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Asia/Pacific Area Traffic Forecasts 2010–2030

Report of the Fifteenth Meeting
of the Asia/Pacific Area Traffic
Forecasting Group (APA TFG)

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SUMMARY

1. The ICAO Pacific Area Traffic Forecasting Group was formed in 1991 with the primary objective of developing forecasts of civil aviation activity in the Transpacific market to support air navigation systems planning activity for ICAO and its Contracting States. The scope of the Group was subsequently broadened to include Intra-Asia/Pacific, which is reflected in the current designation as Asia/Pacific Area Traffic Forecasting Group (APA TFG). The Group maintains close relationships with and provides essential data for regional meetings, as well as groups charged with air navigation planning and implementation in North America (NA) and Asia/Pacific (AP). This report contains forecasts produced by the Group at its fifteenth meeting held on 1-8 November 2010 in the premises of the ICAO Regional Office in Bangkok.

2. During the period 1980 to 2009, Gross Domestic Product (GDP), measured in real terms, grew at average annual growth rates of about 3.3 per cent, 2.6 per cent and 5.1 per cent for the world, the North American and Asia/Pacific regions, respectively. In the aggregate, GDP in the Transpacific area grew at 3.8 per cent (Table 2).

3. The average revenue yield, measured in real terms, for the Transpacific market over the same period is estimated to have declined at an average annual rate of about 2.2 per cent (Table 2). International passenger traffic in the Transpacific market increased from 6.4 million to 27.7 million passengers, at an average annual growth rate of 5.2 per cent (Table 1). The comparable world international passenger traffic increased by 5.9 per cent per year over the same period. During the present decade, the Transpacific traffic experienced a decline of some 10 per cent both in 2001 and 2003 and about 2 per cent in 2002. It rebounded in 2004 and increased by over 19 per cent and continued to grow by over 6 per cent in 2005. It continued to expand in 2006 and 2007, albeit at more modest growth rates (by some 1.1 and 3.3 per cent, respectively). Due to the economic slowdown in the latter part of the year, the growth trend in traffic was reversed in 2008, and a marginal decline of 0.5 per cent was witnessed. Amplified by the economic recession in the first part of the year, the negative traffic growth continued in 2009 (estimated at 5.4 per cent).

4. For the period 2009-2020, the GDP for the North American and Asia/Pacific regions is expected to increase at average annual rates of 2.7 per cent and 6.2 per cent, respectively, and for the period 2020-2030, at 2.6 per cent and 5.1 per cent per annum, respectively. In the aggregate, the most likely scenario (baseline) GDP average annual growth rate for the Transpacific area is projected at 4.6 per cent for the forecast horizon 2009-2030 (Table 3).

5. Average Transpacific airline passenger yield is expected to decrease in real terms by 0.2 per cent per annum for the period 2009-2020 and to decline at about 0.5 per cent annually during the period 2020-2030 (Table 3). Average Intra-Asia/Pacific yield is expected to decline marginally over the forecast horizon, at a rate similar to that for Transpacific yield.

6. Based on these "most likely" GDP and yield projections, Transpacific traffic is forecast to increase at an average annual rate of 6.2 per cent for the period 2009-2020, reaching some 53.8 million passengers in the year 2020. A growth rate of 4.8 per cent per annum is expected for the period 2020-2030, resulting in a forecast of about 86 million passengers by the year 2030 (Table 4).

7. Consistent with the forecasts of passenger traffic growth, future expectations of load factors and average aircraft size (Table 5), total aircraft (including cargo) movements across the Pacific are expected to increase from an estimated 140.4 thousand in 2009 to 228.5 thousand in the year 2020, at an average annual growth rate of 4.5 per cent. For the whole period 2009-2030, these aircraft movements are expected to increase at an annual growth rate of 4.1 per cent, and reach some 327.6 thousand aircraft movements by the year 2030 (Table 6).

8. Intra-Asia/Pacific passenger traffic is expected to increase at a "most likely" average annual rate of 6.9 per cent during 2009-2020, reaching close to 211 million passengers in the year 2020. An average annual growth rate of 5.4 per cent is forecast for the period 2020-2030, resulting in some 356.2 million passengers by the year 2030 (Table 9).

9. Intra-Asia/Pacific passenger aircraft movements are forecast to increase from 1 013.2 thousand in 2009 to some 1 853.6 thousand in 2020, at an average annual growth rate of 5.6 per cent. For the period 2009 to 2030, aircraft movements are forecast to increase at an average annual growth rate of 5.1 per cent and reach some 2 889.3 thousand by 2030 (Table 11).

10. The selected top 45 city-pairs in terms of numbers of passengers in the Asia/Pacific and Transpacific are expected to show traffic increases in aggregate terms of passenger flow at an average annual growth rate of 4.7 per cent from 2009 to 2014. This growth will result in an increase in passenger traffic on the routes concerned from some 51 million passengers in 2009 to some 64.3 million passengers in the year 2014 (Table 12).