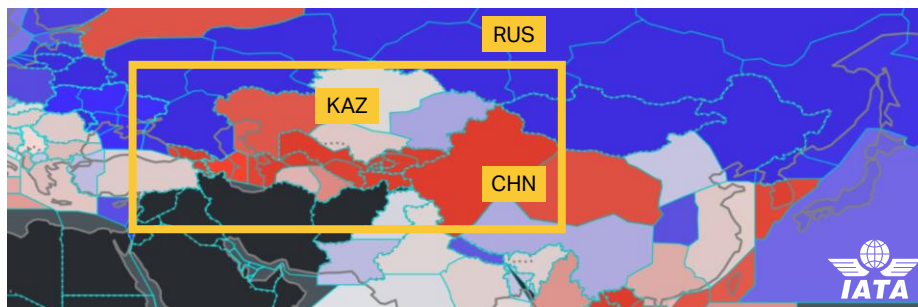
2022



2023



2024



Traffic Shifts in Asia After Airspace Disruptions

This map shows how traffic volume changed across airspaces in Asia compared to 2021.

- **Red areas:** FIRs where traffic increased noticeably.
- **Blue areas:** FIRs where traffic dropped significantly.

Technical note (for reference at the bottom of the slide)

- Colors reflect changes in **total flight distance per FIR**, normalized to remove the effect of overall global traffic growth.
- A log transformation was applied for stability.
- Only changes that passed statistical significance tests (z-test + FDR) are highlighted.

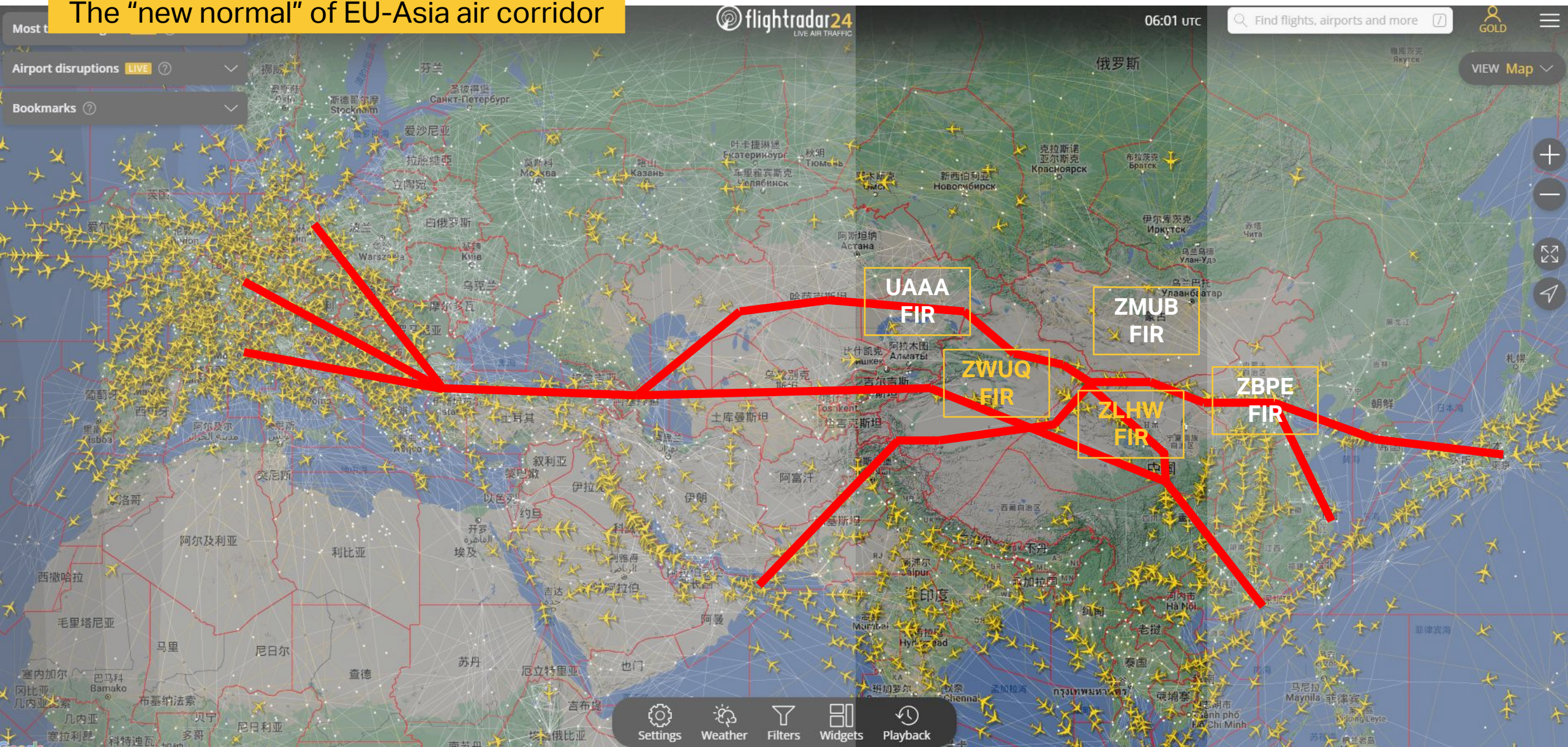
Data-driven Airspace Efficiency Study

Project overview

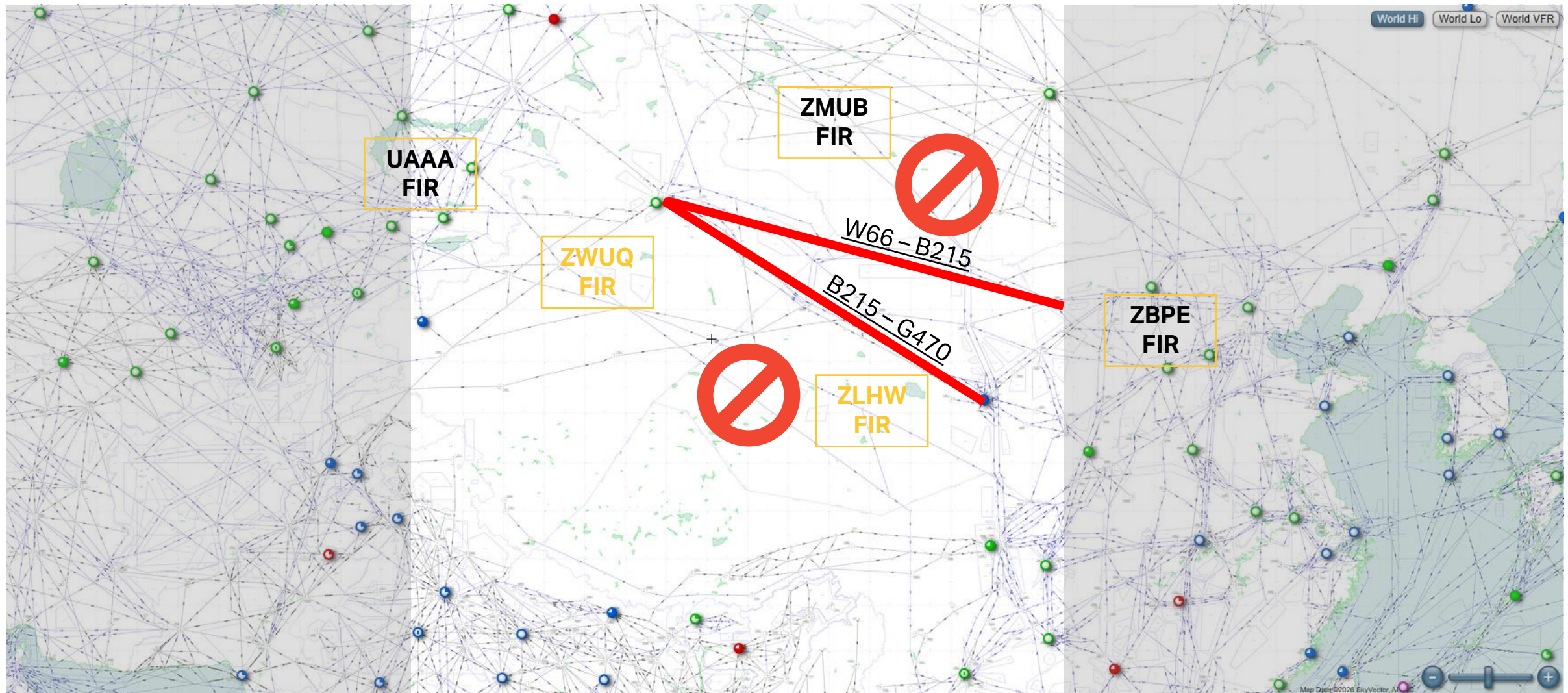
- Collaborate with the airlines and industry stakeholders to develop and validate a performance-based and data-driven methodology for large airspace restructuring initiatives and route proposals from users.
- Utilize the EU-Asia Interface as the case study and validate the approach to support advocacy activities and decision making.
- Complete the statistical modelling and in-depth analysis, with delivery of an industry workshop and a white paper.
- The developed prototype could be further applied to other airspaces.

