Letter of Agreement (LOA)

Between

Taipei FIR (RCAA), VATROC Division

and

Hong Kong FIR (VHHK), VATSEA Division

Revision: 0

Effective Date: 26 APRIL 2015

1. PURPOSE

1.1 - This agreement establishes standard procedures and coordination responsibilities of air traffic control between Taipei FIR (RCAA), Republic of China Division (VAROC) 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 VATSEA 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 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 revision to this LOA shall base upon the English version.

6. GENERAL PROCEDURES

6.1 - Unless otherwise stated or coordinated,

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 (VHHK) and Taipei FIR (RCAA) under all circumstances. The margins on both sides

constitute a buffer zone of width **10nm.** Except during a standard handover procedure, 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 crossing 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 circumstance 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 - Controller 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 (10nm)** from the TCP.

6.1.4 - **No controller shall clear an aircraft directly to a waypoint outside of the FIR** at 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 entering 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 - Controller covering major aerodromes shall advise neighboring controllers when a change of flow has occurred via controller chat or private message if necessary.

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

6.1.8 - En-route or Terminal controllers should advise the other controllers when a sector is combined or separated, and provide information regarding the sectorisation. (e.g. which CTR controllers shall accept incoming aircraft?)

6.1.9 - 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 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.

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

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

7. HANDOFF ALTITTUDES AT TRANSFER OF CONTROL POINTS (TCP)
(Source: Hong Kong AIP ENR 1.8 and Taipei AIP ENR 1.8)
7.1 - **A1** Airway (TCP: **ELATO**)
   7.1.1 – Taipei FIR to Hong Kong FIR:
   All available westbound altitudes[1] 6000feet or above
   7.1.2 – Hong Kong FIR to Taipei FIR:
   Between 5000feet and F270[1]

7.2 – **G581** Airway (TCP: **ELATO**)
   7.2.1 - Taipei FIR to Hong Kong FIR:
   All available westbound altitudes[1] 6000feet or above
   7.1.2 – Hong Kong FIR to Taipei FIR[2]:
   At or below F250 within Hong Kong FIR; all available eastbound altitudes[1] **7000feet or above**

7.3 – **M750** Airway (TCP: **ENVAR**)[4]
   7.3.1 - Hong Kong FIR to Taipei FIR:
   At or above **F270[1,2]**; F290 not available between 2300-1159z UTC

7.4 – **G86** Airway (TCP: **KAPLI**) (EASTBOUND only in Hong Kong FIR)
   7.4.1 - Taipei FIR to Hong Kong FIR:
   Within RVSM Airspace: **F300, F340, F380 and F400**
   Outside RVSM Airspace: all available eastbound altitudes[1]
   7.4.2 - Hong Kong FIR to Taipei FIR:
   Within RVSM Airspace: **F290, F330, F370, F390[3] and F410.**

[1]*Eastbound traffic uses odd number altitude below F410 and westbound traffic uses even number altitudes at or below F400. RVSM is applied between F290 and F410 on VATSIM. For details, refer to ICAO Annex 2, Appendix 3, Table a.*

[2] *Eastbound traffic on G581 shall use route M750 DADON G581. Available altitudes: F290, F330, F370 and F410. Above F410, see ICAO Annex 2, Appendix 3, Table a.*

[3] *Available if destination airport is within Taipei FIR.*

[4] *ATS route between ENVAR and SANAS, 2000UTC to 1300UTC daily, below F290 shall be approved by ATC.*

8. VALIDITY, REVIEW AND AMENDEMENT

8.1 - This Letter of Agreement becomes valid and takes immediate effect upon the approval of the Division Director (VATROC1) of the Republic of China Division (VATROC), the Division Director (VATSEA1) of the Southeast Asia Division (VATSEA), and the Director of Hong Kong Virtual Area Control Centre (HKVACC).

8.2 - 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.

8.3 - A content review of this LOA shall take 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.

8.4 - 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 this ?? day of ????, year 2015:

(Signed Electronically)   *(Signed Electronically)*   *(Signed Electronically)*

Tzuhsiang Zhao   **Eugene Lee**   **Alfred Tang**
Division Director   *Division Director*   *Director*
VATROC   *VATSEA*   *Hong Kong VACC*

APPENDIX A: REFERENCES

Aeronautical Information Publication of Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, 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: RECORD OF REVISIONS

NIL