Letter of Agreement (LOA)

Between

VATSIM Republic of China Division (VATROC)

And

Hong Kong vACC, Southeast Asia Division (HKvACC)

Effective Date: 01 JUN 2025

1. PURPOSE

1.1. This agreement establishes standard procedures and coordination responsibilities of air traffic control between Taipei FIR (RCAA), Republic of China Division (VATROC) and Hong Kong FIR (VHHK), Hong Kong vACC, Southeast Asia Division (VATSEA).

2. CANCELLATION

2.1. This document supersedes any agreements previously established in verbal or written form between HKvACC and VATROC.

3. SCOPE

3.1. The information contained herein are supplementary to the rules established under VATSIM regulations, Aeronautical Information Publication (AIP) of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region published by the Hong Kong Civil Aviation Department and the AIP of Taipei FIR published by the Civil Aeronautics Administration in Taiwan.

3.2. While such regulations shall generally be strictly followed on the VATSIM network, in some circumstances exemptions or modifications to the real-world regulations are necessary due to operational need in an online environment. Such deviation shall be discussed in this document.

4. DISCLOSURE

4.1. Both parties shall make this Letter of Agreement available for public access on their respective official websites. The information contained herein is for the exclusive use on the Virtual Air Traffic Simulation Network (VATSIM) only. Under no circumstances shall such information be used in the real world, including but not limited to, real-world air navigation or real-world air traffic control.

5. LANGUAGE

5.1. This Temporary Letter of Agreement is officially and originally prepared and documented in the English language. Both parties are encouraged to translate this LOA into Chinese for reference purposes, but this is optional. The English version of this LOA shall always prevail, and future revisions to this LOA shall base upon the English version.

6. GENERAL PROCEDURES

6.1. Unless otherwise stated or co-ordinated,

6.1.1. En-route control (CTR) of both parties shall keep traffic away from the **5 nautical miles (nm)** margin of the boundary between Hong Kong FIR and Taipei FIR (RCAA) under all circumstances. The margins on both sides constitute a buffer zone of width **10 nm**. Except during a standard handover procedure, the controller in charge of the corresponding airspace or sector must coordinate and point out such aircraft to the controller of the other party when it becomes necessary for traffic to enter or cross such margin.

6.1.2. Controllers shall make every effort to follow the radar separation minima defined in ICAO Doc 4444. In particular, as radar coverage is universally available in the VATSIM ATC environment, the **separation minima based on distance using Distance Measuring Equipment (DME) and/or GNSS (i.e. ICAO Doc 4444, Section 5.4.2.3)** shall always be observed except in rare circumstances in which these separation minima become unavailable. The separation minima are not discussed within this LOA document as this shall be part of the ATC training for both FIRs.

6.1.3. Controllers of each side shall initiate each handover **ten to thirty nautical miles (10 – 30 nm)** before crossing the Transfer of Control Point (TCP). Handoff must be completed at least **ten nautical miles (10 nm)** from the TCP.

6.1.4. **No controller shall clear an aircraft directly to a waypoint outside of the FIR** of which the controller controls unless prior coordination is made and proper permission of such clearance is obtained. This also applies when there is no en-route/terminal ATC available at the adjacent FIR through which a flight will transit.

6.1.5. Proper liaison between Hong Kong FIR and Taipei FIR shall be established for handover. Controllers shall advise the requested cruising level (i.e. the altitude at which the aircraft will be flying during the handover) of a particular aircraft prior to entering the neighbouring FIR. As per ICAO Doc 4444 Section 5.3.3.1, aircraft may not be cleared to change altitude during a handoff unless prior clearance has been obtained from the accepting controller.

6.1.6. Controllers shall ensure that all aircraft are flying under **real-time speed (1x rate)** prior to the initiation of a handover and during a handover.

6.1.7. En-route or Terminal controllers should advise the controllers of the other FIR when a sector is combined or separated and provide information regarding the sectorisation.

6.1.8. If the route of the filed flight plan of a flight flying between Taipei FIR and Hong Kong FIR does not include a valid TCP or does not include an airway that contains the valid TCP, a controller shall amend the route of such flight plan following standard procedures per ICAO Doc 4444, the Hong Kong AIP and/or the AIP of Taipei FIR so that the amended route will include a valid TCP. If the pilot is unable to amend such route, proper coordination shall be made to accommodate such situations.

6.1.9. As per Section 1.8.6 of the AIP of Taipei FIR, aircraft from Hong Kong FIR arriving into Taipei Taoyuan Int'l Airport (RCTP) shall use ATS Route **M750** to **TONGA** waypoint, followed by an assigned STAR.

6.1.10. Aircraft entering Hong Kong FIR via ATS Route **A1** and waypoint **ELATO** are released for right turns on handoff from Taipei FIR. Hong Kong FIR controllers may instruct the aircraft to make a right turn of 45 degrees or less within Taipei FIR provided that the aircraft will continue to be laterally separated against other traffic in the proximity.

6.1.11. Unless otherwise specified, all handovers shall be conducted between two en-route controllers (CTR).

7. ROUTING REQUIREMENTS

7.1. Flights via ELATO and landing VHHH/VMMC/VHHX/ZGGG shall route in accordance with the routes listed below. Flights to ZGSZ shall route via R200.

