

**59<sup>th</sup> CONFERENCE OF  
DIRECTORS GENERAL OF CIVIL AVIATION  
ASIA AND PACIFIC REGIONS**

*Cebu, Philippines  
14 to 18 October 2024*

**AGENDA ITEM 6: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF  
AIR TRANSPORT**

**REGIONAL AIRCRAFT INTEGRATION INTO THE  
INNOVATIVE SERVICE MODEL OF “LINK THE TRUNK AND  
BRANCH, CONNECT URBAN AND REMOTE”,  
IMPLEMENTING SUCCESSFUL PRACTICE OF REGIONAL  
COMMERCIAL OPERATIONS IN CHINESE INLAND**

(Presented by the People’s Republic of China)

**INFORMATION PAPER**

**SUMMARY**

This document summarizes the case that regional aircraft successfully applied in China’s innovative service model of “Link the Trunk and Branch, Connect Urban and Remote” (LTB Model). Xinjiang is a typical inland province in China, characterized by its vastness and sparseness of population. Regional civil aviation market has long lagged behind, resulting in the high travel costs, long time and low efficiency for local residents. On this background, CAAC has supported airlines to carry out large-scale operation of trunk and branch connections, jointly with local governments, via forming a policy synergy, selecting suitable regional aircraft, promoting the use of digital platforms and other effective measures. At present, regional aircraft have been effectively integrated into the LTB model, and an efficient and convenient regional air transportation network system has been formed through the construction of Domestic Through Check-in Flights. The experience can provide reference for inland and island countries in exploring stable commercial operation of regional aircraft.

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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Background**

In recent years, in order to effectively meet the more convenient travel needs for people in special and remote areas, the Civil Aviation Administration of China (CAAC) has proposed the innovative service model named “Link the Trunk and Branch, Connect Urban and Remote” (LTB MODEL), which was included in the action items of the 58th DGCA Conference. To fulfill this action item, CAAC promoted Domestic Tongcheng Flights services across the industry, furtherly selected suitable regional aircraft and conducted in-depth practices in inland areas such as Xinjiang, which achieved significant results.

### **CONCEPTS**

1.2 In China, Domestic Tongcheng Flights, i.e. Domestic Through Check-in Flights, is the domestic transfer flights that provide full-process services included payment once, through check-in, security check once, baggage through check-in, and whole journey worry-free, for which all participants have to join a multilateral cooperation agreement.

1.3 LTB MODEL, the innovative air transport network model that aims to efficiently connect trunk, feeder, general aviation short-distance flights. This mode relies on Domestic Through Check-in Flights and transfer facilitation, provides high-efficient connectivity among major cities and seamless connectivity among remote areas, and eventually constructs a “national flight network” in China.

1.4 Two digital platforms for transfer, the “Domestic Tongcheng Flights Service Management Platform” and the “Passenger Transfer Service Platform”, which are non-profit and public platforms, resolving the difficulties in operations of LTB MODEL.

## **2. DISCUSSION**

### **2.1 Basic Situation**

Xinjiang, a typical inland province in China, is characterized by vast territory, sparse population, ethnic diversity, and coexistence of multiple cultures. For a long term, people in Xinjiang travel with high costs, long times and low efficiency, led by the low accessibility of the airline network, insufficient capacity supply, and unstable flight operations, which hindered regional economic and social development. To address these difficulties, CAAC cooperated with local governments, has undertaken a series of initiatives to effectively integrate regional aircraft into the LTB MODEL, significantly stimulating the vitality of the aviation market.

### **2.2 Main Work**

#### **2.2.1 Building Synergy of Industry and policies**

Local governments in China play a crucial role in the development of the civil aviation industry. The Xinjiang Autonomous Region government attaches great importance to the development of regional aviation and has jointly issued policy documents with CAAC to support the implementation of Domestic Through Check-in Flights in Xinjiang, greatly improving travel conditions for local residents. By the end of this July, regional airports in Xinjiang had added a total of 6,495 Domestic Through Check-in Flight combinations, an increase of approximately 223% compared to the entire year of 2023, effectively connecting more airports to the domestic air transport network.

## 2.2.2 Selecting Suitable Aircraft for Regional Aviation

Choosing suitable regional aircraft is a key measure to overcome the development bottlenecks for regional aviation. The Xinjiang Autonomous Region government, relying on LTB MODEL and its endowment of cultural tourism resources, encourages local airlines to select and promote the commercial operation of regional aircraft such as ARJ21 and CRJ900 in Xinjiang. In the meantime, it continuously extends the “aviation+” service and industrial chains to enhance the sustainable development capability of regional aviation.

## 2.2.3 Supporting airlines to play a leading role

Xinjiang’s airports implement integrated and group management, providing coordinated and unified support to airlines, effectively enabling their large-scale operations in the region. Benefiting from this, major base airlines such as China Southern Airlines and Urumqi Air, as well as non-base airlines like China Express Airlines, Chengdu Airlines, and Spring Airlines, have increased their capacity in Xinjiang. China Express Airlines’ overnight capacity reached 12 CRJ900 and 2 ARJ21, Chengdu Airlines reached 9 ARJ21, which effectively alleviating the insufficient regional capacity supply.

## 2.2.4 Fully taking digitalization and informatization opportunities

CAAC has rapidly promoted the application of two digital platforms for transfer, which solved the problems of excessive paper documents in the transit process, poor passenger information flow between airports, and cumbersome process for frontline staff, providing a strong foundation for the development of regional aviation in Xinjiang. By the end of June 2024, Domestic Through Check-in Flights covered all airports in Xinjiang, the quantity of Domestic Through Check-in Flights increased by 199% compared to the end of 2023. Meanwhile, the three major transfer airports in Xinjiang—Urumqi, Korla, and Aksu—served 1.98 million transfer passengers. These flights and passengers have all benefited from the convenient services brought by digitalization.

## 2.3 Implementation Effect

Xinjiang has formed a regional air transport network system, and maximized the advantages of regional aircraft. This serves as a case reference for exploring the commercialization of regional aircraft operations in inland and island areas of the Asia-Pacific region.

# 3. ACTION BY THE CONFERENCE

3.1 The Conference is invited to note the information contained in this Paper.

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