Chapter 5

Finding of Facts II

A. Building Works and Installation of Systems

B. Building Services

C. Baggage Handling System

D. Ramp Handling

E. Telephones

F. Public Address System

G. Airbridges

H. Signage

I. Training and Trials

J. Contingency Planning for and Crisis Management on Airport Opening Day

A. Building Works and Installation of Systems

5.1 Given the vast scale of the new airport project and the large amount of works and systems contracts involved, a sound management and administration system is clearly of paramount importance in order to ensure that the construction is accurately executed and diligently monitored with the aim of achieving the timely completion of projects to facilitate the commissioning of the airport by the due date. The target completion date of the construction of the new airport was to tally with the airport opening date of the new airport. Before AOD, apart from the physical construction of the PTB and ancillary facilities including HACTL's Super Terminal 1, there was a vast amount of systems to be built and installed for use: the FIDS, FDDS, BHS, ACS, Building System Integration, Passenger Information Display System, Stand Allocation System, Terminal Management System, Fixed Communication System etc, to name but a few.

5.2 The monitoring of works progress on the part of AA, and Government as owner of the airport, was at best ineffective. The AA Board relied heavily on its CEO to get things done. At an early stage, it also formed a Project Committee, chaired by S for W, with one of its terms of reference being "to consider and report back to the Board on progress of critical items" and "coordinate with the Project Monitoring Working Group and with the Airport Operational Readiness Steering Committee"[1]. However, in their evidence to the Select Committee, the Vice Chairman/AA and S for W[2] had different understanding of whether the Project Committee had responsibility for monitoring the Project Division. S for W considered that the Project Committee's responsibility related solely to the supervision of the financial aspects of contracts, not the monitoring of works on the projects, despite the notes of the ADSCOM meeting on 7 September 1996 which showed that an AA Board Working Group had suggested that the Project Committee be revamped so that it could expand its terms of reference to monitor works progress and

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Source:

1 *Witness statement of Mr HC KWONG, Secretary for Works, to Select Committee, 11 December 1998.*

2 *Minutes of evidence of the 26th and 28th public hearings of the Select Committee, 5 December and 11 December 1998, respectively.*

variations. According to S for W, nothing had since changed because the AA had not made the request.

5.3 The Select Committee has established from the records of the AA Board[3] that the Board clearly decided to expand the Terms of Reference of the Project Committee so that in connection with the design, construction and operation of the new airport, the Project Committee would, among other duties, review project related AOR plans and contingency measures and progress; consider and report back to the Board on progress of critical items; coordinate with the Project Monitoring Working Group and the AOR Steering Committee. S for W's understanding of the role of the Project Committee is obviously inadequate.

5.4 At the Government end, NAPCO, as a division of WB, had the responsibility for coordinating but not the clearly defined power and necessary expertise for supervising and monitoring the progress of works. In answer to a question by the Select Committee at the public hearing held on 28 September 1998, Mr KWOK Ka-keung, D/NAPCO, admitted that NAPCO did not have full details of the AA works contracts and there was a limitation on the amount of information it controlled, hence the reliance on consultants.

5.5 In September 1997, S for W set up an in-house Audit Team of eleven professionals in the Government sector to check the progress of the works for the purpose of ascertaining the AOR for opening in April 1998. The team used five most important milestones for airport opening:

(a) Completion of all necessary works required for Fire Services Department inspections (phased between October and December 1997). This was also a pre-requisite to (b) below.

(b) Completion of all necessary works required for Building Department's issue of a temporary occupation permit (TOP), which was expected to be in December 1997/January 1998. It

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Source:

[3] *AA Board Paper 253/98, 18 November 1996.*

was only when the TOP was obtained that tenants and AA's own AMD staff could secure entry into PTB to carry out major activities.

(c) The completion of individual system contracts between December 1997 and January 1998 to allow integration and training to take place.

(d) The three airport trials scheduled to take place in January, February and March 1998.

(e) The completion of PTB itself.

5.6 The report[4] of the Team found, in respect of the systems contracts, that in case there were further delays appropriate actions needed to be triggered in time, and AA had yet to consolidate fallback measures into a contingency plan. It pointed out the serious risk caused by running system testing and staff training in parallel under a compressed programme, and the lack of the Airport Management Division's assessment of the fallback measures, and emphasized the need of a plan to test FIDS, FCS and BSI systems to their full scale design load and service conditions and a training strategy to ensure the necessary skill transfer. Notwithstanding these findings, the Team was cautiously optimistic that the systems would be available for airport trials and then opening in April 1998.

5.7 In regard to outstanding building services and building works at PTB, the Team raised its concern about the large number of various types of clashes between services installation and building works, and the availability of labour resources to catch up with the outstanding works. As in the case with its assessment of the systems, in spite of these reservations, the Team was also cautiously optimistic of the completion of the works by the end of 1997 for the issuance of the Temporary Occupation Licence.

Source:

[4] *Assessment Report on AA's Works and Systems Critical on Airport Opening issued on 28 November 1997.*

5.8 On 31 December 1997, the Team submitted a further Situation Report on Airport Opening Readiness on the basis of the "areas of concern" raised in the Chief Secretary for Administration's letter to Chairman/AA on 15 November 1997. The Select committee notes that this and the previous report were based on meetings, visits and interviews held with AA staff during a 3-week period. The Team's conclusion was again that an April opening date was achievable. The Select Committee is at a loss as to how the Team could have arrived at a conclusion more optimistic than its own findings.

5.9 With the decision taken subsequently to open the new airport in July 1998, it should be logical to expect that more efforts would be made to re-cover the grounds lost previously. Indeed, at the first AA Board meeting held on 22 January 1998 after the announcement of the July opening date, CEO/AA reported that "Management was striving to complete the works before the end of April" and that "there was no problem on the major franchisees (HACTL and HAECO) at this point in time". However, the works progress since did not bear this out in reality.

5.10 **Table 5.1**, which is adapted from the AA's Executive Summary Programme (with milestone and key dates) showing the status of projects as at 1 July 1998, illustrates the position.

Table 5.1 Executive Summary Programme: Milestones and Key Dates

	Description	UBIP[1]-96 (Planned Completion Date)	Forecast of Completion Date as of												Actual Completion Date
			1 Jul 97	1 Aug 97	1 Sep 97	1 Oct 97	1 Nov 97	1 Dec 97	1 Jan 98	1 Feb 98	1 Mar 98	1 Apr 98	1 May 98	1 Jun 98	1 Jul 98	
1	Govt/AA Approval of CLK Security Strategy	26 Sep 96	4 Jul 97 (-40)	1 Sep 97 (-49)	1 Oct 97 (-53)	1 Nov 97 (-57)	11 Nov 97 (-59)	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	11 Nov 97
2	Airfield Lighting Complete for Runway	31 Mar 97	1 Aug 97 (-18)	4 Sep 97 (-22)	4 Oct 97 (-27)	4 Nov 97 (-31)	5 Dec 97 (-36)	16 Feb 98 (-46)	16 Feb 98 (-46)	14 Mar 98 (-50)	25 Apr 98 (-56)	11 May 98 (-58)	31 May 98 (-61)	13 Jun 98 (-63)	29 Jun 98 (-65)	29 Jun 98
3	Cargo Apron Complete	16 Apr 97	12 Aug 97 (-17)	4 Sep 97 (-20)	31 Oct 97 (-28)	31 Oct 97 (-28)	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	26 Oct 97
4	Airfield Lighting Complete for Aprons & Taxiways	10 Jun 97	31 Oct 97 (-20)	30 Dec 97 (-29)	26 Dec 97 (-28)	26 Dec 97 (-28)	26 Jan 98 (-33)	16 Feb 98 (-36)	16 Feb 98 (-36)	14 Mar 98 (-40)	25 Apr 98 (-46)	11 May 98 (-48)	31 May 98 (-51)	13 Jun 98 (-53)	29 Jun 98 (-55)	29 Jun 98
5	RDPDS[4] Operational	29 Aug 97	31 Aug 97 (0)	31 Aug 97 (0)	23 Sep 97 (-4)	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	23 Sep 97
6	AIP[5] Manual Ready for Distribution	30 Aug 97	2 Aug 97 (+4)	1 Dec 97 (-13)	1 Dec 97 (-13)	4 Dec 97 (-14)	4 Dec 97 (-14)	4 Dec 97 (-14)	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	4 Dec 97
7	Commence PTB Tenant Fitout - Ramp Handling (HAECO)	1 Sep 97	30 Aug 97 (0)	1 Oct 97 (-4)	4 Oct 97 (-5)	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	30 Sep 97
8	GTC - Complete Roads and Parking	23 Sep 97	6 Nov 97 (-6)	6 Jan 98 (-15)	5 Feb 98 (-19)	9 Dec 97 (-11)	23 Jan 98 (-17)	13 Feb 98 (-20)	30 Mar 98 (-27)	30 Apr 98 (-31)	30 Apr 98 (-31)	30 Apr 98 (-31)	14 Jun 98 (-38)	14 Jun 98 (-38)	5 Jul 98 (-41)	5 Jul 98
9	Airport Expressway to Terminal Open to Traffic	3 Oct 97	6 Oct 97 (0)	21 Nov 97 (-7)	22 Dec 97 (-11)	14 Jan 97 (-15)	14 Feb 98 (-19)	21 Jan 98 (-16)	30 Mar 98 (-25)	30 Mar 98 (-25)	30 Mar 98 (-25)	C	C	C	C	30 Mar 98
10	Mechanical & Electrical Building Services Complete (PTB)	14 Oct 97	30 Dec 97 (-11)	15 Jan 98 (-13)	15 Jan 98 (-13)	15 Jan 98 (-13)	15 Jan 98 (-13)	15 Jan 98 (-13)	15 Feb 98 (-18)	15 Feb 98 (-18)	30 Mar 98 (-24)	30 Apr 98 (-28)	14 Jun 98 (-35)	15 Jun 98 (-35)	29 Jun 98 (-37)	29 Jun 98
11	Issue of Temporary Occupation Permit (PTB)	15 Oct 97	15 Dec 97 (-9)	1 Jan 98 (-11)	18 Jan 98 (-14)	17 Jan 98 (-13)	4 Feb 98 (-16)	27 Jan 98 (-15)	16 Feb 98 (-18)	13 Feb 98 (-17)	C	C	C	C	C	13 Feb 98
12	Baggage Handling System Installation Complete	17 Oct 97	25 Nov 97 (-6)	25 Nov 97 (-6)	17 Jan 98 (-13)	17 Jan 98 (-13)	17 Jan 98 (-13)	17 Jan 98 (-13)	7 Jan 98 (-12)	C	C	C	C	C	C	7 Jan 98
13	Aircraft Loading Bridges Complete	29 Oct 97	25 Dec 97 (-8)	29 Dec 97 (-9)	1 Dec 97 (-5)	1 Dec 97 (-5)	1 Jan 98 (-9)	28 Feb 98 (-17)	28 Feb 98 (-17)	28 Feb 98 (-17)	30 Mar 98 (-22)	C	C	C	C	30 Mar 98
14	Determine Opening Day Capacity	30 Oct 97	30 Oct 97 (0)	30 Oct 97 (0)	30 Oct 97 (0)	30 Sep 97 (+4)	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	30 Sep 97
15	Security/ Communications Systems Complete	4 Nov 97	30 Dec 97 (-8)	21 Jan 98 (-11)	21 Jan 98 (-11)	21 Jan 98 (-11)	21 Jan 98 (-11)	3 Mar 98 (-17)	3 Mar 98 (-17)	3 Mar 98 (-17)	30 Mar 98 (-21)	15 May 98 (-27)	30 May 98 (-30)	15 Jun 98 (-32)	5 Jul 98 (-35)	5 Jul 98
16	Automated People Mover Complete	27 Nov 97	27 Nov 97 (0)	27 Nov 97 (0)	27 Nov 97 (0)	13 Dec 97 (-2)	3 Jan 98 (-5)	4 Jan 98 (-5)	28 Feb 98 (-13)	28 Feb 98 (-13)	15 Feb 98 (-11)	C	C	C	C	15 Feb 98
17	Terminal Building Structures & Fit-out Complete	29 Nov 97	25 Dec 97 (-4)	25 Dec 97 (-4)	15 Jan 98 (-7)	7 Mar 98 (-14)	7 Mar 98 (-14)	31 Mar 98 (-17)	31 Mar 98 (-17)	31 Mar 98 (-17)	15 Mar 98 (-15)	C	C	C	C	15 Mar 98
18	Fix Summer 1998 Schedules	30 Nov 97	30 Nov 97 (0)	30 Nov 97 (0)	30 Nov 97 (0)	15 Dec 97 (-2)	15 Dec 97 (-2)	15 Dec 97 (-2)	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	15 Dec 97
19	Aviation Fuel System Ready for Airport Trials	17 Dec 97	17 Dec 97 (0)	17 Dec 97 (0)	17 Dec 97 (0)	17 Dec 97 (0)	8 Jan 98 (-3)	17 Dec 97 (0)	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	17 Dec 97
20	ICAS[6] System Available for Training	31 Dec 97	31 Dec 97 (0)	31 Dec 97 (0)	31 Dec 97 (0)	30 Jan 98 (-4)	30 Jan 98 (-4)	30 Jan 98 (-4)	1 Apr 98 (-13)	1 Apr 98 (-13)	1 Apr 98 (-13)	1 May 98 (-17)	15 Jun 98 (-24)	15 Jun 98 (-24)	C	15 Jun 98
21	Commence Airport Trials	1 Jan 98	1 Jan 98 (0)	15 Jan 98 (-2)	16 Jan 98 (-2)	16 Jan 98 (-2)	18 Jan 98 (-2)	16 Jan 98 (-2)	18 Jan 98 (-2)	C	C	C	C	C	C	18 Jan 98
22	Air Cargo Clearance System (ACCS) Rehearsals[7]	26 Jan 98	26 Jan 98 (0)	26 Jan 98 (0)	26 Jan 98 (0)	26 Feb 98 (-4)	16 Feb 98 (-3)	16 Feb 98 (-3)	1 Apr 98 (-9)	1 Apr 98 (-9)	24 Mar 98 (-8)	30 May 98 (-18)	30 May 98 (-18)	17 Jun 98 (-20)	C	17 Jun 98
23	AAT Air Cargo Terminal No. 2 - Ready for Trials	1 Feb 98	11 Jan 98 (+3)	11 Jan 98 (+3)	11 Jan 98 (+3)	11 Jan 98 (+3)	28 Mar 98 (-8)	30 Apr 98 (-13)	30 Apr 98 (-13)	30 Apr 98 (-13)	30 May 98 (-17)	31 May 98 (-17)	31 May 98 (-17)	30 Jun 98 (-21)	C	20 Jun 98

