Letter of Agreement (LOA)

Between

People's Republic of China Division (VATPRC)

and

Republic of China Division (VATROC)

Effective Date: 28 JAN 2021

1. PURPOSE

1.1 - This Letter of Agreement (LoA) establishes standard procedures and coordination responsibilities of air traffic control among Guangzhou FIR (ZGZU), People's Republic of China Division (VATPRC), Shanghai FIR (ZSHA), People's Republic of China Division (VATPRC) and Taipei FIR (RCAA), Republic of China Division (VATROC).

2. CANCELLATION

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

3. SCOPE

3.1 - The information contained herein are supplementary to the rules established under VATSIM regulations, Aeronautical Information Publication (AIP) used in the real world.

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 English. Both parties are encouraged to translate this LoA into Traditional Chinese and/or Simplified 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 Taipei FIR (RCAA) and Shanghai FIR (ZSHA) (or Guangzhou FIR (ZGZU)) 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

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 - Conversion of altitude measurement unit shall be performed according to Section 7 of this document prior to handoff.

6.1.5 - **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.

6.1.6 - Proper liaison between Taipei FIR and Guangzhou FIR (Shanghai 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. Controller may request an altitude different from the ones specified in

Section 7 of this LoA document from the receiving controller with prior coordination.

6.1.7 - Controller covering major aerodromes should advise neighboring controllers when a change of flow has occurred via controller chat or private message if necessary.

6.1.8 - 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. **Crossing FIR boundary while under acceleration mode is strictly prohibited.**

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

6.1.10 - If the route of the filed flight plan of a flight flying between Guangzhou FIR (Shanghai FIR) and Taipei 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 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.

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

7. HANDOFF ALTITTUDES AT TRANSFER OF CONTROL POINTS (TCP)

7.1 – **R200** Airway (TCP: **OLDID**)

7.1.1 - Leaving Guangzhou FIR – Entering Taipei FIR:

Primary **FL290**, Secondary **FL310**, *or subject to ATC coordination*

7.1.2 - Leaving Taipei FIR – Entering Guangzhou FIR:

Primary **FL280**, Secondary **FL300**, *or subject to ATC coordination*

7.2 - **B591** Airway (TCP: **KASKA**)

7.2.1 -Transiting Shanghai FIR and Taipei FIR

FL300, FL320.

7.2.2 -Transiting Taipei FIR and Shanghai FIR

FL270, FL370.

7.3 - **R596** Airway (TCP: **SULEM**)

7.3.1 -Transiting Shanghai FIR and Taipei FIR

FL240, FL280, FL340

7.3.2 -Transiting Taipei FIR and Shanghai FIR

FL250, FL290, FL370

7.4 – **W6** Airway (Waypoint: **INDIA**)[1]

7.4.1 – Any aircraft within Kinmen **(RCBS)** TMA[2]:

At or below **FL160**

Remarks:

[1] *Normally, this route should not be used unless the flight is related to Kinmen Airport (RCBS).*

[2] *Any aircraft which enters Kinmen TMA should strictly stay within the TMA, except for emergency situations.*

7.5 – **W2** Airway (Waypoint: **DUMAS**)[1]

7.5.1 – Any aircraft within Matsu **(RCMT)** TMA[2]:

At or below **FL200**

Remarks:

[1] *Normally, this route should not be used unless the flight is related to Matsu Beigan Airport (RCMT) or Matsu Nangan Airport (RCFG).*

[2] *Any aircraft which enters Matsu TMA should strictly stay within the TMA, except for emergency situations.*

7.6 – **W8** Airway (Waypoint: **DEFOE**)[1]

7.6.1 – Any aircraft within Matsu **(RCMT)** TMA[2]:

At or below **FL200**

Remarks:

[1] *Normally, this route should not be used unless the flight is related to Matsu Beigan Airport (RCMT) or Matsu Nangan Airport (RCFG).*

[2] *Any aircraft which enters Matsu TMA should strictly stay within the TMA, except for emergency situations.*

7.7 – **M503** Airway

7.7.1 – Any aircraft within the horizontal boundary of Kinmen **(RCBS)** TMA:

At or above **S0840**: controlled by ZSHA_CTR

At or below **FL160**: controlled by RCKH_APP

Between FL160 and S0840 (exclusive)[1]:

Buffer area, strictly forbidden for cruising.

Climbing: from RCKH_APP handover to ZSHA_CTR

Descending: from ZSHA_CTR handover to RCKH_APP

7.7.2 – Any aircraft within the horizontal boundary of Matsu **(RCMT)** TMA:

At or above **S0840**: controlled by ZSHA_CTR

At or below **FL200**: controlled by RCTP_APP

Between FL200 and S0840 (exclusive)[1]:

Buffer area, strictly forbidden for cruising.

Climbing: from RCTP_APP handover to ZSHA_CTR

Descending: from ZSHA_CTR handover to RCTP_APP

7.7.3 – The available flight levels of M503 are:

Between **S0840** and **S1250**[2]: controlled by ZSHA_CTR

7.7.4 – Aircraft shall establish a lateral offset[3] at a distance of **6 NM** to the **west side** of M503 while operating from **PONEN** to **LELIM**.

Remarks:

[1] *This situation should be avoided, except for emergency situations. Both controllers should coordinate before the handover.*

[2] *Normally ATC will only approve the usage of flight levels S0920 or above.*

[3] *Optional; ATC will give offset instruction, but only when the pilot can execute offset.*

8. SPECIAL AGREEMENT ON R200 AIRWAY

8.1 - Since the LoA with HKvACC(HKVACC-LOA-ZGZU-R0/ZGZUVHHK180428), both parties agree to follow the definition in the AIP of Mainland China (ENR 6-ERC2). R200 shall fall within Guangzhou FIR and under the control of Guangzhou Control (ZGZU_CTR). Therefore, aircrafts flying through R200 should transfer between RCAA_CTR and ZGZU_CTR.

9. VALIDITY, REVIEW AND AMENDEMENT

9.1 - This Letter of Agreement becomes valid and takes immediate effect upon the approval of the Division Director (VATPRC1) of the People's Republic of China Division (VATPRC) and the Division Director (VATROC1) of the 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 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 this 28th day of JANUARY, year 2021:

(Signed Electronically)

Chang Ma
Division Director
VATPRC

(Signed Electronically)

Tzuhsiang Chao
Division Director
VATROC

APPENDIX A: REFERENCES

- Aeronautical Information Publication of Republic of China, published by the Republic of China Civil Aeronautics Administration.
- Aeronautical Information Publication of People's Republic of China, published by the Civil Aviation Administration of China.
- ICAO Doc 4444

APPENDIX B: RECORD OF REVISIONS

None