



Written submission on Hong Kong International Airport Master Plan 2030

By SSP Asia Pacific Ltd.

According to IATA's consulting forecast, the air traffic demand for Hong Kong International Airport (HKIA) will fall within the range of 89 – 105 million passengers and 8 – 8.9 million tones of cargo by 2030, which are double of the passenger and cargo traffics in 2010. To cope with such an air traffic growth and continue to take the leading position as an international aviation hub, constructing the 3rd runway is an irrevocable solution.

The economic benefits brought by airport aviation are far beyond measure: it will not only create new jobs in logistics, tourism, retail and construction sectors, but will also strengthen and sustain the role of Hong Kong as a financial and service center in Asia Pacific region.

The growth of our company is a classic example of how the development of the airport affected us. Our company is a multi-national corporate and operates different restaurants in travel locations worldwide. We set up our Hong Kong office in 1998 and then the Asia Pacific divisional headquarters in Hong Kong in 2006. We currently employ more than 600 staff in Hong Kong, about 15 managers of which are supporting China and other Asia Pacific countries. From our company point of view, Hong Kong is geographically situated in the best location of the heart of Asia, it will definitely be a waste if we do not capitalizing this unique asset.

By now, Hong Kong still has its own competitive advantages over other Asian countries in the aspects of finance, legal system and transportation infrastructure which facilitate business transaction in and through Hong Kong, which in return, support the economy growth and job creation. However, if we do not proceed for a long-term airport developing plan, other neighbor cities could easily take over Hong Kong and eventually replace our position in the global financial and economic stage. Indeed, many neighbor airports like Guangzhou, Taipei, Bangkok, Singapore, Shanghai and Seoul are expanding in terms of their airport infrastructure and service. If we do not safeguard and improve our infrastructure, the advantages now Hong Kong is enjoying will be narrowed in the next 20 years because, other than finance and service industries, Hong Kong does not have any other industries to sustain its economic growth and to create job opportunities.

Recently, we observed a phenomenon that many Hong Kong people station and work in China because of the availability of new job opportunities brought by their economic growth. It may, in short term, lower the unemployment rate in Hong Kong, but with the constant influx of 5 million university graduates into China job market every year, I believe driving continual local economic growth sounds much more sustainable than anything the local commercial corporate can do. Although we cannot predict our future, if we do not develop the 3rd runway, we lapse away an important chance of boosting our economy to another level and in an even worse situation: our economy will be in jeopardy.

Some people may argue that we can invest and develop some small new industries to strengthen local economy and generate more opportunities for the local job market. But those industries cannot survive for long because the consumer market in Hong Kong is too small in scale. In cases where the small industries can develop well enough to expand out of the Hong Kong, the 3rd runway is still needed in a long run to support such business expansions.

On behalf of the staff of my company, I definitely look forward to seeing the continual job creation and appointments for them to develop and live out better lives. For the sake of my job, I have opportunities to travel many cities and am always proud of having such an architecturally and qualitatively world class airport in my hometown. However, in the same time, I also noticed that many airports, especially those in Mainland China, are coming up to reach and challenging the international role of HKIA. If we do not keep developing and continue our leading role in the region, we will probably become one of the 2nd tier cities in Mainland China.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Daren Lau', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Daren Lau
Managing Director, SSP Asia Pacific