	Description	UBIP[1]-96 (Planned Completion Date)	Forecast of Completion Date as of													Actual Completion Date
			1 Jul 97	1 Aug 97	1 Sep 97	1 Oct 97	1 Nov 97	1 Dec 97	1 Jan 98	1 Feb 98	1 Mar 98	1 Apr 98	1 May 98	1 Jun 98	1 Jul 98	
24	CPCS[8] Aircraft Catering Facility - Ready for Trials	1 Mar 98	31 Jan 98 (+4)	31 Jan 98 (+4)	31 Jan 98 (+4)	31 Jan 98 (+4)	31 Jan 98 (+4)	31 Jan 98 (+4)	9 Feb 98 (+3)	31 Mar 98 (-4)	28 Feb 98 (0)	C	C	C	C	28 Feb 98
25	Aircraft Line Maintenance Facility No. 1 - Ready for Trials	16 Mar 98	31 Mar 98 (-2)	31 Mar 98 (-2)	31 Mar 98 (-2)	31 Mar 98 (-2)	31 Mar 98 (-2)	31 Mar 98 (-2)	31 Mar 98 (-2)	31 Mar 98 (-2)	29 Apr 98 (-6)	31 May 98 (-11)	31 May 98 (-11)	30 Jun 98 (-15)	C	30 Jun 98
26	Hold Baggage Security System Complete	22 Mar 98	21 Mar 98 (0)	21 Mar 98 (0)	19 Mar 98 (0)	19 Mar 98 (0)	19 Mar 98 (0)	22 Mar 98 (0)	22 Mar 98 (0)	31 Mar 98 (-1)	31 Mar 98 (-1)	31 May 98 (-10)	31 May 98 (-10)	C	C	31 May 98
27	GTC - Complete All MTRC Works in Station Structure	26 Mar 98	27 Mar 98 (0)	21 Mar 98 (+1)	22 Mar 98 (+1)	27 Mar 98 (0)	27 Mar 98 (0)	26 Mar 98 (0)	26 Mar 98 (0)	26 Mar 98 (0)	26 Mar 98 (0)	C	C	C	C	26 Mar 98
28	Issue Aerodrome License	30 Mar 98	30 Mar 98 (0)	30 Mar 98 (0)	30 Mar 98 (0)	30 Mar 98 (0)	30 Mar 98 (0)	30 Mar 98 (0)	30 Mar 98 (0)	30 Mar 98 (0)	30 Mar 98 (0)	15 Jun 98 (-11)	15 Jun 98 (-11)	15 Jun 98 (-11)	29 Jun 98 (-13)	29 Jun 98
29	HACTL Air Cargo Terminal No. 1 - Ready for Trials	31 Mar 98	31 Mar 98 (0)	31 Mar 98 (0)	31 Mar 98 (0)	31 Mar 98 (0)	31 Mar 98 (0)	30 Apr 98 (-4)	30 Apr 98 (-4)	20 Jun 98 (-12)	29 May 98 (-8)	20 Jun 98 (-12)	27 Jun 98 (-13)	27 Jun 98 (-13)	3 Jul 98 (-13)	3 Jul 98
30	FIDS Software Ready for Airport Operations[7]	31 Mar 98	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	31 Mar 98 (0)	31 Mar 98 (0)	31 Mar 98 (0)	30 Apr 98 (-4)	30 May 98 (-9)	6 Jul 98 (-14)	6 Jul 98 (-14)	6 Jul 98
31	Final FIDS System Available Including Deferred Items[7, 10]	31 Aug 98	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	15 Sep 98 (-2)	15 Sep 98 (-2)	5 Nov 98 (-9)	5 Nov 98 (-9)	5 Nov 98 (-9)	5 Nov 98 (-9)	5 Nov 98 (-9)	5 Nov 98[11]
32	Start Airport Commercial Operations	1 Apr 98	1 Apr 98[12] (0)	30 Apr 98[12] (-4)	30 Apr 98[12] (-4)	30 Apr 98[12] (-4)	1 May 98[12] (-4)	30 Apr 98[12] (-4)	6 Jul 98[12] (-14)	6 Jul 98 (-14)	6 Jul 98 (-14)	6 Jul 98 (-14)	6 Jul 98 (-14)	6 Jul 98 (-14)	6 Jul 98 (-14)	6 Jul 98

Remarks:

1. UBIP represents Updated Baseline Implementation Plan.
2. C represents completed.
3. Figures in parentheses represent progress of work against the UBIP-96 Programme. "+" represents ahead of Programme and "-" represents behind Programme; measured in weeks.
4. RDPDS represents Radar Data Processing Display System.
5. AIP represents Aeronautical Information Programme.
6. ICAS represents Immigration Control Automation System.
7. Dates subsequent to UBIP-96.
8. CPCS represents Cathay Pacific Catering Services (HK) Limited.
9. N.A. represents not available.
10. Deferred items represent further development of FIDS, which are not essential on airport opening date.
11. This figure is a forecast as of 1 Jul 98.
12. HACTL forecast 50% capacity by 30 Apr 98.

Source: *NAPCO, Airport Core Programme Monthly Progress Report, July 1997 - July 1998.*

5.11 The table shows that considerable programme slippages had occurred. As at 1 February 1998, 20 of the 31 listed projects items had failed to be implemented on schedule. By 1 April 1998, 14 of these continued to have delays ranging from four weeks to 58 weeks. As at 1 July 1998, eight more items were completed between 15 June and 30 June 1998; four were forecast to be completed on 3 July (HACTL Cargo Terminal 1 Trials), 5 July (Ground Transport Centre - roads and parking, and complete security/communications systems) and 6 July (FIDS Software for AOD) respectively.

5.12 These implementation and completion dates make the original 1996 Updated Baseline Implementation Plan rather theoretical and meaningless. The Select Committee questions why a similar exercise as the assessment conducted by the Administration's in-house professional Audit Team in September 1997 had not been mounted in the run-up to AOD to assess progress of works and ascertain the timely completion of the projects. Although ADSCOM, the AA Board and various committees had discussed the progress of works, mainly on FIDS and HACTL, the Select Committee has found no evidence to convince itself that close and meticulous supervision was exercised to ensure project completion by AOD. On the contrary, the comfort level of many of these parties appeared to have risen following the announcement of AOD. As the deadline of AOD approached, discussions in ADSCOM, AA Board and various committees indicated a readiness to accepting a compromise in standard in order to meet deadlines. The notes of the 177th ADSCOM Meeting held on 21 February 1998, shortly after FIDS had crashed at the second Terminal Operations Trial, show that after some Government officials had expressed concern about the viability of the FIDS and other system, "Chairman/ADSCOM stressed the need to avoid a chaotic situation at airport opening: at a minimum there must be a system to provide the basic functions required".[5]

5.13 The past performance of the AA Management should have provided enough clues to its tendency to agree and make promises that it could not fulfil. As things turned out, no real improvements in the pace of project completion had taken place, while the AA Management kept giving words of assurance to

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Source:

[5] *Notes of the 177th ADSCOM Meeting, 21 February 1998, paragraph 23.*

ADSCOM, AA Board, the Project Committee, NAPCO and its business partners. At the 69th Project Committee meeting on 19 May 1998, Mr OAKERVEE advised that the PTB would be ready by 14 June 1998 with all main physical works completed. Yet, the notes on the Acting Chief Executive and ADSCOM visit to the new airport on 14 June 1998[6] showed that the Ground Transportation Centre look unfinished and PD/AA undertook to complete the external works by end of month. Mr TSUI King-cheong, PM(E&M Works)/AA undertook to ensure installation of the FIDS monitors, lighting panels by 26 June. A number of systems inside the Customs and Excise Room and the Immigration Control Office were either not operable or yet to be installed. Tenant fit-outs inside the restricted area had yet to start. The VIP Suite had yet to be complete. Air-conditioning was a problem in HACTL. The Custom and Excise inspection hall had yet to install doors, windows and locks to the office.