Case Study: EU-Asia Interface

The "new normal" of EU-Asia air corridor

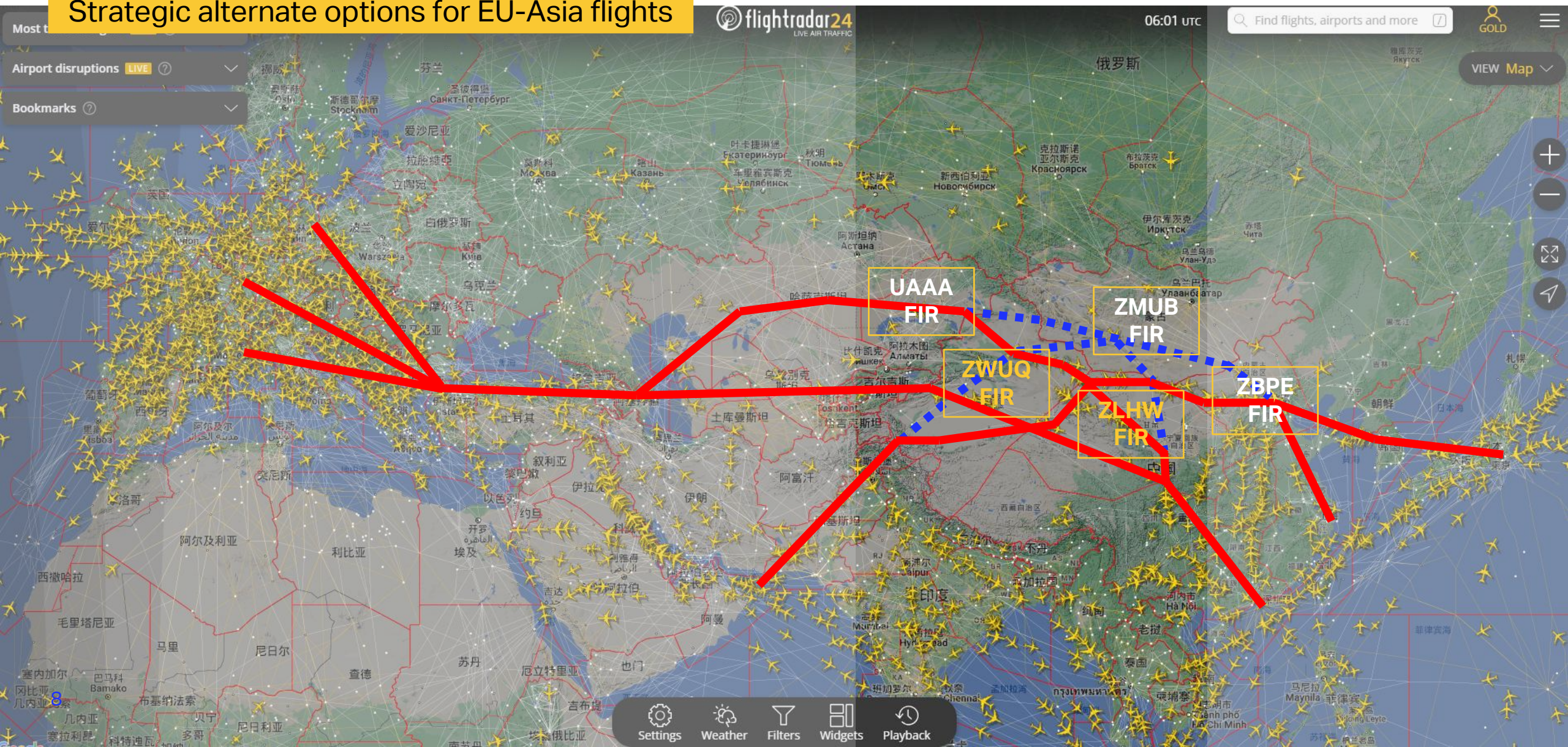


Airspace Supply in Lanzhou & Urumqi FIRs

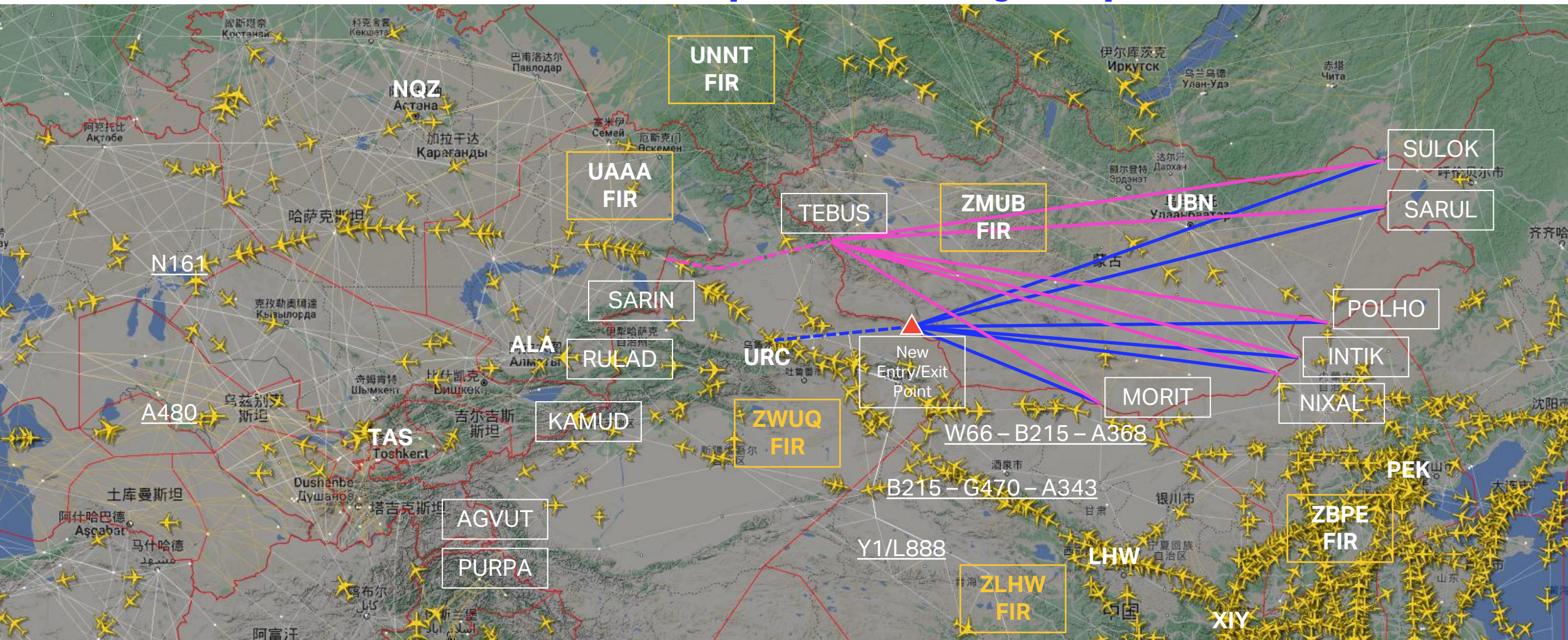


New ATS Routes Proposed by Operators

Strategic alternate options for EU-Asia flights



New ATS Routes Proposed by Operators



Scope & KPI Reference

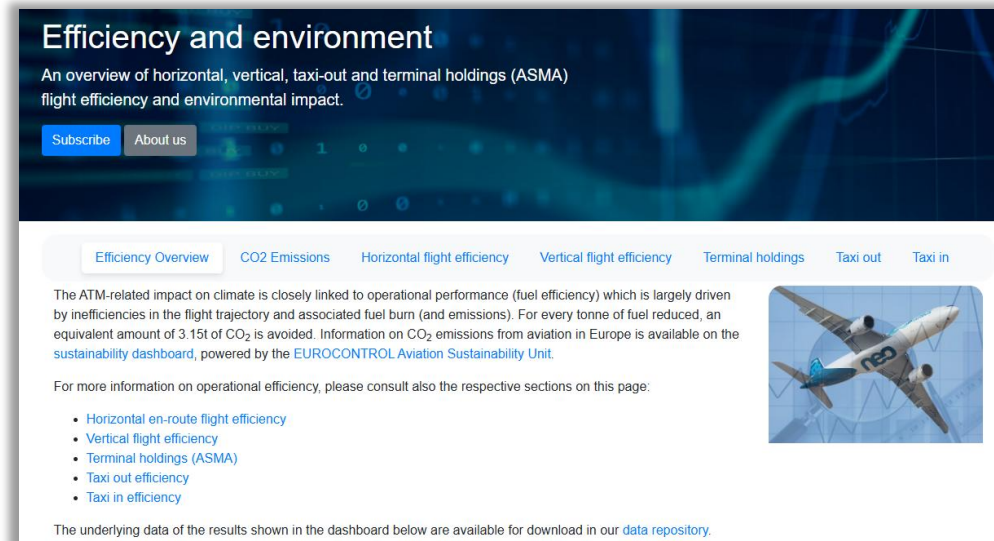
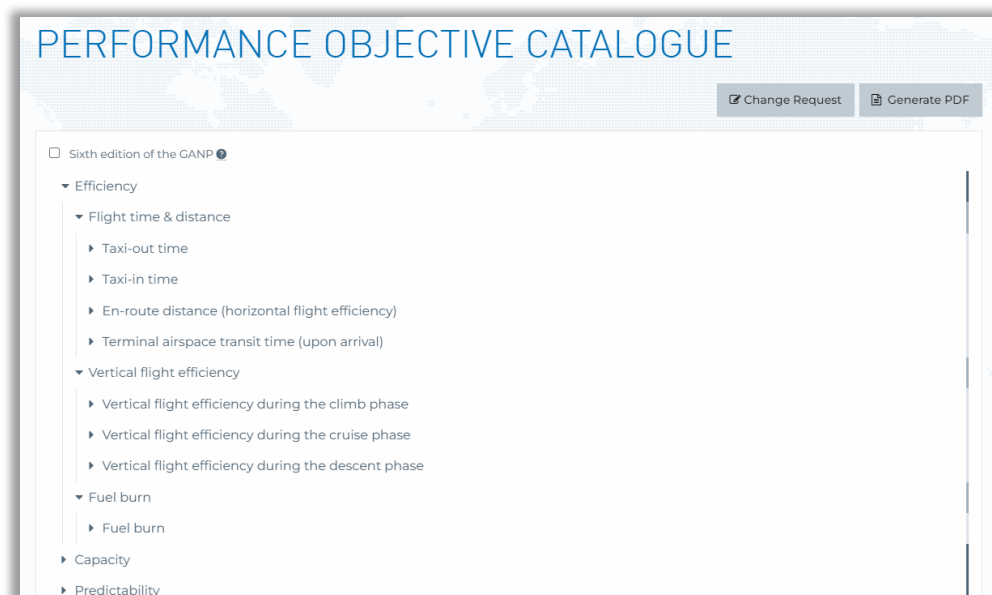
➤ Scope – enroute flight efficiency within focused FIRs:

