

LCQ8: Three-runway system

Following is a question by the Hon Michael Tien and a written reply by the Secretary for Transport and Housing, Mr Frank Chan Fan, in the Legislative Council today (February 24):

Question:

The Chief Executive stated in the 2020 Policy Address that the Airport Authority Hong Kong would, as originally planned, commission the third runway and the entire three-runway system (3RS) in 2022 and 2024 respectively. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

(1) of the respective forecasts, made by the Government when it approved in principle the construction of 3RS in 2012, on Hong Kong's long-term air traffic demand (i.e. the annual number of air traffic movements at the Hong Kong International Airport) (i) in 2030 and (ii) after 2030;

(2) of the maximum number of air traffic movements that 3RS can handle annually upon its commissioning, as forecasted by the Government in 2012; and

(3) of the time, as anticipated by the Government in 2012 on the basis of the forecasts mentioned in (1) and (2), when the handling capacity of 3RS will reach its full capacity?

Reply:

President,

The Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government is committed to consolidating and enhancing Hong Kong's status as an international aviation hub. In March 2012, the Executive Council (ExCo) approved in principle the recommendation of the Airport Authority Hong Kong (AAHK) to adopt the Three-Runway System (3RS) as the future development direction for Hong Kong International Airport (HKIA). In March 2015, the ExCo advised and the Chief Executive affirmed the need for the 3RS project at HKIA to cater for the long-term economic and development needs of Hong Kong. Thereafter, AAHK commenced construction of the 3RS in August 2016.

According to the estimates of an international air traffic expert commissioned by the AAHK during the planning stage of the 3RS, the annual traffic demand of HKIA would reach 97 million passengers, 8.9 million tonnes of cargo and 602 000 air traffic movements (ATM) by 2030.

According to the estimates available at the time, upon the commissioning of the 3RS, the runway capacity of HKIA would increase progressively to the maximum of 102 ATMs per hour; the practical maximum annual capacity of the 3RS would be about 620 000 ATMs.

As the AAHK plans for the long-term development of HKIA, the 3RS is one of the major projects to address the growing demand for air traffic in Hong Kong. To cater for long-term air traffic demand, as noted in the AAHK's report titled "From City Airport to Airport City", the AAHK will enhance the handling capacity of HKIA through a series of measures and development projects. The relevant report can be viewed on the following website: www.hongkongairport.com/en/airport-authority/publications/airport-city-report.page.

In view of the impact of the pandemic and the rapid changes in the current market environment, a continuous planning process for HKIA is needed. The AAHK will continue to closely monitor market changes in order to formulate its long-term development strategy.