5.14 The situation had not much improved during the ADSCOM visit on 24 June; while some works had finished, new outstanding items were found[7]. In two ADSCOM Papers[8], the AA management confirmed that airport systems, Ground Transportation Centre, Government areas, HACTL, security would be operationally ready for AOD. At the 186th ADSCOM meeting held on 4 July 1998, the employment of workarounds was discussed, indicative of the lack of confidence in FIDS. HIT/AA told the meeting that requests for telephone and fax lines received before 24 June would be met. CEO/AA assured ADSCOM that they had resolved the coverage problem of the Trunk Mobile Radio in the PTB and the west end of the airport island. He was also working on the defective monitors. A list of 49 outstanding Government entrusted items were passed to CEO/AA by CPM/NAPCO with expressed concern that a lot of the systems were marginally functional: only 70% of telephone lines were working and quite a number of the systems were not fully installed, tested or taken over.

Source:

6 *Notes of Acting CE and ADSCOM Visit to Airport Railway and the New Airport on 14 June 1998.*

7 *Notes of the 185th ADSCOM Meeting, 24 June 1998.*

8 *ADSCOM Papers 34/98 and 36/98 dated 23 June and 2 July 1998.*

5.15 Regarding toilets, CEO/AA said that the whole flushing water system would be turned over and completed on 5 July. The deployment of security staff to guard the doors because of the ACS difficulties was discussed. That part of the meeting concluded with a remark that Chairman/ADSCOM understood there would be a lot of loose ends to tie up at the last minute and asked CEO/AA to keep a close watch and to smooth at the problem areas.

5.16 Meanwhile, in a confidential NAPCO SITREP dated 29 June 1998, NAPCO made the following assessment on AOR:

> "The "Day One" configuration of airport systems, including manual operational modes, are to be in place by the week of 22 June. The continued systems delays and operational problems represent real risk to smooth airport operation. These delays and problems have critically impacted training schedules, particularly for Government departments, as well as the scope and viability of trials conducted to date, including the "dress rehearsal". The basic functionality of airside systems and equipment also remains questionable, given problems observed in the first airside trial on 2 May remained largely uncorrected during the "dress rehearsal" on 14 June. "

Considering the state of unreadiness the projects were in and AA's inability to deliver in the past, the Select Committee questions why ADSCOM had accepted CEO/AA's assurance in favour of the NAPCO assessment.

B. Building Services

Introduction

5.17 There were many reported problems relating to building services which, in many ways, appear to be the consequences of the slow progress of the PTB systems and construction programme. Many of these problems had manifested themselves before AOD - indeed in some cases, way before AOD. Some of these problems may be regarded as minor, teething problems, but some are of a more serious nature.

Building services problems on AOD

Air-conditioning in the PTB

5.18 According to AA[9], since AOD there had been four major incidents of unplanned shutdowns of the chiller plants, partially or totally, in PTB. These occurred on 6 July, 10 July, 12 July and 13 July. On the last occasion, the shutdown of the four chillers and four sea water pumps being used lasted for over seven hours from about midnight.

5.19 The first of the four major incidents of air-conditioning failure is said to be due to defective flow switch and the control system, resulting in two out of the three operating chillers shutting down. In the second and third incidents, the shutdown of one out of four chillers was due to operator error. The last incident is attributed to voltage fluctuations induced by a suspected lightning strike. There should be a total complement of six chillers in operation in PTB. However, prior to AOD two chillers had experienced shutdowns due to malfunctions of electrical motors.

Source:

[9] *AA's response dated 10 August 1998 to the letter from the Chairman of the Commission of Inquiry on the New Airport dated 28 July 1998.*

5.20 The Select committee notes that at the NAPCO Directorate Meeting on 11 May 1998[10], held after the Fourth Terminal Operations Trial on 2 May 1998, inadequate air conditioning was raised and Consultant Project Manager said that the problem should be resolved when all airport elements were completed. On 22 May 1998, S for W told ADSCOM[11] that the AA should find out the exact problem and that the lack of air-conditioning at the Ground Transportation Centre had adverse effects on the MTRC system. PD/AA reported that out of the six chillers installed, one was operational, and he believed that four chillers would be operational at the end of the month. However, AA could not have all six chillers working by AOD.

5.21 There were also complaints that there was no or inadequate air-conditioning in the tenanted areas of the PTB. Mr Raymond LAI Wing-cheung, FCD/AA told the Select Committee at the public hearing on 28 November 1998 that for about 10 days from AOD only 35% of the airline offices had air-conditioning.

5.22 The unavailability of air-conditioning in the tenanted areas is attributed by AA to the large quantity of late tenants requests for connection to the air-conditioning system, delays in works due to restricted access to the tenanted areas outside the tenants' working hours, failure of tenants' contractors to complete the installation, poor workmanship of tenants' contractors, crossed chilled water pipework of the AA, and frequent chiller malfunctioning.

5.23 However, the Select Committee notes delays in completing the works in those areas is probably the main contributing factor to this problem. There is evidence[12] to show that airlines had complained to DCA in May 1998 about this, and had not taken up possession for reason that the wiring and cabling were incomplete and the facilities were not ready for accommodation.

Source:

[10] *Notes of NAPCO Directorate Meeting, 11 May 1998.*
[11] *Notes of the 183rd ADSCOM Meeting, 22 May 1998.*
[12] *Notes of AA Board Meeting, 28 May 1998.*

Water supply to toilets and catering facilities

5.24 Complaints were received regarding the number and size of toilets in PTB, problems with flushing, the lack of tap water supply in the toilets of almost all major areas in PTB. There were also stoppages of tap water in some catering establishments in PTB.

5.25 The problems with the flushing system and the lack of flushing water is attributed by AA to flooding caused probably by a broken sewer line. The lack of tap water in toilets was due to the defective valves which should be regulating the water flow in two of the Tank Rooms. Whereas the make-shift solution approaching AOD was for the contractor's employees to manually operate the Tank Rooms, on AOD they were denied access due to security arrangements. The tanks eventually became empty.

Telecommunications

5.26 There were widespread and numerous reports of complaints about failures in telecommunications within the airport. Many Help-phones, public telephones and telephones in airline offices were not operational. Fax and data line failures were reported, and there were blind spots at which the Trunk Mobile Radio (TMR) networks were not operational. On the other hand, amid the hectic scramble for information resulting from the FIDS failure and other related systems, the heavy use of mobile telephones inside the airport caused an overload of the TMR and mobile telephone networks. There were also reports of weak signal strength of at least one telephone network. The problems are separately dealt with in section E of this chapter.

Power interruption

5.27 There were a number of reported power failures for brief periods.

5.28 According to AA, power failure occurred because, contrary to what the AA had anticipated, the restaurant tenants preferred the use of electricity to gas. Airline tenants also requested more power towards AOD. This necessitated the upgrading of the overall power system. To do so, power disruption to increase the capacity of power distribution system was on occasion

undertaken by AA. Also, the redesign, specification and procurement of new equipment took time.

5.29 Furthermore, there were occasions on which the tenants' electricity contractors working on site switched off power without permission. Power failure were also caused by tripping of circuit breakers which in turn was caused by faults in electrical installations put in by tenants.

Escalators and Automated People Movers (APM)

5.30 Of the 61 escalators in the PTB, 59 were in service on AOD. 20 and 19 escalator stoppages were reported on AOD and the following day. On 20 July 1998, two weeks after AOD, one passenger and four AA staff were unable to leave the APM for about 50 minutes. There were also several stoppages of the trains.

5.31 It is stated by AA that the stoppages of the escalators were mainly caused by the escalator's protective devices being set at a high sensitivity level; people deliberately stopping some escalators; and minor workmanship problems.

5.32 In the case of the stoppages of the APM, the causes are said to be due to a door malfunction in the train, and the passengers made the situation worse by trying to force doors open. Excessive door control circuit sensitivity contributed to the other stoppage incidents.

5.33 The problems mentioned in this section point to the general lack of readiness for the airport to start operation on 6 July 1998. Problems with such facilities as power, water, escalators are indicative of either poor workmanship due either to rush works done within a tight time frame, or compromised standards having been set in testing, trials and commissioning. Such works fall within the responsibilities of Project Division which supervised them and of Airport Management Division which, as the end-user, should have ensured that the required standards are met. The Select Committee feels that although these problems may have been small in isolation, the aggregate effects of their occurring at the same time, as they did on AOD, was devastating.

C. Baggage Handling System

Introduction

5.34 The Baggage Handling System (BHS) at Chek Lap Kok is a centralised, computer controlled, automated system designed to serve the PTB's 288 check-in desks and deliver checked / hold baggage to any of the 152 flight laterals or four departures baggage carousels in the Baggage Hall. The first phase of the system is designed to serve 35 million passengers a year and will be able to process 13,680 bags per hour. The BHS sorts the baggage to flight laterals by reading the IATA (International Air Transport Association) standard baggage labels. After the baggage has been loaded into containers, it is transported by ramp handling operators (RHOs) to the correct planes. Unidentified baggage is automatically sent to a problem bag area for onward handling by airlines/RHOs.

5.35 The Select Committee is told that the BHS at Chek Lap Kok is one of the most advanced systems of its kind in the world. It is connected with CUTE (Common User Terminal Equipment), which relays information about passengers, flight numbers and destinations from all of the airlines using Chek Lap Kok to the BHS. This information (known for each item of baggage as a baggage source message, or BSM) is transmitted by the airlines through CUTE to the BHS Sort Allocation Computer.

5.36 According to Mr B REIJERS[13], former Consultant–Baggage Handling System of AA, the ability of the CUTE system to transmit accurate information to the BHS is dependent on the quality of the information it receives from the airlines. The CUTE system provides the bar coded baggage labels at check-in and passes on the BSMs from all airlines to the BHS. AA acts as a co-ordinator between the contractor and the airlines with regard to production by the airlines of baggage labels and corresponding BSMs which would be compatible with the BHS. In this regard, the Chek Lap Kok CUTE

Source:

[13] *Witness statement of Mr Ben REIJERS, former Consultant – Baggage Handling System of AA, to the Commission of Inquiry on the New Airport, 11 September 1998.*

Implementation Task Force was established as part of the airlines' preparation for the move from Kai Tak to Chek Lap Kok. The meetings were attended by invited staff from the BHS contractor, airline representatives and representatives of Airport Management Division.

The baggage problems on AOD

5.37 As reported widely in the media, there were numerous complaints about long waiting time for baggage retrieval and some baggage was even missing or not delivered onto the aircrafts. Some bags were late getting to their flights, and some missed their flights altogether. Some arriving passengers had to wait longer than usual for their baggage. There were reports that some passengers waited for several hours to reclaim their baggage. The number of departure bags left at the end of each of the first four days from AOD was 10,000, 6,200, 2,000 and 14,000.[14]

5.38 The confusion in the handling of baggage contributed to the delays in flight departures and arrivals. The average delay for departing flights during the first week was 1.7 hours; that for arriving flights was 0.8 hour.