- China: ZWUQ FIR, ZLHW FIR, ZBPE FIR
- Mongolia: ZMUB FIR
- Kazakhstan: UAAA FIR

➤ Timeframe for the study: 2 flight seasons (12 months)

➤ KPI reference:

- ICAO: [GANP KPIs on ATM efficiency](#)
- Eurocontrol: [Efficiency and environment](#)
- IATA: ATM WG prioritized metrics from the ICAO GANP (Flight efficiency & environmental impact)



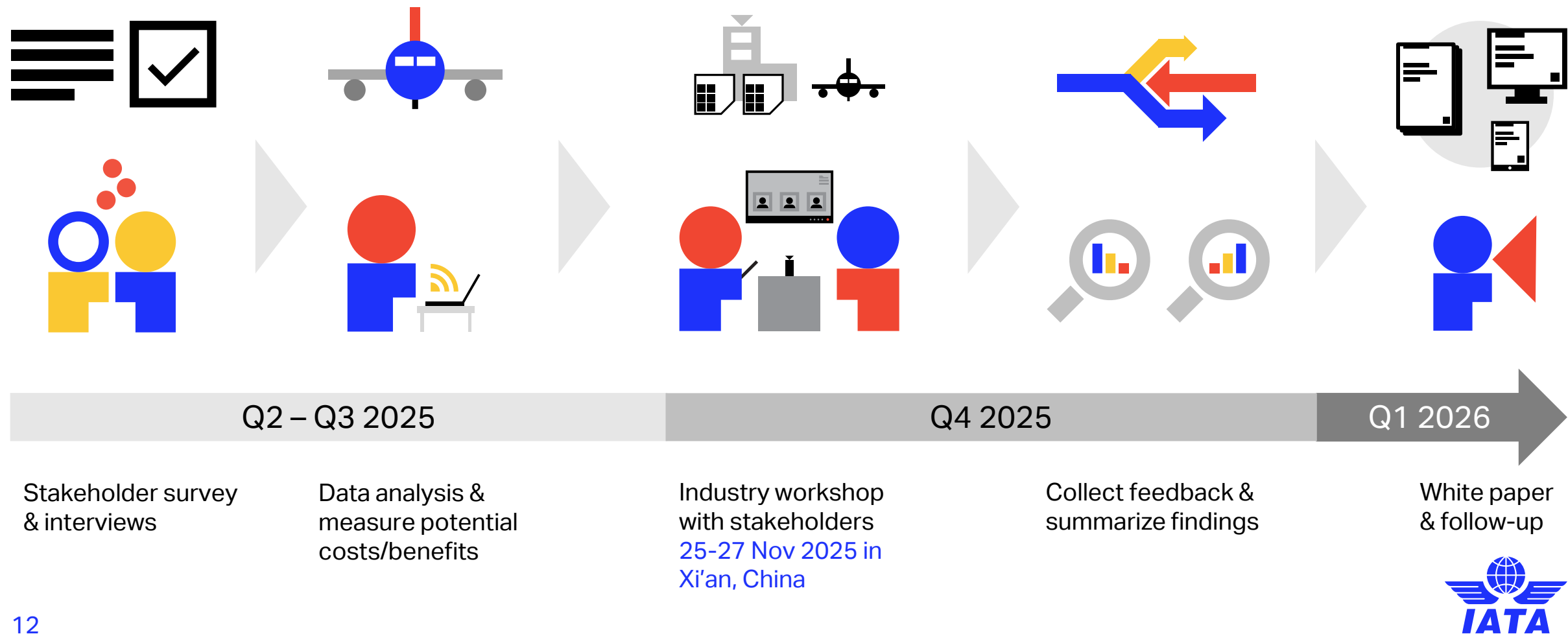
Methodologies

The approach suggested by project team:

- Real data collection and analysis
- Statistical modelling
- Interviews with key stakeholders
- Technical visits to key facilities
- Performance assessment and desk research
- Industry review and validation



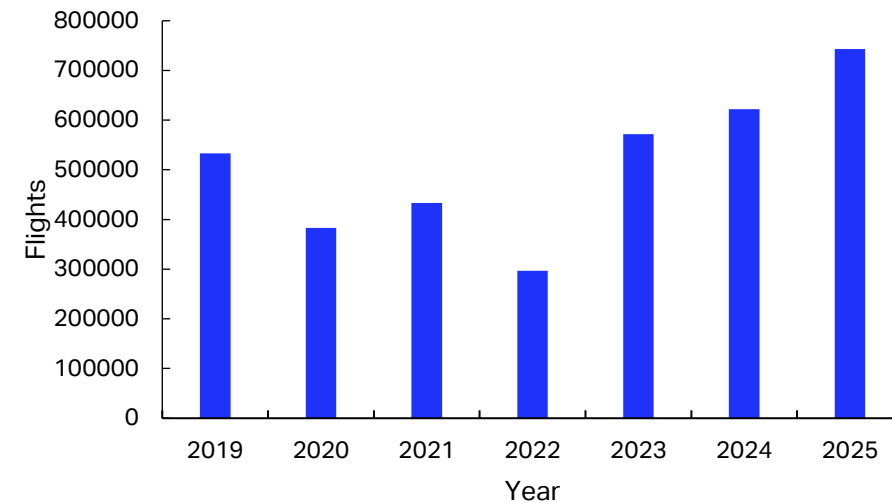
Project Timeline



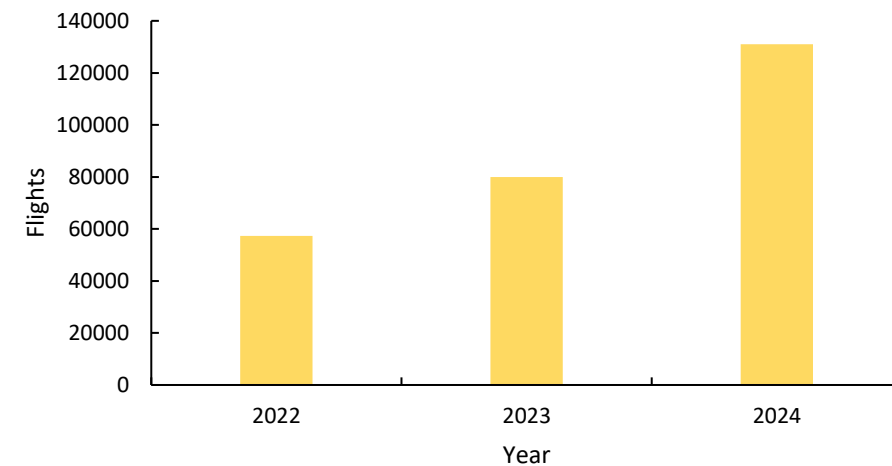
Annual Traffic Data

FIR	2022	2023 (YoY)	2024 (YoY)
ZWUQ	26,008	157,178 (+504.34%)	429,905 (+173.51%)
ZLHW	431,380	912,827 (+111.61%)	1,313,810 (+43.93)
ZMUB	35,339	48,554 (+37.39%)	73,755 (+51.90%)
UAAA	112,721	160,231 (+42.15%)	191,599 (+19.58%)
UACN	104,802	139,104 (+32.73%)	152,113 (9.35%)
UAI	141,243	188,397 (+33.39%)	223,576 (+18.67)

Annual flights by FIRs (Source: GADM)

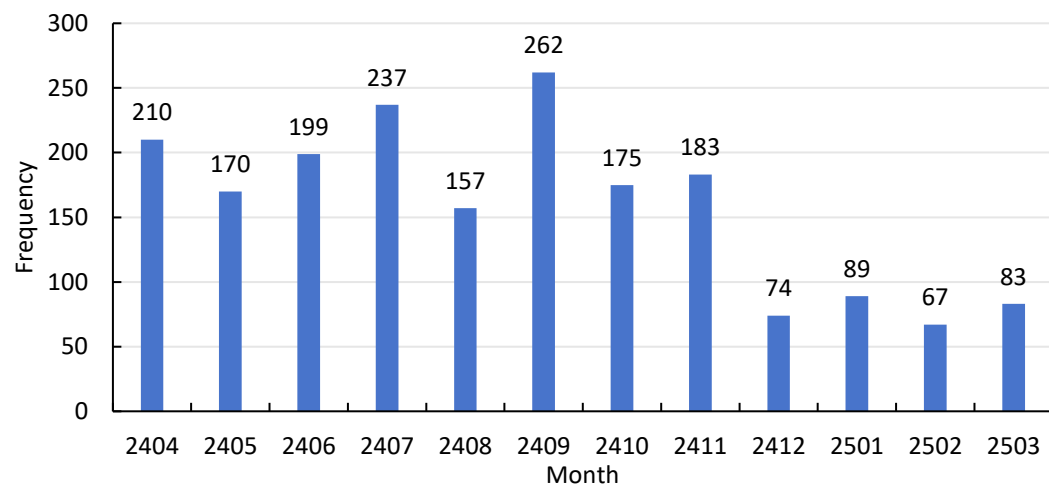


Annual flights in Lanzhou FIR (Source: ATMB)

