

Home-developed aircraft C919 and ARJ21 inaugural flights to Hong Kong to take off next week

Home-developed aircraft C919 and ARJ21 will visit Hong Kong for the first time from next Tuesday (December 12) to Sunday (December 17). Jointly hosted by the Civil Aviation Department (CAD) and the Airport Authority Hong Kong (AAHK), the event marks the C919's first voyage out of the Mainland of China. In addition to the static display of the C919 and the ARJ21 at Hong Kong International Airport (HKIA) during their stay in Hong Kong, the C919 will conduct a demonstration flight over Victoria Harbour for members of the public to witness the airliner's first appearance over Hong Kong skies.

With the recovery of the aviation industry in full swing and to consolidate Hong Kong's role as an international aviation hub, the CAD will organise a full range of activities starting middle of the month with the strong support of the International Civil Aviation Organization Asia and Pacific Regional Sub-Office and the Civil Aviation Administration of China (CAAC). Two meetings will take place at the CAD Headquarters, namely the 34th meeting of the Asia Pacific Air Navigation Planning and Implementation Regional Group from December 11 to 13, and the 13th meeting of the Regional Aviation Safety Group – Asia and Pacific Regions on December 18 and 19. Furthermore, the CAD will join hands with the CAAC and the Hong Kong International Aviation Academy to organise the first Asia Pacific Region Innovation & Capacity Building Symposium 2023 at the AsiaWorld-Expo on December 14 and 15.

To showcase the country's accomplishment in the aircraft manufacturing industry to the public as well as international guests, the Commercial Aircraft Corporation of China, Ltd (COMAC) has graciously accepted the invitation to arrange the C919 and the ARJ21's visit to Hong Kong during the event period. The ARJ21 is the first turboprop regional aircraft independently designed and manufactured by China. It began commercial operation in 2016 and was brought into the international market last year following an official delivery to its overseas customer. The C919 is a large commercial passenger aircraft strictly designed, manufactured and certificated in accordance with international airworthiness standards. The first commercial C919 aircraft was delivered to an airline in December 2022 and it came into service in 2023. The successful productions of these two civilian passenger aircraft mark a significant milestone for the national aviation manufacturing industry.

The domestic aircraft duo of the C919 and the ARJ21 will receive a ceremonial water salute on their arrival at HKIA in the afternoon on December 12. A welcoming ceremony will be hosted by the CAD and the AAHK at HKIA apron on the following morning (December 13). The two domestic aircraft will be staged on a static display at the designated area of HKIA right after the ceremony on December 13 until December 15. Representatives of local and overseas aviation industry, as well as members of youth groups and district

organisations, will be invited on board to have a close encounter with the aircraft.

Another highlight of the visit of the C919 and the ARJ21 will be the flight demonstration that takes place at about 10.30am to 11am next Saturday (December 16). If weather permits, the C919 will take off at around 10.30am from HKIA and overfly Victoria Harbour from west to east. It will then fly around Hong Kong Island twice for members of the public to admire this home-grown aircraft up close. On the same afternoon, representatives from COMAC will accept the invitation to meet with young people at the CAD Headquarters to share interesting facts about the knowledge and development of the C919 and the ARJ21 aircraft. The two aircraft will then leave Hong Kong for Shanghai in the afternoon the next day (December 17).

The Director-General of Civil Aviation, Mr Victor Liu, said the CAD had been participating in the preliminary research and development of the C919 upon invitation by the CAAC since 2012. The CAD had been playing an active role in the C919 evaluation activities and a CAD flight operations expert was deployed to Shanghai for two months last year to take part in the C919 T5 Test for flight crew training. Mr Liu said he was overjoyed and excited to witness the fly-past of the C919 over Hong Kong skies; he also extended his heartfelt gratitude to the CAAC and COMAC for their unremitting support and making this happen.

The Chief Executive Officer of the AAHK, Mr Fred Lam, said, "HKIA is honoured to be the first airport outside the Mainland to receive the C919 aircraft. At HKIA, we greatly admire and are inspired by the innovative spirit and technological prowess that underpin the development of the C919. We look forward to deepening collaborations with our partners on the Mainland and contributing to the development of a world-class aviation industry for the country."

To facilitate the fly-past, the CAD will establish a temporary restricted flying zone (RFZ) in and around Victoria Harbour. Flying activities, such as the flying of unmanned aircraft systems (drones and model aircraft), kites, captive balloons, mass release of small balloons, etc, will be restricted. The CAD will announce details of the temporary RFZ on the electronic portal for small unmanned aircraft "eSUA" and by Notice To Airmen.