5.39 Mr Allan KWONG, Assistant General Manager-Operations of Jardine Air Terminal Services Limited (JATS), claimed that "the situation with baggage handling on AOD saw more than 10,000 bags misprocessed by the BHS. Instead of being properly sorted and distributed to departure laterals for collection, these bags ended up in the problem bag area. The build up of problem bags severely stretched the already overworked and exhausted manpower of JATS, as they had to be manually sorted and processed."[15]

Source:

[14] *Daily Summary of Airport Operational Statistics, 13 July 1998.*

[15] *Witness statement of Mr Allan KWONG, Assistant General Manager-Operations of JATS, to the Commission of Inquiry on the New Airport, 11 September 1998, paragraph 44.*

Inadvertent operation of emergency stops

5.40 As pointed out by Mr Chern HEED, AMD/AA, BHS had been slowed down by the fact that the RHOs had, for many times on AOD, either purposely or accidentally pressed the emergency stops installed in the BHS. The emergency stop is a device installed in BHS which causes the conveyor belt system to stop. During the public hearing on 10 November 1998, Mr NG Ki-sing, General Manager, AMD/AA, pointed out that during the Terminal Operations Trials, AA had already noticed that the protruded position of the emergency stops of the BHS made it easy for the RHOs to accidentally touch them. Mr NG had therefore requested PD to rectify the problem. However, the required improvement work was completed only after AOD.[16]

Leftovers from Kai Tak

5.41 A large number of unclaimed bags* with unrecognisable baggage tags at Kai Tak Airport had been brought to Chek Lap Kok during the relocation move on 5 July 1998. There was no clear evidence showing who was responsible for arrangement and decision. The airlines brought all these bags to Chek Lap Kok and the RHOs fed them all into BHS. Since these bags were not scheduled to depart on any flight from Chek Lap Kok, BHS identified them as "problem bags". They were therefore diverted to the problem bag area.

Unrecognisable bar codes

5.42 According to Mr B REIJERS, a large number of labels on transfer bags contained bar codes unrecognisable to BHS or contained invalid BSMs prepared by airlines, or had no BSMs at all. In addition, many of the labels were not properly attached, which reduced the chances of the BHS reading the

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Source:

[16] *Minutes of evidence of the 15th public hearing of the Select Committee, 10 November 1998, pages 28 and 29.*

Notes:

* *There have been different reports on the actual number of such bags, ranging form about 400 to 1000. The actual number remained unclarified.*

label in fully automatic mode. There was also temporary disconnection from an airline's host computer which resulted in a surge of bags to no-read. If BHS did not read the label in automatic mode, the baggage would be sent to the primary sorter's no-read manual coding stations.

Non-compliant flight numbers

5.43 It was found that several airlines used non-compliant flight numbers (about 8% of baggage on 6 July and 7 July). These bags were therefore also directed to the problem bag area.[17]

Arrival bags incorrectly fed into the transfer unload conveyors

5.44 Mr B REIJERS stated in his witness statement that another baggage problem lay in the fact that some inbound flights contained a mixture of arrivals and transfer baggage, which were placed in the same container. Some of the arrivals bags from these flights were incorrectly fed into the transfer unload conveyors. Since these bags were not due to leave Chek Lap Kok, BHS identified and sorted them as problems bags. As an example, in the late morning on AOD, the arrival bags of a KLM flight were mis-loaded into the transfers system instead of the arrivals system.[18] These bags were sorted to the problem bag area.

Improper feeding of bags into the BHS by airlines

5.45 Mr NG Ki-sing and Mr Mark SILADI, Vice-Chairman of the Board of Airline Representatives in Hong Kong (BAR), claimed that inadequate training was provided to the airline staff and ground servicing staff to operate BHS. The causes of this may be many-fold, such as late recruitment of and arrival of the servicing staff and inavailability of training practice and familiarization facilities. However, the Select Committee notes with dismay

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Source:

[17] *AA's Response dated 10 August 1998 to the letter from the Commission of Inquiry on the New Airport dated 28 July 1998, part 2 - item 7, paragraph 2.6.*

[18] *AA's Response dated 10 August 1998 to the letter from the Commission of Inquiry on the New Airport dated 28 July 1998, part 2 - item 7, paragraph 2.2.*

that AA, though it had noticed this problem prior to AOD, did not take any remedial action such as deploying more standby staff to station at BHS. The evidence obtained from Mr NG during the public hearing on 10 November 1998[19] supports this point:

(a) During the six to nine months before AOD, while liaising closely with the airline companies on training matters relating to the operation of the BHS at the new airport, Mr NG had noticed that the training received by the airline staff was inadequate. There were particular problems with the use of correct labels for baggage. Mr NG had realised then that this would pose potential problems to the smooth operation of the airport on AOD;

(b) Mr NG regretted that he had not asked the airlines to increase manpower on AOD to deal with contingencies.

5.46 During the public hearing of the Select Committee on 3 December 1998, Mr Mark SILADI also said that "there was a lack of time to train the airline staff adequately on BHS"[20]. He said that "it was also due to the late completion of fitting out of the building which did not allow staff to go into the building to do the training".

Unexpectedly high reject rate by the operators of the level 2 security procedure

5.47 The reject rate by the operators of the level 2 security procedure was higher than expected on 6 July and 7 July. The level 2 operators were over-cautious particularly on the first day of operation. As a result, the level 3 operators had difficulties processing the larger number of bags passing to level 3 such that a significant number of bags became late or problem bags.

Source:

[19] *Minutes of evidence of the 15th public hearing of the Select Committee, 10 November 1998, pages 17 to 19.*

[20] *Minutes of evidence of the 25th public hearing of the Select Committee, 3 December 1998, page 120.*

5.48 The Select Committee cannot find evidence that there was any fault with BHS. The baggage problems on AOD appeared to have been caused by a combination of external factors and human mistakes in operating the new system and following new procedures.

5.49 The Select Committee believes that if there had been more training conducted for the airline and ground servicing staff, the extent of the human factors contributing to the baggage problems found on AOD would have been minimized. However, given the fact that AA was actually well aware of the training problem, it should have anticipated that baggage handling would be a potential area of problems and should have planned contingency measures beforehand. Mr NG Ki-sing told the Select Committee on 10 November 1998 that the baggage problem could have been controlled if there had been an increase in manpower by 50% or much better by 100%[21], and that in fact he could have mobilized through airlines additional manpower to deal with the baggage problems on AOD.

5.50 The Select Committee believes that the size of the baggage problem on AOD could have been contained by adequate training before AOD, and difficulties occurring on the day could have come under control if AA had planned for contingency measures, including the deployment of more staff and making arrangements to issue entry permits to the staff as and when necessary on AOD.

Source:

[21] *Minutes of evidence of the 15th public hearing of the Select Committee, 10 November 1998, page 22.*

D. Ramp Handling

Background

5.51 Ramp handling is provided at Chek Lap Kok by three different companies, namely, Jardine Air Terminal Services Limited (JATS), Hong Kong Airport Services Limited (HAS) and Ogden Aviation (Hong Kong) Limited (Ogden). They are collectively known as the Ramp Handling Operators (RHOs) franchised to provide ramp handling services for the movement of baggage and cargo as well as other ancillary services, such as passenger bridge operation under a contract arrangement with their airline customers.[22]

Problems of ramp handling services on AOD

Problems of FIDS and FDDS

5.52 According to AA[23], the difficulties encountered were primarily related to problems in obtaining timely and reliable flight information, coupled with the overload of mobile telephone network as many RHOs were using mobile phones to attempt to communicate. There were also some supervision and organisation problems as people were adapting to a new and unfamiliar environment.

Shortage of dollies/ramp equipment

5.53 In his witness statement to the Commission of Inquiry on the New Airport,[24] Mr YEUNG Kwok-keung, Deputy Managing Director of HACTL, said there was a severe shortage of dollies on 6 July 1998. As a result, the RHOs were using passenger baggage carts for carrying cargo, and vice versa. This created difficulties and delays at ST1 as passenger baggage carts were

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Source:

[22] *AA's response dated 10 August 1998 to the letter from the Commission of Inquiry on the New Airport dated 28 July 1998, part 2 - item 7, paragraph 1.*

[23] *AA's response dated 10 August 1998 to the letter from the Commission of Inquiry on the New Airport dated 28 July 1998, part 2 - item 7, paragraph 3.*

[24] *Witness statement of Mr YEUNG Kwok-keung, Deputy Managing Director of HACTL, to the Commission of Inquiry on the New Airport, 4 September 1998.*

incompatible with HACTL's Cargo Handling System. HACTL had to locate additional dollies before the cargo contained in them could be reloaded on the apron into cargo containers and taken into ST1 for processing. Mr YEUNG claimed that "the shortage of dollies was undoubtedly the source of much confusion in the apron operations on 6 July 1998."

5.54 At the public hearing of the Select Committee on 17 December 1998, Mr Anthony CHARTER, MD/HACTL, said that the lack of flight information and the shortage of dollies contributed significantly to the problems in cargo handling on AOD.[25]

5.55 After AOD, AA conducted a review on the problems found in the first week of airport operations. In this connection, the AA Board Paper No. 194/98 stated that "There was considerable confusion and inefficiency in the performance of ramp handling functions…5(a) an apparent lack of general preparedness on the part of the three ramp handling franchisees to cope with the very different operating conditions at the new airport."

5.56 In his witness statement, Mr YEUNG Kwok-keung further provided his estimates of the required number of dollies for operation on AOD. He suggested that as the new airport was roughly four times the size of Kai Tak, the individual dolly trip time should increase correspondingly. He made the point that the change from a single RHO at Kai Tak to three RHOs at Chek Lap Kok warranted an increase in the number of dollies. Furthermore, he believed that the baggage problems during the initial days after AOD had, to some extent, reduced the circulation of cargo dollies and the ability of the RHOs to devote their full attention to managing the cargo operations on the apron.[26]

Source:

[25] *Minutes of evidence of the 30th public hearing of the Select Committee, 17 December 1998, page 3.*

[26] *Witness Statement of Mr YEUNG Kwok-keung, Deputy Managing Director of HACTL to the Commission of Inquiry on the New Airport, 4 September 1998.*

Response from RHOs

5.57 In response to HACTL's allegation that the cargo handling problems were caused partly by the lack of dollies, Mr Allan KWONG, Assistant General Manager-Operations of JATS, took a different view. He believed that the true cause of the shortage of pallet dollies was due to the paralysis of ST1 which prevented HACTL from releasing pallet dollies back to JATS and the other RHOs within the 30 minutes recycling time provided in the agreed cargo interface procedures. He denied that JATS or the RHOs had insufficient dollies to cope with cargo handling requirements at the new airport. He emphasized that JATS had carefully planned pallet dolly requirements well before AOD and based its inventory of 279 pallet dollies and 630 container dollies on conservative calculations and customer requirements.[27]

Lack of co-ordination between ramp handlers

5.58 Mr YEUNG Kwok-keung also pointed out that another problem with the operation of the RHOs was their lack of co-ordination. He considered that much of the confusion in ramp handling operation on AOD was caused by the lack of co-ordination of the RHOs. He further made the point that AA being responsible for the overall operation of the apron outside ST1 should be responsible for co-ordinating the operations of the RHOs on the apron.[28]

Evidence of Mr Chern HEED[29]

5.59 Mr Chern HEED, AMD/AA, told the Select Committee that the Airport Management Division looks after the operational aspects of the franchisee agreements signed between the three RHOs and FCD/AA.