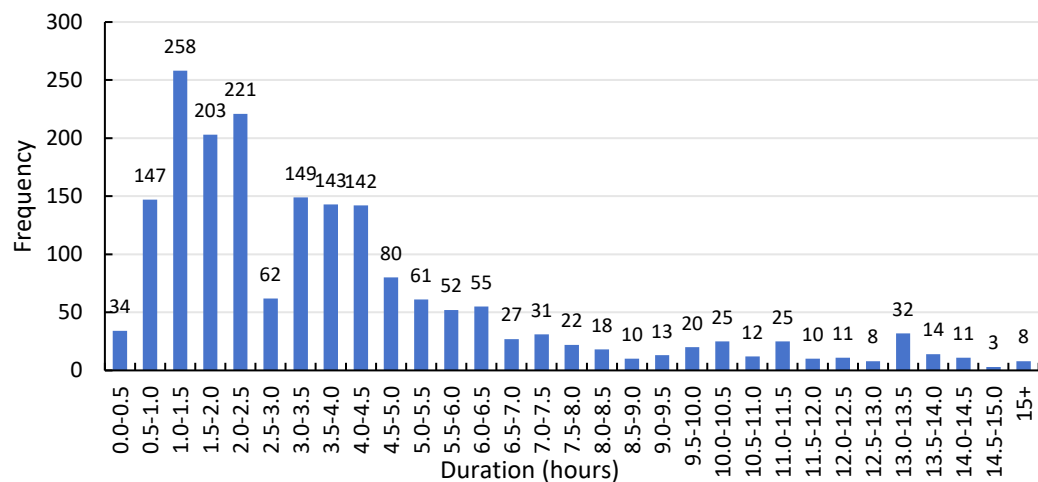


Annual flights crossed the border between Urumqi FIR and Central Asia (Source: ATMB)

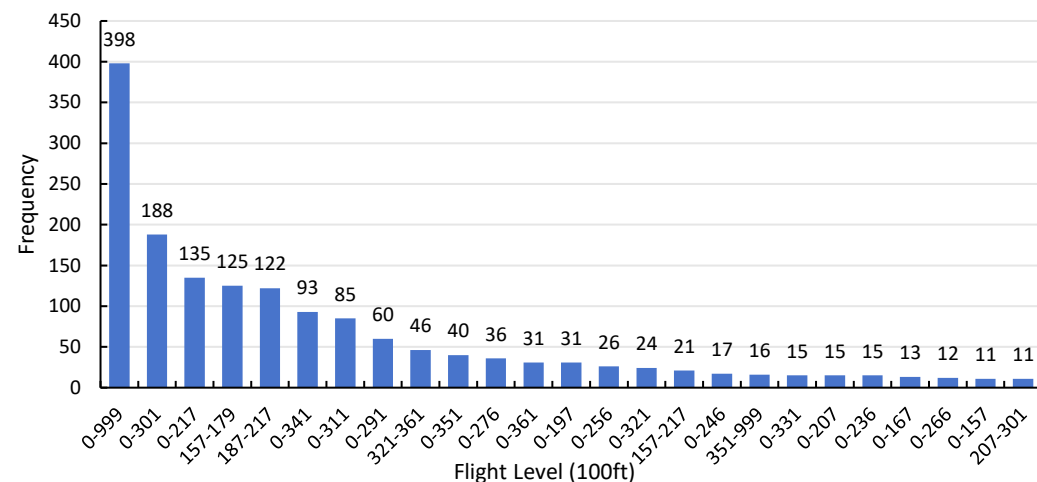
Analysis on NOTAM Data of Lanzhou FIR



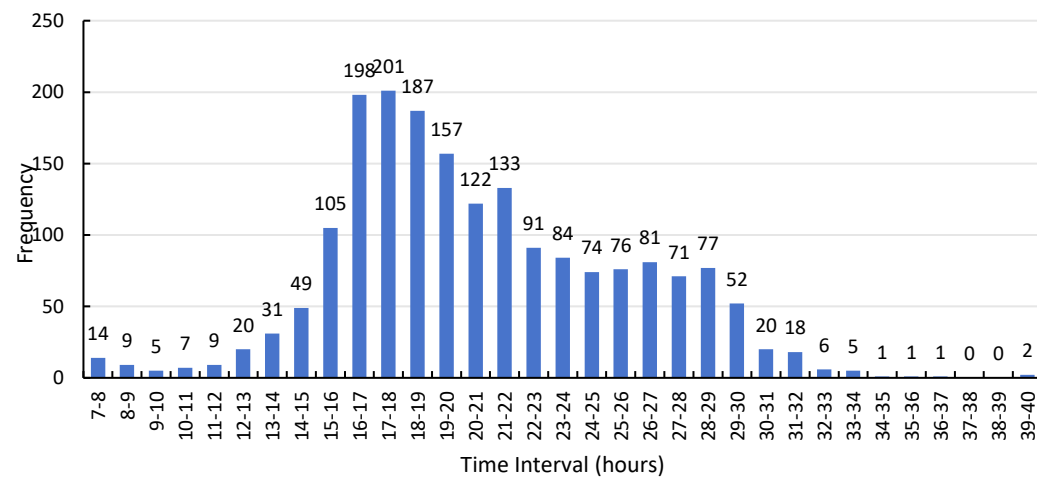
Monthly airspace closure NOTAM frequency of Lanzhou FIR



