

Legislative amendments to facilitate commissioning of third runway and three-runway system at Hong Kong International Airport

To facilitate the commissioning of the third runway and the three-runway system (3RS) at Hong Kong International Airport (HKIA), the Government proposes to amend the following areas and restrictions by way of subsidiary legislation:

- (1) the Maps of Airport Area and the Maps of Restricted Area under the Airport Authority Ordinance (Cap. 483);
- (2) the Hong Kong International Airport Approach Area (HKIAAA) under the Shipping and Port Control Regulations (Cap. 313A); and
- (3) the airport height restrictions (AHRs) prescribed under the Hong Kong Airport (Control of Obstructions) Ordinance (Cap. 301).

A Government spokesman said, "According to the Airport Authority Hong Kong's target, the commissioning of the third runway and associated infrastructure is scheduled for 2022, after which the existing North Runway will be closed for about two years for reconfiguration into a new centre runway. The 3RS project is scheduled for completion in 2024. The proposed technical amendments are necessary to safeguard aviation safety and to ensure the safe and effective operation of HKIA with the commissioning of the third runway and the 3RS."

The 3RS project includes reclamation of land to the north of the existing Airport Island. It is proposed to expand the Airport Area and the Restricted Area to cover the third runway and associated infrastructure on the reclaimed land so that they will be integrated with the infrastructure on the existing Airport Island for the safe and effective operation of HKIA as a whole.

As a result of the reclamation, part of the waters within the existing HKIAAA No. 3 and 7 at the northern part of HKIA will no longer exist. To regulate vessels' movement in the vicinity of HKIA to safeguard the operation of aircraft and air navigation service equipment, the boundaries of HKIAAA No. 3 and 7 are therefore required to be expanded accordingly.

To cater for the changes in airspace protection requirements necessitated by the 3RS and to take into account the latest international aviation standards, new AHRs are formulated for controlling building heights to safeguard the operation of aircraft and air navigation service equipment. Under the new AHRs, certain areas in the vicinity of HKIA, mainly the surrounding sea or mountainous areas, will be subject to more stringent restrictions, while the remaining areas constituting the majority of Hong Kong will be subject to less stringent AHRs.

The Legislative Council Panel on Economic Development has been consulted. Members had no objection to the legislative proposals.

The proposed legislative amendments, namely the Airport Authority Ordinance (Map of Airport Area) (Amendment) Order 2021, the Airport Authority Ordinance (Map of Restricted Area) (Amendment) Order 2021, the Shipping and Port Control Regulations (Amendment of Fifth Schedule) Notice 2021, the Hong Kong Airport (Control of Obstructions) (No. 2) Order 1997 (Amendment) Order 2021 and the Hong Kong Airport (Control of Obstructions) (Exemption) Order (Repeal) Order were gazetted today (August 20), and will be tabled at the Legislative Council on August 25 for negative vetting.

The amendments will come into operation on May 31, 2022, to allow sufficient time for the Airport Authority Hong Kong to arrange the necessary training, familiarisation and operational drills with the airport stakeholders for simulating a real operating environment before the commissioning of the third runway in 2022.