Source:

[27] *Witness statement of Mr Allan KWONG, Assistant General Manager-Operations, JATS, to the Commission of Inquiry on the New Airport, 11 September 1998, paragraph 48.*

[28] *Witness statement of the Mr YEUNG Kwok-keung, Deputy Managing Director of HACTL to the Commission of Inquiry on the New Airport, 4 Septebmber 1998.*

[29] *Minutes of evidence of the 14th public hearing of the Select Committee, 5 November 1998, pages 124 to 145.*

5.60 Mr HEED disagreed that there was an overall lack of preparedness on the part of the RHOs. On the contrary, he considered that the RHOs were "adequately prepared for AOD" and that "one of the companies was perhaps less prepared than the other two".

5.61 Addressing the shortage problem of dollies on AOD, Mr HEED said that it was the RHOs' decision as to the number of dollies that were required and there was no reason for AA to dispute their decision. He took the view that the number of dollies was sufficient on AOD. The shortage that occurred was "because of other problems and the fact that (unprocessed) cargo was not moving and (was) occupying dollies".

5.62 Mr HEED also told the Select Committee that the Airport Management Divison had reviewed the operational procedures of the RHOs prior to AOD and asked for amendments to be made to the operational procedures. He believed that Airport Management Division had done all it could in ensuring that the RHOs were prepared.

5.63 The Select Committee finds no established evidence showing that there was inefficiency on the part of the RHOs to such an extent that it was the direct cause of the problems of cargo processing in ST1.

E. Telephones

Problems on AOD

5.64 There were numerous complaints about failures in telecommunications within the new airport on AOD.

5.65 It was reported that over 200 of some 300 public telephones in PTB were not connected on AOD. Adequate operational telephones for use in airline offices were not available. Fax and data line failures were also reported and the Police reported that there were blind spots at which the Trunk Mobile Radio network was not operational. There were also complaints on the installation of only one telephone line in the pressroom of the new airport.

5.66 Malfunctioning of mobile phone network was reported on AOD. Some mobile phone users inside PTB continually received busy signals due to network overload and the peak period of the problem was the first day of airport operation. There were also reports of the weak signal strength of at least one telephone network.

5.67 Cathay Pacific Airways Limited also lodged a complaint to AA on 16 October 1998 that only 112 telephones were working, out of the 256 requested for AOD.[30]

Telephone system in PTB

5.68 The Select Committee first looks into the telephone system for AA and its tenants in PTB of the new airport.

5.69 In his letter to the Select Committee on 19 November 1998, Mr Douglas OAKERVEE explained that AA is responsible for providing the following basic infrastructure of the telephone system in PTB:

Source:

[30] *Letter dated 29 October 1998 from Mr Bill ROBERTS on behalf of Mr Douglas OAKERVEE, PD/AA, to Clerk to the Select Committee, Schedule 16/10/L/1.*

(a) communication rooms;

(b) backbone cabling between communication rooms;

(c) cabling from communication rooms to the extremity of tenants areas;

(d) provision of the Tenant or House (Authority) Distribution Frame (TDF or HDF respectively) and;

(e) cabling within AA's own areas.

5.70 The infrastructure listed in (b) and (c) above is referred as "blockwiring" and was carried out under Contract 388 (Voice and Data Cabling System).[31]

5.71 To complete phone installation, both tenants and AA are responsible for installing local cabling within their areas, provision of the wall voice data outlet (VDO) and the handset.[32]

5.72 Tenants could rely on the following two ways to get telephone service in PTB:

(a) Fixed Telecommunications Network Services (FTNS) providers could connect telephone service for tenants using AA's cabling; or

(b) Airlines could install their own telephone system Private Automatic Branch Exchange (PABX) with AA's assistance in connecting cabling for the system.[33]

Source:

[31] *Letter dated 19 November 1998 from Mr Douglas OAKERVEE, PD/AA, to Clerk to the Select Committee, page 1.*

[32] *Letter dated 19 November 1998 from Mr Douglas OAKERVEE, PD/AA, to Clerk to the Select Committee, page 2.*

[33] *Letter dated 2 December 1998 from Mr Raymond LAI, FCD/AA, to Clerk to the Select Committee, page 3.*

5.73 On FTNS, AA has entered into agreements with four FTNS operators, namely, Hong Kong Telecom, Hutchison, New World and New T&T, for blockwiring works.

5.74 On tenants' telephones, each FTNS operator would get orders for blockwiring work for their customers and then apply to the Information Technology Division (IT) of AA for allocation of cable pairs to a particular VDO. IT would accordingly select pairs of cables already installed in communication rooms and TDF. Small wiring connections (often referred as "jumpering") linking cables within communication room and to the TDF are then carried out by AA's contractor and FTNS providers respectively.

5.75 On AA's telephones, its contractor would be responsible for the blockwiring and jumpering of AA's phones under Contract 388. AA has also entered into another Contract 383 "Telephone System" for the installation, commissioning and testing of AA's own telephones, including those at airline desks and airbridges, help phones, and telephones at various Government facilities.[34]

5.76 New World Telephone (NWT) is licenced by AA to provide public telephone service within PTB, which includes payphones (power phones and conventional phones), courtesy phones and vending phones.[35] The Commercial Division of AA oversaw the installation of the public telephone system by NWT. The Project Division provided the cabling and power to NWT's telephone apparatus.[36]

5.77 There are eleven mobile phone networks having a shared common antenna system inside the terminal building. SmarTone Mobile Communication Limited was responsible for the installation of the common shared antenna network on behalf of the eleven mobile phone network operators

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Source:

[34] *Letter dated 19 November 1998 from Mr Douglas OAKERVEE, PD/AA, to Clerk to the Select Committee, page 2 and letter dated 27 November 1998 from Mr Raymond LAI, FCD/AA, to Clerk to the Select Committee, page 5.*

[35] *AA's response to the letter from the Chairman of the Commission of Inquiry on the New Airport dated 28 July 1998, Item 12.*

[36] *Witness statement of Mr TSUI King-cheong, PM(E&M Works)/AA, paragraph 55.*

who shared the cost. Every mobile phone network operator is responsible for installing its own equipment to meet its own anticipated demand.[37]

Developments relating to the telephone system

5.78 In his witness statement, Mr Douglas OAKERVEE[38] explained that AA had originally designed its own PABX telephone exchange with a capacity of 14,000 lines and its own trunked mobile radio systems for all users of the airport. In June 1997, the Office of the Telecommunications Authority required that any telephone service providers in the new airport should be permitted to provide their own systems. A number of providers became involved and each developed their own systems to be used at the airport. AA claimed that this changed and increased, at a relatively late stage, the complexity of the wiring required. The need to accommodate different users also led to interfacing problems between the various systems.[39]

5.79 PD/AA said that the majority of the blockwiring under Contract 388 was complete by May 1998, and a significant proportion of allocations and connections for AA's phones had been completed.[40] However, the Select Committee notes that it is recorded in the summary table on "Availability for AOR" that, for Contract 388, the main backbone cabling system was available before 15 June 1998, but additional cabling to meet service providers was required. Replacement of damaged cables would be continued after airport opening and some replacement cables required long lead time.

Source:

37 *AA's response to the letter from the Chairman of the Commission of Inquiry on the New Airport dated 28 July 1998, Item 13.*

38 *Witness Statement of Mr Douglas OAKERVEE, PD/AA, to the Select Committee, 8 October 1998, page 23.*

39 *Witness statement of Mr Douglas OAKERVEE, PD/AA, to the Select Committee, 8 October 1998, page 23.*

40 *Letter dated 19 November 1998 from Mr Douglas OAKERVEE, PD/AA, to Clerk to the Select Committee, page 2.*

5.80 Regarding the damage of cables, Mr Chern HEED said that workers of AA and 4 FTNS service providers were all scrambling at the same time to connect to their telephones before AOD. This resulted in disruptions in telephone connections and damage of cables.[41]

5.81 Mr Raymond LAI, FCD/AA, also pointed out in his letter to the Select Committee on 27 November 1998 that it was realized in late May and June 1998 that the provision of blockwiring services by AA was behind schedule. AA then decided that the four FTNS operators should take up the responsibility for blockwiring work for their own customers, and this required the operators to access AA's communication rooms. The operators had then encountered problems to access these rooms which were locked. Daily meetings were then set up between relevant divisions of AA and Hong Kong Telecom, which had the biggest market share among the operators, to monitor the progress of the work.[42]

5.82 On 27 May 1998, FCD/AA issued letters to individual tenants requiring them to appoint a telephone service provider and ask their appointed telephone service provider to contact and coordinate with AA before the end of May in order for their telephone lines or data lines to be ready by AOD.[43]

5.83 According to PD/AA, the cut-off date for tenants to submit their applications for phones was 24 June 1998 if they wanted telephone lines by AOD, but the number of requests increased tremendously before AOD. He pointed out that on 26 June 1998, AA had had 6,833 outstanding applications for terminals. On 4 July 1998, the applications had gone from 6,800 up to 7,454. By 30 July 1998, the figure had even grown to 9,500.[44]

Source:

41 *Minutes of evidence of the 13th public hearing of the Select Committee, 3 November 1998, page 84.*

42 *Letter dated 27 November 1998 from Mr Raymond LAI, FCD/AA, to Clerk to the Select Committee, page 5.*

43 *Letters dated 27 May 1998 from Mr Raymond LAI, FCD/AA, to tenants.*

44 *Minutes of evidence of the 9th public hearing of the Select Committee, 16 October 1998, page 86.*

5.84 On the other hand, Mr Mark SILADI, Vice-Chairman/BAR, pointed out at the hearing on 3 December 1998 that BAR had, through the AA/BAR Consultative Group Meeting, asked PD/AA to complete certain works regarding fit-out and telecommunications. However, PD was never represented at the meeting. He considered that influence through the Consultative Group was not significant or adequate, so PD was not responding to airlines' requests.[45]

5.85 As a result, Mr Philip CHEN, Chairman/BAR wrote to CEO/AA, on 12 June 1998 that airlines and ground handling companies were experiencing serious problems with office and lounge fit-outs. Some problems such as the lack of telecommunication facilities were AOR issues. Mr CHEN particularly pointed out that airlines could not operate on Day One without these critical links.[46]

5.86 Mr Raymond LAI pointed out that PD/AA and HIT/AA had informed him that most of the blockwiring for tenants' orders received before 15 June was completed by 2 July 1998. However, he found that there were still a number of problems and concerns raised by either tenants or FTNS operators right before AOD. These problems[47] included:

(a) tenants not having all the telephone and fax lines connected;

(b) missing TDF, telephone box and VDO which caused problems for telephone connections;

(c) FTNS operators complaining that blockwiring were wrongly installed and/or labeled; and

(d) miscommunication of information between FTNS operators and AA, and between FTNS operators and tenants.[48]

Source:

45 *Minutes of evidence of the 25th public hearing of the Select Committee, 3 December 1998, page 75.*

46 *Letter dated 12 June 1998 from Mr Philip CHEN, Chairman/BAR, to Dr Henry TOWNSEND, CEO/AA.*

47 *Letter dated 27 November 1998 from Raymond LAI to Clerk to the Select Committee.*

48 *Letter dated 27 November 1998 from Mr Raymond LAI, FCD/AA, to Clerk to the Select Committee, page 5.*

