

Hong Kong and Singapore decide not to further pursue bilateral Air Travel Bubble

The Governments of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) and Singapore announced today (August 19) that taking into account the differences in the anti-epidemic strategies currently adopted by the two places, the two governments have decided not to pursue further discussions on the bilateral Air Travel Bubble (ATB) and will continue to facilitate movements of travellers between the two places under their respective border control measures.

A spokesman for the HKSAR Government said that the discussions on the ATB, which began in the second half of 2020, had gone through a long period of evolution of the COVID-19 epidemic situation. All along, it was premised upon similar anti-epidemic strategies adopted by the two places, aiming to reduce local caseloads to a minimum. With Singapore currently moving towards a new strategy of building a "COVID-resilient" nation, the basic premises that underpin the ATB have changed. Take for instance the seven-day moving average of unlinked local cases, which is the criterion for suspending and resuming the ATB as per the agreed framework. The figure may not be kept consistently at the required level in Singapore as a result of its new strategy.

The spokesman stressed that Hong Kong and Singapore remained committed to facilitating connectivity between the two places and would continue to maintain dialogue and share experiences in this respect.

The HKSAR Government welcomes Singapore's announcement to unilaterally allow entry of travellers from Hong Kong into Singapore quarantine-free starting from August 20, 2021, at 11.59pm, considering that it is a step forward in resuming cross-border travel between the two regional aviation hubs and international cities. Regarding travellers from Singapore coming to Hong Kong (including both Hong Kong residents and non-Hong Kong residents), they may refer to the prevailing arrangements for inbound travellers for Group B specified places, under which Singapore is classified, as required by the HKSAR Government.