Restriction duration distribution of Lanzhou FIR

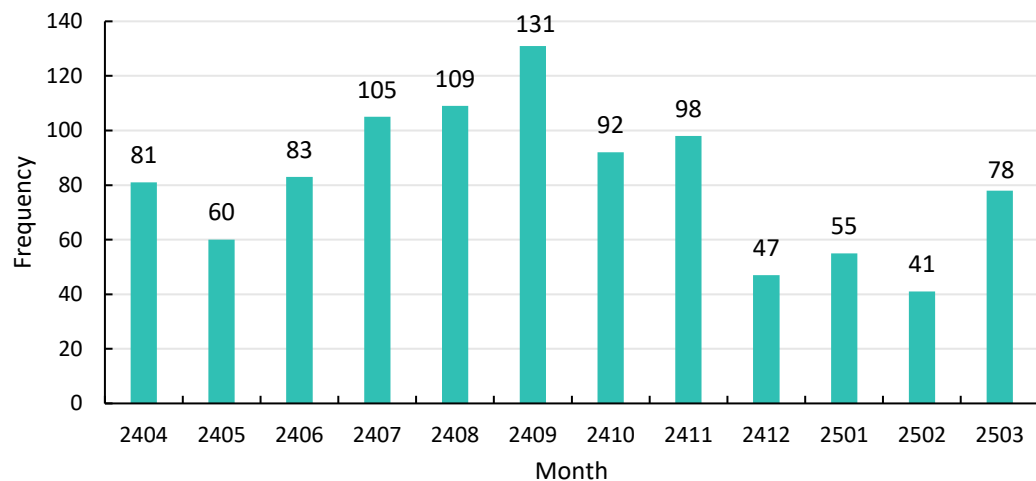


Distribution of the restricted flight levels in Lanzhou FIR

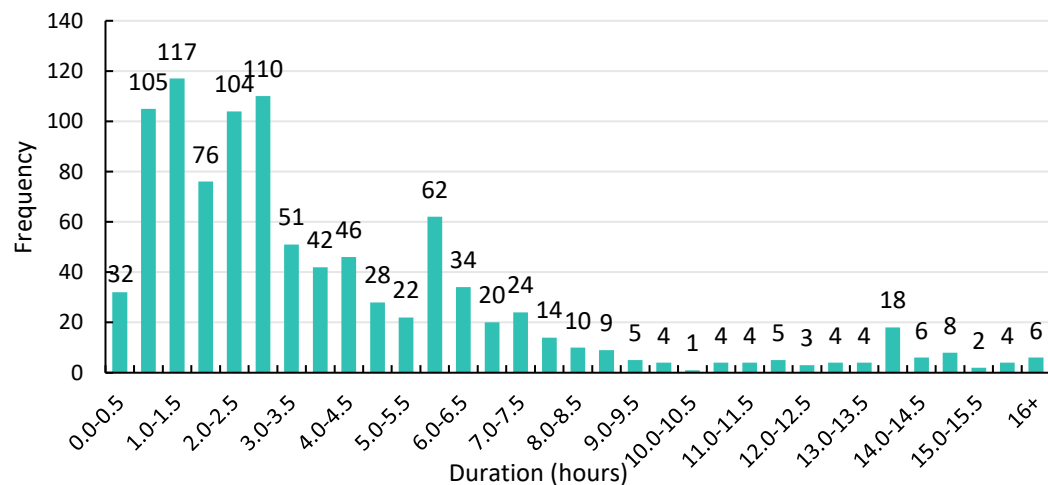


Distribution of airspace closure NOTAM lead time in Lanzhou FIR

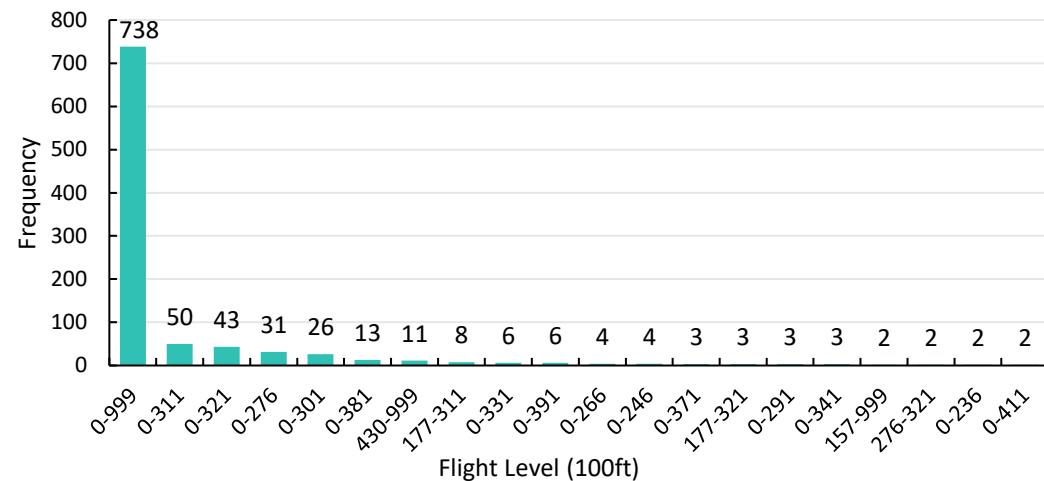
Analysis on NOTAM Data of Urumqi FIR



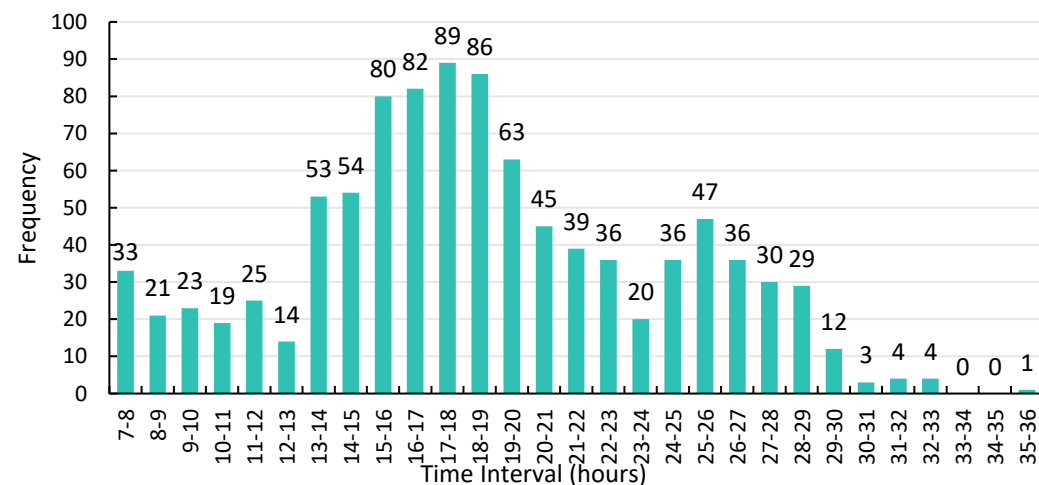
Monthly airspace closure NOTAM frequency of Urumqi FIR



Restriction duration distribution of Urumqi FIR

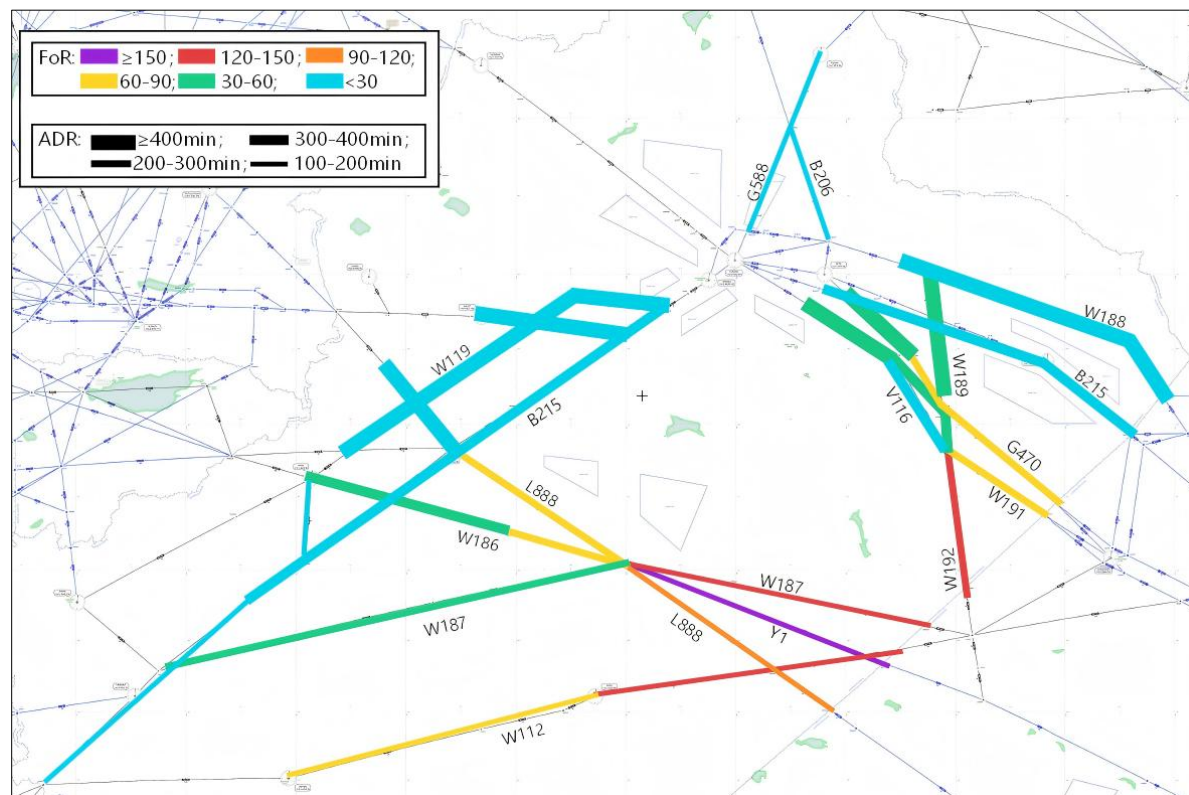


Distribution of the restricted flight levels in Urumqi FIR

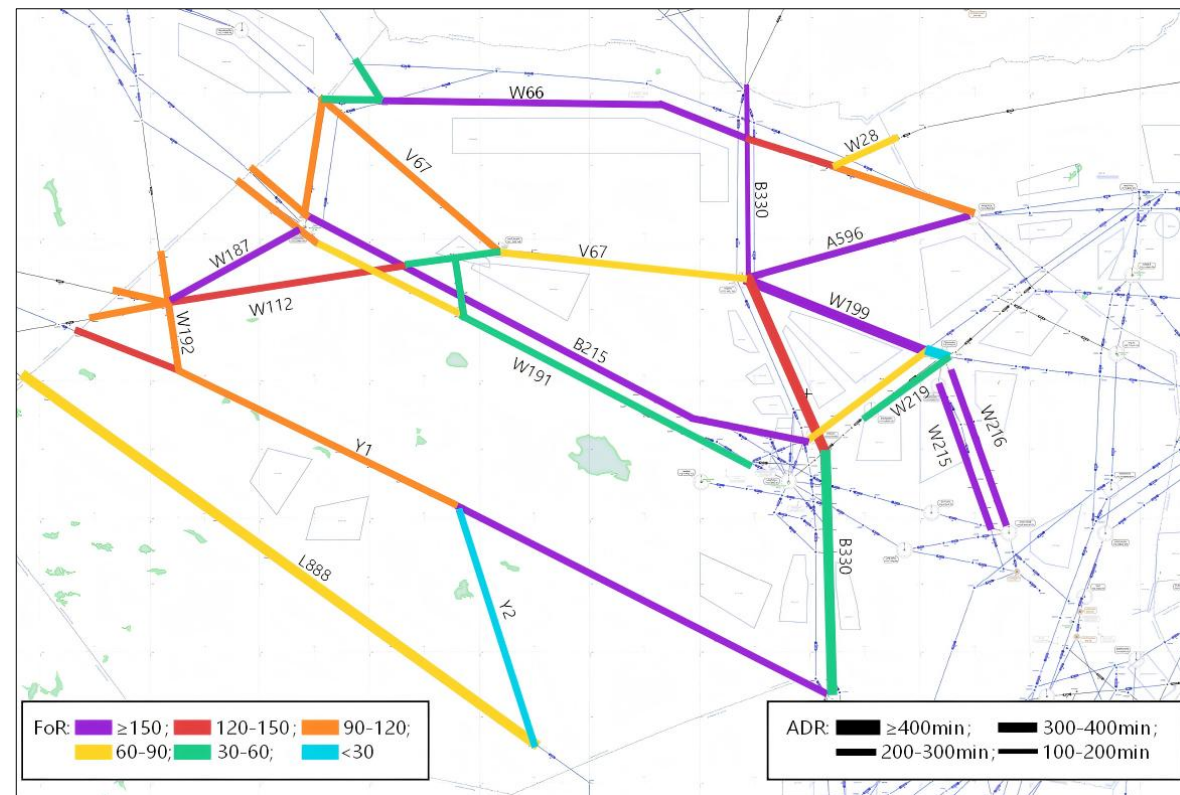


Distribution of airspace closure NOTAM lead time in Urumqi FIR

Distribution of Airspace Restrictions



Route closures in Urumqi FIR



Route closures in Lanzhou FIR

**Based on historical data of 3,547 NOTAMs collected for ZLHW FIR and ZWUQ FIR between 30 Mar 2024 and 29 Mar 2025.
FoR = Frequency of Restrictions, ADR = Average Restriction Durations*