5.87 Despite the above, AA, in its report to ADSCOM dated 2 July 1998 under the heading "Communication Cabling", said that all requests for telephone received prior to 24 June 1998 had been completed, and that AA and FTNS operators were progressing through requests received after 26 June 1998 on a best efforts basis. AA also confirmed that more than 95% of the telephone sets had been installed in PTB and the system was being given the final configuration by the contractor. The public enquiry service hotlines in English and Cantonese would be available from 1 July 1998.[49]

5.88 In relation to the above, the Select Committee notes that in the Airport Works - Schedule of Critical Activities Weekly Status Report (Report No. 28 - Week ending 5 July 1998) prepared by AA, it is stated that in respect of Contract 383 - Telephone System (AA phones and not tenant phones), "System is operational and connection continuing with approximately 80% of the phones now achieved."[50]

5.89 On the other hand, Mr NG Ki-sing, General Manager - Terminal Operations/AA, produced a paper titled "System Status Report as at 5 July 1998" to the Select Committee at the public hearing on 10 November 1998. It is stated that none of the individual items such as telephones for Info desk and help phones under the Telephone System had an availability of 80%, not to say 95% as reported to ADSCOM, on 5 July 1998.[51]

5.90 In response to the above discrepancies, Mr Chern HEED explained that the 95% quoted in the report to ADSCOM was based on the completeness of systems connections for Contract 383 telephones, public pay phones, telephones for service providers and other systems connections. By contrast, the 80% figure quoted in the Weekly Status Report No. 28 only referred to Contract 383 telephones.[52]

Source:

[49] *ADSCOM paper No. 36/98.*

[50] *Weekly Status Report (Report No. 28 - Week ending 5 July 1998).*

[51] *Letter dated 9 November 1998 from Mr NG Ki-sing, GM-Terminal Operations/AA, to Clerk to the Select Committee, Attachment 4.*

[52] *Letter dated 4 November 1998 from Mr Chern HEED, AMD/AA, to Clerk to the Select Committee.*

5.91 Mr Douglas OAKERVEE echoed Mr HEED's response and added that the figure of 80% was based on a survey of the telephone availability on 4 July and 5 July 1998 immediately before AOD. He also said that the figures produced by Mr NG Ki-sing were actually based on the same survey. The discrepancies were noted where phones were stolen after installation. He particularly mentioned that between February 1998 and June 1998, the contractor for Contract 383 notified AA and the Police that 156 installed phones had been stolen.[53]

5.92 Nevertheless, subsequent to the hearing of the Select Committee, Mr Douglas OAKERVEE admitted in his reply on 30 November 1998 that, with the benefit of the hindsight, the report to ADSCOM mentioned above which sought to summarize a complex issue containing statements which inaccurately reported that all system connections requested prior to 24 June 1998 had been completed. He also said that the inaccuracies were not identified in any management review. The 95% figure quoted for telephones related to installation and might be misinterpreted.[54]

5.93 Regarding PABX, Mr Raymond LAI admitted in its letter to the Select Committee that AA could not complete all the cabling for PABX users on AOD. For examples, the Cathay Pacific Airlines requested 256 telephone lines, of which only 112 were ready on AOD; the remainder were completed by 22 July 1998. Jardine Airport Services Limited/ Jardine Air Services Terminals requested 271 telephone lines. Only 80 were ready for them on AOD and the remainder were completed by mid-August 1998.[55]

5.94 On the public telephones, Mr TSUI King-cheong, PM(E&M Works)/AA, also pointed out in his witness statement that, apart from cabling problems, incorrect jumpering of some fibre optic cables and circuits were also experienced on AOD. He said that, despite the completion of the cabling

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Source:

[53] *Letter dated 7 December 1998 from Mr Douglas OAKERVEE, PD/AA, to Clerk to the Select Committee, page 2.*

[54] *Letter dated 7 December 1998 from Mr Douglas OAKERVEE, PD/AA, to Clerk to the Select Committee, page 2.*

[55] *Letter dated 2 December 1998 from Mr Raymond LAI, FCD/AA, to Clerk to the Select Committee, page 3*

before AOD, not all the cable jumpering and VOD problems were overcome in time. He also added that power to a number of the telephones might have been "tripped off" and this might have been due to a combination of reasons, including incomplete wiring and broken cables.[56]

5.95 According to AA, the total number of public telephones required, installed and operational on AOD are summarized in **Table 5.2**.[57]

	Payphone Landside	Payphone Airside	Total Payphone	Courtesy Phone	Vending Machines	Total
Required	134	205	339	43	10	392
Installed	128	197	325	42	9	376
Operational	73	45	118	0	0	118

Table 5.2 Availability of public telephones on AOD

5.96 Mr NG Ki-sing pointed out that he only found out in the final checking on 5 July 1998 only 30% of public telephones were connected.[58]

5.97 Mr Douglas OAKERVEE advised the Select Committee that NWT, the public telephone service provider, came on very late in the day and started its installation work about a month before AOD. AA had to respond to NWT's request for doing some more wiring at the last moment. He also said that AA was anxious to get the public phones up because some of them had been damaged or stolen.[59]

Source:

[56] *Witness statement of Mr TSUI King-cheong, PM(E&M Works)/AA, paragraphs 56 and 57.*

[57] *AA's response to the letter from the Chairman of the Commission of Inquiry on the New Airport dated 28 July 1998, Item 12.*

[58] *Minutes of evidence of the 15th public hearing of the Select Committee, 10 November 1998, page 42.*

[59] *Minutes of evidence of the 9th public hearing of the Select Committee, 10 October 1998, pages 82 to 85.*

5.98 AA's responsibility in regard to mobile phones network was simply to ensure the physical installation of the antenna was complete. The equipment capacity was carried out by individual operators. According to AA, the problems on AOD was not envisaged because it was not anticipated that there would be so may people using mobile phones at the same time. Nevertheless, the mobile phone operators had planned to expand their equipment capacity to supplement the network, and the problems had been resolved.[60]

5.99 The Select Committee does not agree with AA that change in telecommunication legislation in June 1997 had great impact on the telephone system in the new airport. The change might have increased the complexity of the system and co-ordination among tenants and service providers, but there is a year prior to AOD for AA to make proper adjustments to cater for the change. The Select Committee considers that PD/AA had underestimated the tenants' demands and failed to provide adequate cabling for them before AOD, even for those tenants who had followed AA's instruction and submitted their applications before 24 June 1998.

5.100 The Select Committee is also of the view that, since a number of tenants only gained access to the new airport for fit-out works at a very late stage, this also contributed to the tremendous increase in the number of telephone applications before AOD.

5.101 AA's report to ADSCOM in June 1998 containing inaccurate information on the availability of telephones also gave a false sense of security to ADSCOM that the new airport was ready for operation on 6 July 1998.

5.102 The Select Committee also observes that PD/AA failed to cooperate and coordinate with other divisions in meeting the needs of their tenants such as airlines. As a result, AA was unable to provide facilities and systems in response to the users' requirements.

Source:

[60] *AA's response to the letter from the Chairman of the Commission of Inquiry on the New Airport dated 28 July 1998, Item 13.*

F. Public Address System

Introduction

5.103 The Guardforce Limited was responsible for the supply of the Public Address (PA) system under Contract 382.

Problems on AOD

5.104 According to an AA Board Paper dated 14 July 1998, "there had been recurring problems with the main public address system and the local PA system (at Departure Gates) remained unavailable".[61] Since then, the problems have persisted mainly with the local gate rooms PA System.

Readiness of the PA system for airport opening

5.105 Based on the evidence given by Mr Chern HEED during the public hearing on 3 November 1998[62], the PA system was handed over from the Project Division to the Airport Management Division on 30 May 1998. However, the Airport Management Division had already found then that the system was not ready for handover with the following problems detected:

(a) the main system was available but not functioning in a stable condition. Mr HEED admitted that he did anticipate problems with the PA system prior to AOD;

(b) the local PA was not available.

5.106 In view of the deficiencies shown, the Airport Management Division did not sign in the relevant handover certificates, as an indication that the system had not met the criteria for official handover.

Source:

[61] *AA Board Paper 194/98 dated 14 July 1998, pg.5*

[62] *Minutes of evidence of the 13th public hearing of the Select Committee, 3 November 1998, pages 59 to 83.*

5.107 However, the Select Committee finds that, dated 2 July 1998, the AA Management reported that "All critical systems are available in standalone mode, including the Public Address systems."[63] CEO/AA told ADSCOM at its meeting on 4 July 1998 that the PA System could be used to disseminate up-to-date information if it should turn out to be necessary to use the standby FIDS on AOD.[64] The Select Committee finds it hard to reconcile these statement with Mr Chern HEED's evidence. In fact, a question on this point was put to Mr HEED during the public hearing on 3 November 1998 and he agreed that the information presented in the report dated 2 July 1998 for ADSCOM might have been put in optimistic terms.[65]

5.108 The responsibility for not getting the system ready for AOD squarely rests with the Project Division. The project manager directly responsible for this contact was Mr TSUI King-cheong, while Mr OAKERVEE as PD/AA must also bear part of the blame as the overall head of the Division.

5.109 The responsibility for not flagging the problem up to either the AA Board or ADSCOM lies with both Mr Chern HEED, and Dr Henry TOWNSEND.

Source:

63 *"Airport Operational readiness Status Report as at 30 June 1996", ADSCOM Paper No. 36/98, paragraph 12.*

64 *Notes of the 186th ADSCOM Meeting, 4 July 1998.*

65 *Minutes of evidence of the 13th public hearing of the Select Committee, 3 November 1998, page 79.*

G. Airbridges

Introduction

5.110 The airbridges used at the new airport are different from those used in Kai Tak. These new airbridges were designed and installed by Bukaka Ramp Joint Venture as a nominated sub-contractor.[66]

Operation of airbridge operators

5.111 Once an arriving aircraft has parked, airbridge operators operate and position the bridges at the aircraft doors to allow passengers to depart.