ADES	Route after entering Hong Kong FIR
VHHH	...ELATO V522 ABBEY
VMMC	...ELATO J101 SMT
VHHX	...ELATO
ZGGG	...ELATO J101 SMT DCT TAMOT

7.2. Transit flights entering Hong Kong FIR shall fly one of the following routes listed below.

Entry Route	Route after entering Hong Kong FIR	Exit Route
A1/G581	...ELATO DCT MAGOG DCT DOTMI...	A470
	...ELATO J101 PONTI DCT BEKOL...	A461
G86	...KAPLI DCT MADRU DCT SULUX DCT IGLEG DCT IKELA...	A1
	...KAPLI DCT ALLEY V10 SIKOU...	A202/R339

8. HANDOFF ALTITUDES AT TRANSFER OF CONTROL POINTS (TCP)

8.1. Area Radar East Arrivals (TRK) – Taipei Control South Sector (S)

TCP	Route	Direction	FLAS Levels
ELATO	A1	To RCAA	Eastbound altitudes between A050 and F270
		To VHHK	Westbound altitudes at A060 or above (note 6)

TCP	Route	Direction	FLAS Levels
ELATO	G581 (note 1)	To RCAA	Eastbound altitudes at A070 or above
		To VHHK	Westbound altitudes at A060 or above

8.2. Area Radar East (TRE) – Taipei Control South Sector (S)

TCP	Route	Direction	FLAS Levels
ENVAR	M750	To RCAA	Eastbound altitudes at F270 or above (note 2, 5 & 7)

8.3. Area Radar South (TRS) – Taipei Control South Sector (S)

TCP	Route	Direction	FLAS Levels
KAPLI	G86 (note 3)	To RCAA	Within RVSM airspace: F290, F330, F370, F390 (note 4), F410 Outside RVSM airspace: Eastbound altitudes
		To VHHK	Within RVSM airspace: F300, F340, F380, F400 Outside RVSM airspace: Westbound altitudes

8.4. Notes

Note 1: Traffic from Hong Kong FIR to Taipei FIR at F270 or above shall route via M750 DADON G581.
Note 2: For traffic via M750 DADON G581:
a) Within RVSM airspace: F290, F330, F370 and F410.
b) Outside RVSM airspace: Eastbound altitudes above F410.
Note 3: ATS Route G86 within Hong Kong FIR is a unidirectional eastbound route. East of KAPLI, this route is bi-directional.
Note 4: F390 only available if destination airport within Taipei FIR.
Note 5: Traffic via M750 between ENVAR and SANAS between 2000 – 1300 UTC daily below FL290 requires co-ordination with Taipei Control.
Note 6: F300 not available for traffic via A1/G581 ELATO joining J101 in Hong Kong FIR.
Note 7: F290 not available between 2300 – 1159 UTC daily.
Note 8: RVSM is applied between F290 and F410 on VATSIM. Eastbound traffic uses odd number altitudes at or below F410 and westbound traffic uses even number altitudes at or below F400. For details, refer to ICAO Annex 2, Appendix 3, Table a.

9. VALIDITY, REVIEW AND AMENDMENT

9.1. This Temporary Letter of Agreement becomes valid upon the approval of the Director of the Hong Kong Virtual Area Control Centre (HKvACC), the Division Director of VATSIM Southeast Asia Division (VATSEA) and the Division Director of VATSIM Republic of China Division (VATROC).

9.2. Should there be any changes to real-world procedures made by the local authorities, both parties shall decide whether an amendment to this LOA is necessary.

9.3. A content review of this LOA shall take place six (6) months after this LOA takes effect. During the review, both parties shall convene to discuss the implementation of this LOA and make proper amendments to it if necessary. Subsequent content review shall take place every six (6) months henceforth.

9.4. Any parties wishing to amend this LOA (by adding, omitting or changing any clauses) shall contact the other party to call for an immediate review of the LOA. Both parties must reach a consensus on any amendments before they take effect. Subsequent content review shall take place every six (6) months henceforth.

This Letter of Agreement is approved on 28 May, year 2025:

X	X	X Tzuhsiang Chao
(Signed Electronically)	(Signed Electronically)	(Signed Electronically)
Mark Hui Director Hong Kong vACC	**Isaac Tan** Deputy Director VATSEA	**Tzuhsiang Chao** Director VATROC

APPENDIX A: REFERENCES

Aeronautical Information Publication of Hong Kong FIR, published by the Hong Kong Civil Aviation Department.

Aeronautical Information Publication of Taipei FIR, published by the Civil Aeronautics Administration of Taiwan.

ICAO Doc 4444

ICAO Annex 2

APPENDIX B: SECTOR OWNERSHIP PRIORITY

Positions on the right take over positions on the left if they are offline.

B1: Hong Kong FIR Positions (FL365 and above)

Area Radar East Arrivals (TRK) - ELATO			
HKG_U_CTR	HKG_K_CTR	HKG_E_CTR	HKG_W_CTR
Area Radar East (TRE) - ENVAR			
HKG_U_CTR	HKG_E_CTR		HKG_W_CTR
Area Radar South (TRS) - KAPLI			
HKG_U_CTR	HKG_S_CTR		HKG_W_CTR

B2: Hong Kong FIR Positions (FL365 and below)

Area Radar East Arrivals (TRK) - ELATO		
HKG_K_CTR	HKG_E_CTR	HKG_W_CTR
Area Radar East (TRE) - ENVAR		
HKG_E_CTR	HKG_W_CTR	
Area Radar South (TRS) - KAPLI		
HKG_S_CTR	HKG_W_CTR	

B3: Taipei FIR Positions

Taipei Control South Sector (S) – ELATO, ENVAR, KAPLI		
TPE_S_CTR	TPE_E_CTR	TPE_W_CTR

APPENDIX C: RECORD OF REVISIONS

DATE	REV.	REVISION CONTENT
26 APR 2015	0	Initial Release
28 MAY 2025	1	Added Section 6.1.10 Added Routing Requirements