Assessment of Potential Solutions

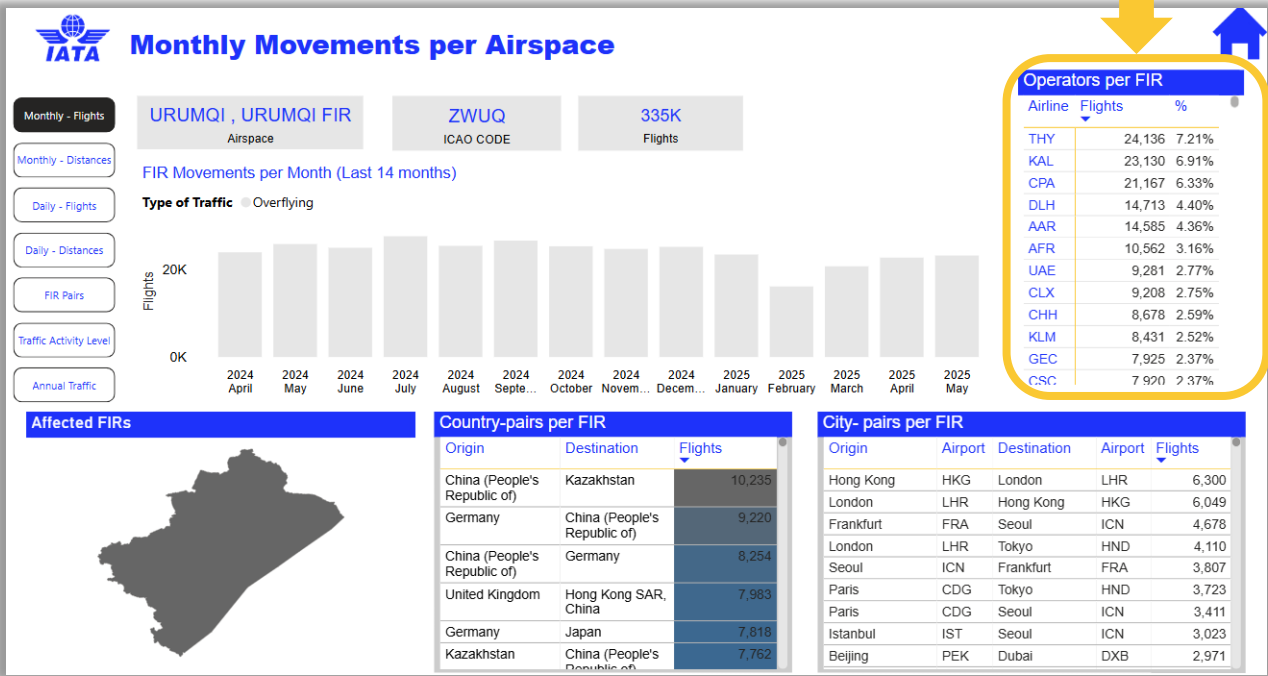
Dimension	<u>Solution 1</u>: Development of New Routes Within Lan-U FIRs	<u>Solution 2</u>: Optimization of Airspace Closure Notification & Alternative Route Information	<u>Solution 3</u>: Strengthening Civil-Military Coordination to Enhance Airspace Flexibility	<u>Solution 4</u>: Development of Strategic Alternative Routes in Mongolian Airspace
Solution Type	Route structure modification (domestic)	Process optimization	Dynamic resource management	Route structure modification (cross-border)
Key Content	Planning new routes within Lan-U airspace	Earlier NOTAM issuance; provision of diversion recommendations	Enhanced real-time airspace sharing and release mechanisms	Planning new routes within Mongolian airspace
Feasibility	Extremely low: constrained by geography and airspace structure	Moderate to high: achievable through administrative measures	Moderate: existing coordination mechanisms can be further optimized	Moderate to high: resources available, but requires international coordination and infrastructure upgrades
Expected Benefits	Directly increases local route supply, though difficult to realize	Addresses information gaps; improves decision-making efficiency and predictability	Unlocks latent capacity; enhances instantaneous capacity; mitigates short-term congestion	Fundamentally strengthens network resilience; provides systemic backup corridor; delivers direct economic benefits
Key Limitations	Geographical and airspace constraints insurmountable	Does not increase physical route capacity	Outcomes unpredictable; cannot be incorporated into advance planning	Dependent on international coordination; requires investment and involves longer timelines

Structured Operator Survey

➤ Historical schedule data was collected for S24 and W24/25 flight seasons (from 30 Mar 2024 to 29 Mar 2025) – covering all the real flights operated (in/out/overfly).

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P
Flight Number	Aircraft Type	Start Date	End Date	Day of Ops	Departure	STD (UTC)	Arrival	STA (UTC)	Flight Route in China	Planned Flight Level in ZWUQ FIR (Meter)	Planned Flight Level in ZLHW FIR (Meter)	PBN (Enroute)	CPDLC	RCP	ADS-C
CA1211	333	31-Mar-24	26-Oct-24	5.7	ZBAA	6:10	ZWWW	11:15	IDKEX B339 ASILA A575 UPREK W28 ATBUG W66 NUKTI B215 HAM W99 FKG B215 WUR	11000	11000				

➤ Totally **6,830** flight schedules from 22 top users of the airspace were collected.



Carrier Consent Form (Airspace Efficiency Survey)

The air carrier named below ("Carrier") has recently undertaken to participate in an IATA Data-Driven Airspace Efficiency Survey ("Survey"). As part of the Survey, the Carrier transmitted certain data, including historical flight schedule data of the Carrier, to IATA ("Carrier Data"). The Carrier has consented to allow IATA to use the Carrier Data to work on analysis and statistical modeling. Carrier has the right to withdraw this consent at any time on providing written notice to IATA.

The following terms and conditions govern the contribution and use of the Carrier Data subject to this consent.

1. LICENSE GRANT BY CARRIER

1.1. The Carrier hereby grants IATA a non-exclusive, perpetual, irrevocable, worldwide, royalty-free license to store, reproduce, use, produce derivative products and services, release, disclose, transmit and license the Carrier Data transmitted under this Agreement to third parties for the purpose of the Survey, and any advisory activities, white paper publications, papers, studies, or any other activity related with this purpose ("Use"). It is understood that IATA subcontractors and alliance partners shall also have that right of Use, provided an agreement is duly executed between IATA and such contractors and alliance partners and that such Use is limited to the rights granted to IATA herein. IATA remains responsible for acts of its subcontractors and alliance partners with respect to the Survey.

1.2. The output Survey data ("Survey Output Data") is the property of IATA or its licensors and all rights, titles, and interests in and to the Survey Output Data, and any accompanying written or printed materials, including without limitation any intellectual property rights, are owned by IATA or its licensors. IATA shall not be prevented from using the Survey Output Data, or any portion thereof, in any form or manner, or from making the Survey Output Data, or any portion thereof, available to any other entity or person at any time and for any purpose, by any means including under separate sub-licensing arrangements.

1.3. IATA shall not disclose the contributed Carrier Data to any third party on a standalone basis. Notwithstanding the foregoing, IATA may attribute the Survey Output Data to the Carrier as part of the Use and Carrier hereby consents to such attribution, including in relation to IATA's use of the Survey Output Data.

1.4. In storing and using the Carrier Data, IATA will establish and maintain appropriate security measures and require its contractors and alliance partners to establish and maintain appropriate security measures to safeguard against unauthorized access of the Carrier Data by third parties. IATA will notify the Carrier in the event it becomes aware of actual or imminent unauthorized use of the Carrier Data and take all reasonable measures in order to prevent or terminate any such use or any such disclosure, if necessary, with the assistance of the Carrier.

1.5. The Carrier acknowledges and agrees that the Carrier Data and information transmitted to IATA may be held through the services of a third-party provider and located in a jurisdiction other than the jurisdiction of the Carrier. The Carrier further acknowledges that Data may be stored on the cloud. The Carrier hereby consents to the abovementioned storage means.

1.6. Except for a breach of the above terms, where IATA's liability shall be limited to total aggregate amount of US\$10,000,000, IATA shall have no liability to Carrier for use of the Carrier Data.

Signed by a duly authorized representative for and on behalf of the carrier [] on this ___ day of _____, 2025.

Signature: _____
Name: _____
Title: _____

Selected KPIs

1. Airspace efficiency
2. Predictability
3. Economic impact
4. Environmental impact
5. Traffic flow
6. Workload

No.	Dimension	Indicator	Definition	Unit	Primary Assessment Objective
KPI1	Traffic Flow	Traffic Volume	Number of flights operating on a given route segment	Flights	To assess the level of traffic demand on a route segment
KPI2	Efficiency	Route Distance	Planned distance of the route flown	km, nm	To evaluate route efficiency in terms of distance
KPI3	Efficiency	En-route Extension Ratio	Ratio of planned route distance to the ideal great circle distance	%	To assess the efficiency of flight planning and route design
KPI4	Efficiency	Flight Time	Flight time within a given route segment	min	To evaluate time efficiency and distribution of flight times on a given route
KPI5	Predictability	Flight Time Variability	Distribution of flight times around the mean value	min/flight	To assess the stability of flight operations; greater variability indicates lower predictability
KPI6	Predictability	NOTAM-induced Delay Rate	Proportion of flights delayed due to NOTAM restrictions	%	To evaluate the likelihood of NOTAM-related disruptions on a given route
KPI7	Efficiency	Average NOTAM-induced Delay	Average delay per flight caused by NOTAM restrictions	min/flight	To assess the severity of NOTAM-related disruptions
KPI8	Economic/ Environmental	Fuel Consumption	Fuel consumed during flight	kg	To quantify fuel usage as an input for economic and environmental assessment
KPI9	Environmental	CO2 Emissions	CO2 emissions resulting from fuel consumption	kg	To evaluate environmental impact
KPI10	Economic	ANS Charges	Charges for air navigation services on a given route	USD	To assess the cost of air navigation services
KPI11	Traffic Flow	Diversion Rate	Proportion of flights diverted from original routes to new routes	%	To indicate the level of traffic redistribution achieved by new routes
KPI12	Workload	Controller Workload	Change in controller workload resulting from flight diversions, expressed as total flight hours within a sector	Sector-hours	To evaluate the impact of new routes on controller workload (both China and Mongolia)
KPI13	Workload	Pilot Workload	Change in pilot workload resulting from flight diversions, expressed primarily as total flight time	Flight hours	To assess the impact of new routes on pilot workload