Maintenance of the airbridges

5.112 The contractor bears the maintenance responsibility for the airbridges in the first year of their operation. After that, the Airport Management Division of AA has the responsibility for the management and maintenance of the airbridges.[67]

Training for the operators

5.113 According to Dr Henry TOWNSEND a total of 318 airbridge operators of the three RHOs had been trained and certified by the Airfield Operations Department prior to AOD. He confirmed that this workforce was adequate to operate the 72 airbridges in operation at the airport. Each RHO had representatives with previous bridge operation experience to attend training courses provided by manufacturer and they were in turn responsible for training their own company's operators. The Airfield Operations Department certified the operators after they had undergone an examination.[68]

Source:

[66] *AA's response dated 10 August 1998 to the letter from the Commission of Inquiry on the New Airport dated 28 July 1998, part 2 - item 6, paragraph 1.1.*

[67] *AA's response dated 10 August 1998 to the letter from the Commission of Inquiry on the New Airport dated 28 July 1998, part 2 - item 6, paragraph 4.*

[68] *AA's response dated 10 August 1998 to the letter from the Commission of Inquiry on the New Airport dated 28 July 1998, part 2 - item 6, paragraph 6.7.*

5.114 During the public hearing on 5 November 1998, Mr Chern HEED confirmed that Airport Management Division was responsible for monitoring the quality of the training provided to the ramp handlers and he was satisfied that the training provided was adequate.[69]

Problems with airbridges on AOD

5.115 According to Mr Allan KWONG, Assistant General Manager-Operations of Jardine Air Terminal Services Limited (JATS), "aircrafts were manually marshalled into parking bays due to incorrect ground markings and the shut down of the automated docking guidance system. Despite the temporary resolution of these two problems through the adoption of manual marshalling of aircraft, JATS airbridge operators continued to encounter considerable deployment problems due to the numerous parking bay allocation changes caused by the delays and congestion brought about by the breakdown of FIDS."[70]

5.116 Mr Allan KWONG also pointed out that additional problems were created by the fact that two days before AOD, RHOs were informed that the swipe cards for use on the airbridges would not be used. Instead, keys would be used to operate them. However, although JATS had raised requests for more keys to be provided, only a limited number of keys (20) were provided by the AA to operate airbridges. So, on AOD, the operation of airbridges was delayed as "the operators had to wait for the use of the keys to activate the airbridges. These problems, compounded with the late arrival of ground support equipment and the misallocation of parking bays, had resulted in severe delays and disruptions to the timely disembarkation and boarding of passengers." Moreover, there was malfunctioning of the software for controlling the airbridges, causing intermittent alarms and airbridge malfunctioning in some aircrafts.

Source:

69 *Minutes of evidence of the 14th public hearing of the Select Committee, 5 November 1998, page 75.*

70 *Witness statement of Mr Allan KWONG, Assistant General Manager-Operations, JATS, to the Commission of Inquiry on the New Airport, 11 September 1998, paragraph 38.*

5.117 On AOD, four airbridges were non-operational for between one and two and a half hours. As told by Mr Chern HEED during the public hearing on 5 November 1998[71], there were five auto-levelling alarms out of 72 bridges on AOD. Other problems encountered included problems in extending or retracting airbridges to and from the aircraft, hitting the limit switches by the operators in trying to move the bridge, and operators not being able to use the round key for the airbridges. Altogether there were 21 bridge problems reported on AOD. Mr Chern HEED confirmed that the auto-levelling alarms had caused delays to the disembarkation of passengers from aircrafts on AOD. According to him, most of the problems with the airbridges on AOD were the auto-levellers problems and only one or two cases had to do with human error.

Reasons for the problem of the auto-leveller not being identified before AOD

5.118 It was found after AOD that the alarms had been triggered by a software error, which was fixed on 12 July 1998. AA explained that "the problem was not evident during the commissioning tests of the airbridges. It did not occur during training using mock-up aircraft doors. It also did not occur in an Airport Trial on 14 June 1998 conducted by the Authority using real aircraft. The problem was difficult to identify because it occurred randomly and only on and after AOD."[72]

5.119 According to AA, the auto-leveller device of airbridges served to adjust the position of the bridge automatically to ensure precise alignment at all times with the aircraft door.[73] This was necessary because when an aircraft was fully loaded it sat lower and when it was unloaded it rose slightly. The bridges should go up and down with the aircraft. During the public hearing on 5 November 1998, Mr Chern HEED told the Select Committee that as AA could

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Source:

[71] *Minutes of evidence of the 14th public hearing of the Select Committee, 5 November 1998, pages 71 and 72.*

[72] *AA's response dated 10 August 1998 to the letter from the Commission of Inquiry on the New Airport dated 28 July 1998, part 2 - item 6, paragraph 6.5.*

[73] *AA Board Paper 194/98, 14 July 1998, page 6.*

not simulate a live loaded aircraft during trials, the auto-leveller problem was not known prior to AOD. He added that there had been no problem with the auto-leveller ever reported at other airports where the same airbridges were used.[74]

5.120 Although Bukaka Ramp, the contractor, should be held responsible for the software error triggering off the series of auto-leveller alarms on AOD, the Select Committee considers that AA had failed to spot the software error in accepting the equipment and should therefore also be held responsible for the problems. The Select Committee also doubts the reliability of the trials commissioned for the airbridges as only empty aircrafts were used during the trials. Thus, whether the auto-levellers could function properly had not been fully tested.

5.121 In view of the fact that some of the problems with the aircraft were caused by human errors, the Select Committee also questions the adequacy of the training provided to the operators prior to AOD.

Source:

[74] *Minutes of evidence of the 14th public hearing of the Select Committee, 5 November 1998, pages 71 to 74.*

H. Signage

Introduction

5.122 According to AA, the design of the direction signage system was the responsibility of the consultant, the Mott Consortium, which employed a specialist airport signage subconsultant. Working with the Airport Management Division, they adopted a system aiming at minimizing the number of signs necessary, and employing the use of a single colour background with supergraphics at major decision points. The basic design of PTB assumed a "one-way" flow system for departing passengers entering the building at Level 7 Check-in Hall from the Level 8 Departure kerb or the MTRC platform and carparks. All arriving passengers were assumed to leave from the Level 5 Meet-and-Greet Hall.

5.123 The construction of the signage with the PTB was done by a nominated sub-contractor which retained a local contractor, primarily for installation works.

5.124 On AOD, there were about 1,500 signs in the PTB.

Problems of signage on AOD

5.125 On AOD and the days following, there were reports on complaints by passengers and visitors that inadequate signs had been installed in PTB, that the signs were too small and that some signs gave incorrect information. The problems with other systems, notably the FIDS, generated a lot of confusion inside PTB and the situation was not helped by the problems with the direction signage.

5.126 The Select Committee learned that in the wake of the chaos at the airport, temporary signs had been erected while additional permanent signs were being ordered and installed. It is learned that there are now some 4,000 signs in the airport, about three times the amount that was available on AOD[75].

5.127 The problem, however, appears to have been foreshadowed. In its response dated 10 August 1998 to the letter from the Chairman of the Commission of Inquiry on the New Airport dated 28 July 1998, AA claimed that under the "minimalist" signage system, it had been intended that additional signage would be identified during trials and as a result of experience in the aftermath of AOD. However, the fact that has been established is that ever since the first Terminal Operations Trial on 18 January 1998, concern had been voiced about putting up adequate permanent and correct signage to direct passengers at various locations in PTB[76]. At the meeting of the AA Project Committee on 17 February 1998[77], the Chairman, addressing the question of signage, noted that he was more concerned with the philosophy of the signage rather than the individual signs, and there was a need to conduct an exercise for missing signs. Acknowledging the need, the Project Director explained that "the original rationale behind the design of signage was driven by the more aggressive commercial philosophy in that commercial activities, not necessarily airlines, were key to the airport. The signs had therefore been designed to direct passengers to the commercial areas. This resulted in some areas where the signage for commercial and airport operations was in conflict, such as those between the Immigration and the gates at the departures. This needed to be looked at jointly with other divisions. The Chairman commented that there might be a need to adjust or combine the two different philosophies to take into account the observations and feedback from the trials."

Source:

[75] *Witness statement of Mr Mark A SILADI, Vice-chairman of the Board of Airline Representatives Hong Kong to the Commission of Inquiry on New Airport, 1 September 1998, page 4, paragraph (d).*

[76] *Minutes of the 37th AA Board Meeting, 22 January 1998, paragraph 2.2.2 (a).*

[77] *Notes of the 67th Project Committee Meeting, 17 February 1998, paragraph 8.13.*

5.128 Following the second Terminal Operations Trial on 15 February 1998, an AA Board Paper 65/98 for the Board's approval on 26 February 1998[78] made proposals for urgent undertaking of works identified to be necessary in the light of comments in the two Trials, including signage at the approach road to PTB, arrival and departure halls, baggage reclaim hall, Meet-and-Greet hall, toilets, gates, lounges, and thoroughfares. Yet, the problem persisted in subsequent months although it appears that some orders had been made for some additional signs. At the ADSCOM Meeting on 4 July 1998[79] - two days before AOD, DCEO/AA reported that "the contractor had failed to fly in all the signage from Spain because of a slippage in production schedule. There might be some complaints. AA would put up temporary signs … AA had also hired a group of "airport ambassadors" who would look out for people needing help".

5.129 The Project Division is responsible for overseeing the design, manufacture and installation of signs. In reply to the Select Committee's question in respect of signage, on whether the Airport management had a very low level of acceptability compared with that of the public, Mr Billy LAM, then DCEO/AA, told the Select Committee[80] that "we had some trial runs early on and we provided a lot of input to the Project Division listing the works which we required. Certain of our requests were met by the contractor but some could not be provided for … I agree that there were different perceptions of acceptable levels of usability".

5.130 Appearing before the Select Committee at the public hearing on 10 November 1998[81], Mr NG Ki-sing of the Airport Management Division stated that suggestions had been made to the Project Division but the progress had been slow and it was difficult to get the Project Division to increase or change a sign.

Source:

78 *AA Board Paper 65/98, 25 February 1998.*

79 *Notes of the 186th ADSCOM Meeting, 4 July 1998, paragraph 28.*

80 *Minutes of evidence of the 12th public hearing of the Select Committee, 23 October 1998, page 8.*

81 *Minutes of evidence of the 15th public hearing of the Select Committee, 10 November 1998, page 85.*

5.131 The Select Committee fails to understand why the problems with the signs, first identified five months before AOD, could not have been resolved. The fact that the signs in PTB have since increased three-fold clearly points to the grossly inadequate number of such signs at airport opening. The Select Committee feels that the Project Division and Airport Management Division should share the responsibility for their shortage in this regard.

I. Training and Trials

5.132 At the ADSCOM meeting on 7 November 1997, DCA, Mr SIEGEL said "Details of training programme had been worked out, but were aborted by delays in the works progress … The training programme was not given a realistic timetable … had not been effectively implemented as the promised systems facilities and manual were not available on time … AA's training programme was squeezed to fit in with the delays in work progress and thus became unrealistic ".

5.133 When The Select Committee asked Mr Chern HEED[82] about the impact works and systems delays had on training, he said that there was a need for the Airport Management Division to commence training on the systems before they were handed over and they were still under construction. He said that "… As you know we never or seldom get an ideal world, and that's what we encountered in this situation. And what we were required to do was to adapt to the situation, to find workarounds, to find alternatives that would be able to carry on the activity that we require or the function that was needed to be done, so that we could keep the airport going".

5.134 In respect of the training on FIDS, Mr HEED said that although FIDS was handed over to the Airport Management Division on 23 June 1998, the Division had been able to get access to the system for training purpose from about February 1998, despite the fact that it was also undergoing testing, and some work was being done on it. The staff was therefore able to do some hands-on training on the system. He said, "Now, it wasn't 100% we couldn't have the system all the time, but we were able to circulate our people that needed the training through to get hands-on experience with it. To some extent, it is even better training than if you had the full system operational in that there was a need for people to adapt to the things that didn't work properly and therefore find workarounds and actually get in to the guts of the system, which wouldn't ordinarily be there, for example, in a perfect system operating on the ideal situation".

Source:

[82] *Minutes of evidence of the 14th public hearing of the Select Committee, 5 November 1998, page 96.*

5.135 Mr HEED maintained that the schedule for essential training established in September 1997 in preparation for AOD had in fact been achieved by the end of April 1998, approximately one month later than originally planned. The things that were most missed were actual hands-on time with the proper working system. He conceded, too, that training and testing on some integrated systems had not been achieved before AOD, but concluded that he was comfortable that the staff had enough training.