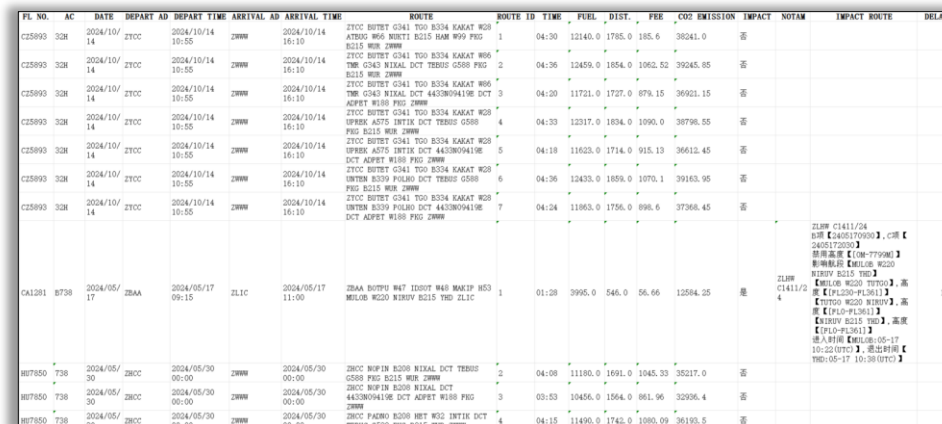
Multi-faceted Assessment Approach

Assessment Perspective		Content	Reference KPIs
Overall Performance		NOTAM-induced delay rate and delay time, flight time, fuel consumption, CO2 emissions, ANS charges, controller workload, pilot workload	KPI6, KPI7, KPI4, KPI8, KPI9, KPI10, KPI12, KPI13
Representative Route Performance		For each representative route: information on original and alternative routes, distance distribution within China and Mongolia airspace, route distance and enroute Extension Ratio for both original and alternative routes, NOTAM-induced delay rate on original route, delay time for affected flights, and changes in flight time, fuel consumption, and ANS charges	KPI2, KPI3, KPI6, KPI7, KPI4, KPI8, KPI10
Stakeholder-specific Performance	Chinese airlines	Operational efficiency, fuel consumption, ANS charges, and overall economic impact	KPI4, KPI8, KPI9, KPI10, KPI11, KPI13
	Non-Chinese airlines	Operational efficiency, fuel consumption, ANS charges, and overall economic impact	KPI4, KPI8, KPI9, KPI10, KPI11, KPI13
	Chinese ANSP	Changes in ANS charges, traffic volumes, controller workload, and CO2 emissions	KPI1, KPI8, KPI9, KPI10, KPI12
	Mongolian ANSP	Changes in ANS charges, traffic volumes, controller workload, and CO2 emissions	KPI1, KPI8, KPI9, KPI10, KPI12
	Industry	Improvements in operational efficiency, delay reduction, and CO2 emissions	KPI4, KPI7, KPI8, KPI9, KPI10
Traffic Flow Characteristics		Overall traffic flow changes, diversion rates, and traffic variations at different waypoints and key routes in Mongolia	KPI1, KPI11

- Match the original and alternative route operations

- Original route: **68,256** movements
- Alternative route: **797,666** movements (generated by the model)

- Select the alternative with shortest flight distance
- Pair simulated data with original route data and establish the baseline dataset
- Comparative data analysis and assessment



Sample of simulated output data

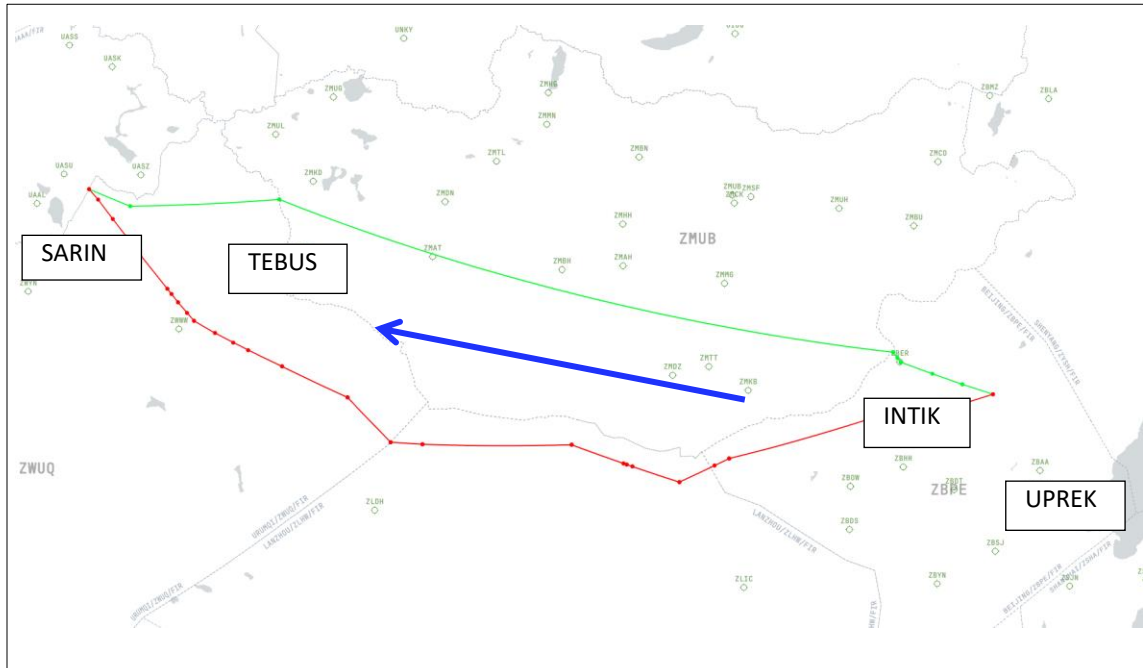
Deliverables and Key Results

Overall performance

Item	Change in Numbers
Total number of flights (30 Mar 2024 – 29 Mar 2025)	46,161 of 68,256 flights were selected
Flight delays affected by NOTAMs	6,664 flights (14.4%) with an average delay of 140.3 minutes per flight
39,456 flights with shorter alternative route distances:	
Total flight time	- 4,968 hours
Total fuel consumption	- 33,530.6 tons (approximately - 91,865 kg per day)
Total CO2 emission	- 105,622.8 tons (approximately - 289 tons per day)
Total ANS charges	- 2,040,908 USD (- 44,650,445 for China & + 42,609,537 for Mongolia)
Total potential delay time affected by NOTAMs	- 13,084 hours
Total controller service time	- 4,968 sector-hours (- 72,346 for China & + 67,378 for Mongolia)
Total crew workload	- 4,968 hours of flight time & -13,084 hours of delays
1,044 (affected by NOTAMs) out of 6,705 flights with longer alternative route distances:	
Total delay time	- 2,320 hours
Total fuel consumption	+ 1,630 tons
Total CO2 emission	+ 5,134 tons
Total ANS charges	- 32,760 USD

Representative Route Performance

Example: UPREK – SARIN Route Pair

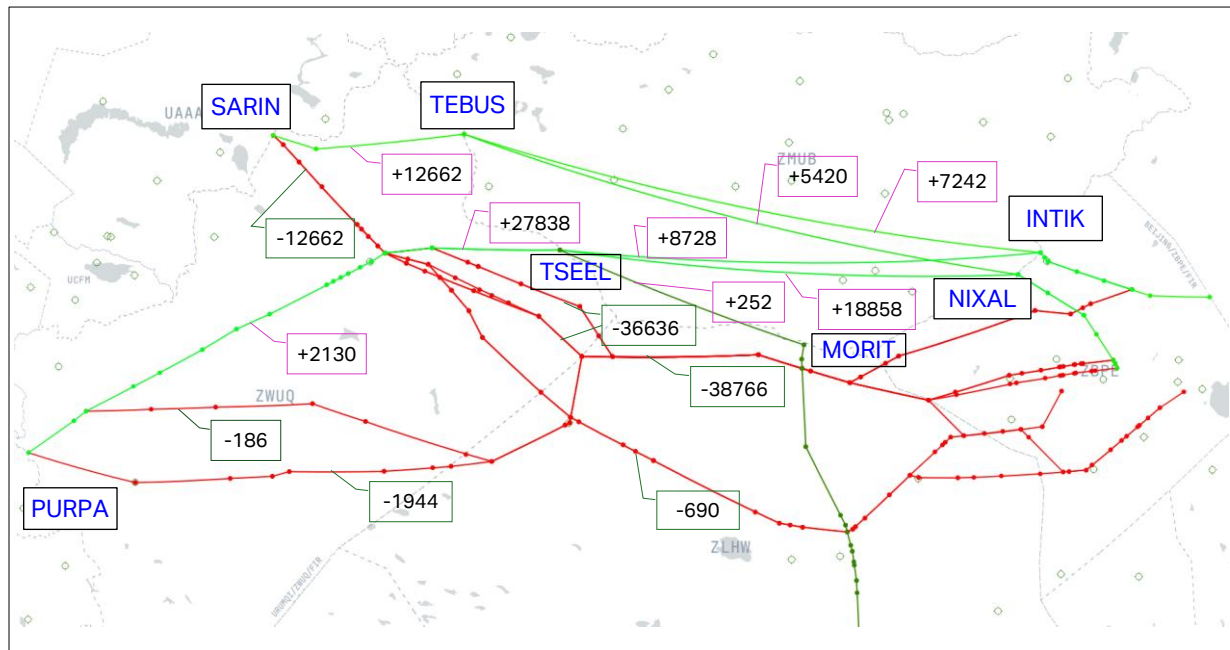


Route Information		Simulated Performance	
Origin-Destination	UPREK-SARIN	Flights Simulated	2,432
Great Circle Distance (NM)	1,406	NOTAM-Induced Delay Rate on Original Route	17.9%
Original Route	UPREK W28 KEVOB W28 ATBUG W66 NUKTI B215 FKG A368 SARIN	Average / Median Delay per Affected Flight on Original Route (min/flight)	266/282
Original Route Distance (NM)	1,543.2	Average Change in Flight Time per Flight (min/flight)	-17.1
Original Route En-route Extension Ratio	9.74%	Total Change in Flight Time (min)	-41,446
Alternative Route	UPREK A575 LHT A575 INTIK DCT TEBUS DCT 4640N08444E DCT SARIN	Average Change in Fuel Consumption per Flight (kg/flight)	-2,604
Alternative Route Distance (NM)	1,418	Total Change in Fuel Consumption (t)	-6,333
Alternative Route En-route Extension Ratio	0.85%	Total Change in CO2 Emissions (t)	-19,947
Change in Alternative Route Distance (NM)	-125.2	Total Change in Route Charges (USD)	-1,579,604
Distance within Chinese Airspace (NM)	489.8	Change in Route Charges - China (USD)	-5,078,649
Distance within Mongolian Airspace (NM)	928.2	Change in Route Charges - Mongolia (USD)	+3,499,044

Traffic Flow Shift and Diversion Rates

Route / Border Point	Annual Traffic	Max Daily Change	Avg Daily Change	Avg Flight Time (min)	Flight Time Variability (min)
INTIK-TEBUS	+7242	+23	+20	126	3.7
NIXAL-TEBUS	+5420	+19	+15	104	1.9
INTIK-TSEEL	+8728	+38	+24	113	6.1
NIXAL-TSEEL	+18858	+66	+49	88	7.5
TEBUS	+12662	+42	+35		
INTIK	+16334	+61	+45		
NIXAL	+23486	+85	+64		
TSEEL	+27838	+100	+73		

Traffic Flow Changes on Mongolian Route Segments and at China-Mongolia Border Points



Traffic Flow Changes on Major Routes

Representative Route	Simulated Flights	Restriction Rate	Chinese Airlines (Flights)	Net Cost Reduction for Chinese Airlines?	Net Cost Reduction for Non-Chinese Airlines?	Estimated Diversion Rate
UPREK-SARIN	2432	17.90%	\	\	Y	100%
AGAVO-SARIN	4810	17.40%	\	\	Y	100%
SARIN-PUKOL	212	15.60%	\	\	Y	100%
SARIN-SASAN	1315	15.20%	\	\	Y	100%
SARIN-BIKUT	3893	16.70%	585	N	Y	86.5%
UPREK-PURPA	1944	15.40%	\	\	Y	100%
UPREK-FKG	6784	12.20%	5984	N	Y	20.6%
ZBHH-FKG	364	12.10%	364	Y	\	80.0%
LAXAG-FKG	700	11.70%	700	N	\	10.0%
ZBTJ-FKG	326	10.20%	326	Y	\	80.0%
MAGIV-BIKUT	186	14.10%	186	N	\	10.0%
ADPET-PUKOL	1693	10.40%	1693	N	\	10.0%
ADPET-BIKUT	14640	13.40%	4360	N	Y	73.2%
ADPET-TMR	157	9.60%	157	N	\	10.0%

Estimated Diversion Rates for Routes with Shorter Alternative Distances

Technical Meetings, Visits and Interviews



Ulaanbaatar Technical Visit Report

15-17 September 2025 / Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia

Background

In June 2025, IATA has launched the special project "Data-driven Airspace Efficiency Study" and proposed a group of new ATS routes across Mongolia's Flight Information Region (ZMUB FIR). This project is supported by member airlines and cooperated with Civil Aviation University of China (CAUC).

To support the project on evaluation of the ATM and airport infrastructure in Mongolia and validation of the capabilities of CNS, ATFM, ATCO human resources and divert options, etc., IATA organized the technical visit to Ulaanbaatar and meetings with Mongolian stakeholders. The group is joined by IATA OSS central team and North Asia region, as well as the subject matter experts from member airlines and CAUC.

Agenda

DATE	EVENTS
15 th September	09:00 – 16:00 IOSA/ISSA/ISAGO Workshop for Mongolia
	17:30 – 18:30 Group Briefing and Preparation Meeting
16 th September	09:00 – 11:30 Technical Meeting with Civil Aviation Authority of Mongolia (CAAM)
	13:30 – 16:30 Technical Meeting with National Civil Aviation Center SO LLC (NCAC)
	16:30 – 17:30 Technical Visit to ACC
17 th September	10:00 – 11:30 Technical Meeting with New Ulaanbaatar International Airport LLC (NUBIA)
	11:30 – 12:30 Technical Visit to UBN Airport Facilities

Attendance

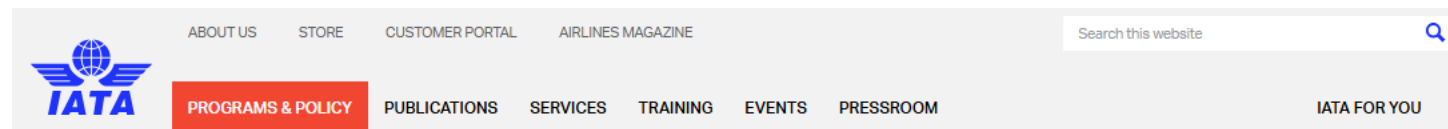
NAME	ORGANIZATION	JOB TITLE
Stuart Fox	IATA	Director Flight and Technical Operations
Peng Dou	IATA	Regional Director, Operations, Safety and Security
Bin (Kevin) Hu	IATA	Regional Manager, Operations, Safety and Security
Xinlu Su	IATA	Senior Consultant, Operations, Safety and Security
Enkhbat Usukhjargal	IATA	Representative Mongolia

Industry Review Workshop

- The industry workshop was delivered on 25-27 Nov 2025 in Xi'an, China in collaboration with CAAC/ATMB, attended by 103 participants from 9 States/ANSPs, 20 airlines and 7 international organizations and institutes.



IATA White Paper



Home > Programs & Policy > Operations & Infrastructure > Air Traffic Management > ATM Operational Concepts

PROGRAMS & POLICY

Operations & Infrastructure

Airport Slots

Airport Infrastructure

Air Traffic Management

ATM Operational Concepts

Communications, Navigation & Surveillance (CNS)

Technologies

Aviation Radio Spectrum

Air Navigation Service Charges

Aviation and 5G

Drones

Ground Operations

Baggage Operations

Fuel

Technical Operations

Aircraft Performance

Pilot & Maintenance Training & Licensing

ATM Operational Concepts



IATA plays a leading role in coordinating efforts among aviation stakeholders to ensure that Air Traffic Management (ATM) standards are globally harmonized. Several regional ATM programs have been initiated or launched across the world, without alignment. They cannot be sustainable solutions.

In addition, future ATM systems must be managed as an integrated network that is harmonized and interoperable to achieve on-time operations, predictability, and low carbon footprint. Currently the incompatibilities in technologies, aircraft equipage, and performance requirements create unsustainable business cases for airlines considering investment

decisions. Technological solutions must be derived in collaboration amongst all stakeholders to ensure functional compatibility with airborne systems and timeliness of implementation.

Need Help?

[Contact us](#)

Navigational Avoidance of Contrail Regions

Airlines have been partnering with universities, research centers, and private entities to identify the requirements and limitations for navigational avoidance of high-probability, high-warming contrail regions. This [insights paper](#) (pdf) highlights the unknowns and limitations, and their impacts on operational decisions at tactical and pre-tactical levels.

User Requirements for Air Traffic Services (URATS) - ATM

The [User Requirements for Air Traffic Services \(URATS\) – Air Traffic Management \(ATM\), Volume I](#) (pdf), presents IATA's positions on ATM concepts to be applied as a reference for air navigation services provider's (ANSP) investment plans and in the adoption of new cockpit technologies.

OPERATIONAL IMPROVEMENTS | TBO & FF-ICE | SWIM | IATA WEBINARS | A-CDM TOOLKIT | **AIRSPACE EFFICIENCY**

In response to the airspace disruption and operational challenges, IATA has launched a special project in 2025 named "Data-driven Airspace Efficiency Study" in collaboration with airlines, ANSPs and industry stakeholders, and a data-driven and performance-based methodology has been developed to improve airspace efficiency, sustainability and resilience. This approach was validated by the case study on EU-Asia Interface and its FIRs, further details along with the findings and recommendations can be found in the [IATA White Paper - Data Driven Airspace Efficiency](#) (pdf)

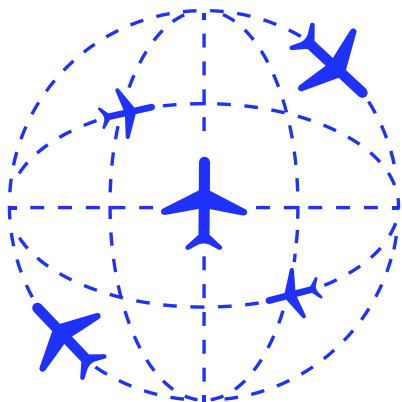


Data-driven Airspace Efficiency Study Case Study: EU-Asia Interface



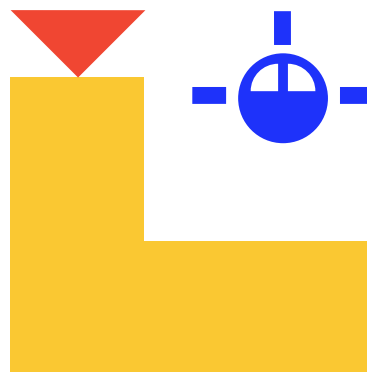
1 Data-driven Airspace Efficiency Study

Key Takeaways and Recommendations



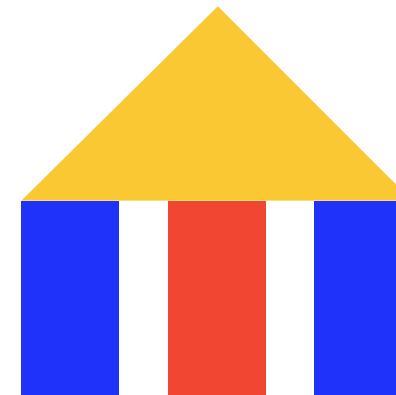
Outcome of Study

Strategic value to EU-Asia routes offered by the proposed solutions



Short Term

Coordinated measures to alleviate cross-border operational challenges



Medium-to-long Term

Recommended industry framework for airspace efficiency management

Airspace Efficiency Management System

Recommended industry framework



Recommended Industry Framework for Airspace Efficiency, Sustainability and Resilience

Thank you

Bin (Kevin) Hu
hub@iata.org