5.136 The Select Committee notes that as early as 1 December 1997, the AA Management had advised the AA Board[83] that "assuming a late April opening date there will be a period of 10 weeks … available for hands-on training and practice on systems in their Day One (AOD) configurations. Staff will be rostered to CLK for a minimum of 10 days hands-on experience during this period". The fact remains that, with FIDS which was handed over on 23 June 1998 in deficient state, only two weeks were left for the hands-on experience, falling eight weeks short of the original target.

5.137 On the question of training for airline staff in baggage handling, Mr NG Ki-sing, General Manager – Terminal Operations/Airport Management Division/AA, told the Select Committee at its public hearing on 10 November 1998 that some airline staff were not given adequate training in handling baggage, hence the problem with baggage labels and baggage trays on AOD.

5.138 Mr Mark SILADI, Vice-Chairman/BAR, also told the Select Committee[84] that there was a lack of time to train airline staff in the proper handling of baggage at check-in. "The impact of late fit-out (due to delays by the AA contractor) means that your staff cannot be at the airport to receive the training that is required in the various parts of the building … the environment was not in a condition conducive to training".

Source:

[83] *Paper for AA Board Workshop held on 1 December 1997, page 17.*

[84] *Minutes of evidence of the 25th public hearing of the Select Committee, 3 December 1998, page 92.*

5.139 In his witness statement to the Select Committee[85], Mr Alan T C LAM, General Manager (Airfield Operations) of AA, stated that a draft Airport Operations Manual - Airfield Operations was submitted to the CLK Ramp Operations Working Group (CROW) in January. Following the airside trials, a consolidated version of the Manual was finalized at the end of June 1998. He said that RHOs were required to provide adequate training for their staff. In respect of AA owned equipment (airbridge, fixed ground power, pre-conditioned air, potable water system) AA coordinated an extensive training programme for RHOs. HAS staff had ample opportunities to familiarize themselves with the layout and the set-up of the equipment on the apron area through HAS's own training.

5.140 In regard to complaints by RHOs that they had not had access to drive into the baggage hall until quite late, Mr Chern HEED told the Select Committee at the hearing on 5 November 1998 that the RHOs could walk into the hall any time and look around to see what the layout was. He said that there was a lot of RHO staff hired in the last month. He was satisfied that the airbridge operators' training was adequate, as each had to have experience in 50 operations on airbridges before being certified fit.

5.141 According to AA[86], a number of trials in the six months before the airport opening were carried out to test the functionality of the airport facilities and the effectiveness of staff training, communication and coordination amongst various working parties. These trials can be broadly classified into two categories: operations trials which focus on the handling of passengers, baggage and cargo in a simulated environment, and facilities trials which aim at testing the functionality of the various operational facilities and systems against the design specification. During the trials, opportunities were taken to test not only the normal operating procedures but also fallback procedures and facilities. AA claims that the experience gained assisted the Authority in responding to the events which occurred on AOD.

Source:

[85] *Witness statement of Mr Alan T C LAM, GM(AO)AA, dated 23 November 1998, to Select Committee, page 7, paragraph 4.5, etc.*

[86] *AA's response dated 10 August 1998 to the letter from the Chairman of the Commission of Inquiry on New Airport dated 28 July 1998, Part I.*

5.142 However, the Select Committee discovers that many deficiencies identified at these trials remained unattended to, and the fallback procedures proved to be inadequate to cope with the problems on AOD.

Operational Trials

Airside Trials

5.143 Three airside trials were conducted on 2 May 1998, 14 June 1998 and 25 June 1998 to test aerodrome facilities, aircraft ground services, ramp protection procedures and aircraft maintenance hangar facilities. A summary is set out below:

Trial Date	Aircraft	Airlines	Ramp Handling Franchisee	Line Maintenance Franchisee	Cargo Handling Franchisee	Fuelling Company	Catering Company
2.5.98	B747	CX	HAS	HAECO	HACTL	AFSC	CPCS
14.6.98	B777	CX	HAS	HAECO	HACTL	AFSC	CPCS
	A320	KA	HAS	HAECO	HACTL	AFSC	LSG
	A310F	FX	OGDEN	OGDEN	AAT	AMR	
25.6.98	B747	CX	HAS	HAECO	HACTL		

5.144 Ground handling for passengers, aircraft fuelling and catering uplift were simulated as carriage of passengers and cargo on these trial flights from Kai Tak was not permitted.

Terminal Operations Trials

5.145 There were five airport trials, using volunteers acting as passengers, between 18 January 1998 and 14 June 1998. The fourth trial included one aircraft movement. The fifth trial included three aircraft movements during the day and one at night. It also included the use of the APM and GTC with volunteers utilizing all forms of transport (except taxis) including the Airport

Express to reach the airport. There was also a trial by the MTRC on 21 June 1998 when 30,000 passengers were brought to the airport on the Airport Express.

5.146 A summary of the five terminal operations trials is set out below.

Trial Number	Date	Approximate Number of Participants	Check-in Desks		Gates		Baggage Carousels	
			No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Trial 1	Sun, 18 Jan 98		54	19	3	5	3	25
Trial 2	Sun, 15 Feb 98	1,000	108	38	6	15	5	40
Trial 3	Sat, 28 Mar 98	1,200	198	69	13	35	10	80
Trial 4	Sat, 2 May 98	2,000	252	88	20	55	10	80
Trial 5	Sun, 14 Jun 98	12,000	288	100	31	85	12	100

Landside Operations Trials

5.147 Two landside operations trials were conducted on 23 April 1998 and 23 June 1998 respectively. The main purpose of these trials was to test the communications and coordination of parties concerned in the event of emergency and the response and efficiency of incident recovery operations. In addition, a series of briefing sessions, site visits and test runs were arranged. Taxis, franchised buses, tour coaches and hotel limousines were included. In addition, two open days were organized for private motorists on 19 and 20 June 1998. The open days gave an opportunity for staff to practice traffic control procedures.

Emergency exercise

Aircraft Crash Exercise

5.148 To satisfy aerodrome licensing requirement of the Civil Aviation Department and to test the adequacy and effectiveness of the airport emergency plan to deal with an aircraft accident at Chek Lap Kok, an aircraft crash and rescue exercise was held on 26 April 1998. The crash exercise was preceded by two table-top exercises on 21 January 1998 and 17 February 1998 and a warm-up exercise on 31 March 1998. 756 participants from 14 Government departments, Airport Authority, ramp service operators and airlines participated in the Aircraft Crash Exercise.

Emergency Communication Exercise

5.149 The Airport Authority participated in the Emergency Communication Exercise organized by the Transport Department.

The case of HACTL

5.150 HACTL admits that, apart from construction delays, recurrent power failures, water damage and general disruption caused by the overlapping construction and installation works severely interfered with HACTL's staff training schedules in relation to the operation of the cargo machinery. Although HACTL made every possible effort to familiarize its operational staff with the cargo handling machinery to be in use at ST1, effective on-site training was made very difficult by the constant interruptions leading to AOD.[87]

Source:

[87] *Witness statement of Mr K K YEUNG, Deputy Managing Director, HACTL to the Commission of Inquiry on New Airport, page 38.*

5.151 Mr Anthony CHARTER[88] admitted that the fact that the (ST1) building did not receive a statutory approval until 3 July, which was the day HACTL actually received cargo into the terminal, made the timing of a functional trial impossible. Mr CHARTER also confirmed that HACTL had not participated in any of the five Airport Operations Trials conducted by AA.

5.152 The Select Committee considers the training and trial programmes designed by AA and HACTL had been compressed and compromised to accommodate construction and systems delays and malfunctioning. In the words of Mr Chern HEED, workarounds were used even in training and trials! The Select Committee is convinced that serious failings in these two vital elements and the corresponding lack of resolve to accord them proper time and place prior to AOD is the main cause of human errors occurring on AOD and thereafter.

Source:

[88] *Minutes of evidence of the 5th public hearing of the Select Committee, on 29 September 1998, page 46.*

J. Contingency Planning for and Crisis Management on Airport Opening Day (AOD)

5.153 Throughout the inquiry, the Select Committee has attempted to establish whether all parties concerned had, in preparation for AOD, made contingency plans to deal with problems that might arise on that day, be they foreseen or unforeseen by the parties. Mr Chern HEED has repeatedly told the Select Committee[89] that workarounds were available. For example, whiteboards, telephones and fax and the Public Address System would be used, should there be problems with FIDS and the systems with which it was hooked. He said he had, in anticipation of some problems occurring on AOD, arranged to meet airline and RHOs' representatives daily during the first week of AOD. He had also geared up airport management staff, as well as Project Division staff and contractors, by asking them to be around at PTB on AOD.

5.154 The Select Committee has not been able to find evidence to show that AA's franchisees and partners had been sufficiently alerted to potential problems with FIDS and the systems, the Public Address System and the Access Control System on AOD, or involved in advance in the drawing up of a contingency plan to combat the problems that could be anticipated. At the public hearing of the Select Committee on 3 December 1998, Mr Mark SILADI, Vice-Chairman/BAR, said that "overall contingency planning was not raised at the BAR/AA Consultation Group … I think probably the lack of alarm on the part of AA left us or gave us an impression that it was not necessary"[90], and that "we never had a sense of alarm from AA regarding FIDS". He also said that he was not aware of an overall contingency plan should FIDS fail and it was only on AOD that he knew about the use of whiteboards to write down flight information on AOD.

Source:

89 *Minutes of evidence of the 13th and 14th public hearings of the Select Committee, on 3 and 5 November 1998, various pages.*

90 *Minutes of evidence of the 25th public hearing of the Select Committee, 3 December 1998, pages 27 to 35.*

5.155 In giving evidence to the Select Committee, Mr Chern HEED said, "we had contingency plans for every system that we had in operation and we felt that we could manage the situation when it arose"[91]. So, it would seem that, for those areas where problems had been foreseen, some "workarounds" had been made, such as:

FIDS and systems problem	-	Use of whiteboards, telephones, fax and PA system;
Signage problem	-	Use of temporary airport ambassadors to guide passengers;
Access Control System - problems		Arranged for 300 temporary guards to man the 150 or so gates round the clock; using of keys to replace inoperative swipe cards for airbridges;
Local PA System	-	Use of main PA system for purposes of making local gate announcements.
Lack of tap water	-	Posting contractor's employees in Tank Rooms to manually control the valves.

5.156 Mr Billy LAM, DCEO/AA, told[92] the Select Committee that, in anticipation of possible FIDS/AODB outage, AA had worked out an outage contingency procedure. The Select Committee notes from the document produced[93] that the effective date for the document was 30 July 1998, almost one month after AOD. Mr LAM admitted that the document had not been written down prior to AOD. However, the plan had been worked out prior to AOD and the staff involved understood the procedure and that Standby FIDS and

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Souce:

91 *Minutes of evidence of the 13th public hearing of the Select Committee, 3 November 1998, page 7.*

92 *Minutes of evidence of the 12th public hearing of the Select Committee, 23 October 1998, pages 32 and 33.*

93 *FIDS/AODB Outage Contingency Procedure.*

whiteboards, as part of the contingency procedure, could be used. The Select Committee considers that, even if the procedure had been worked out prior to AOD, the fact that it had not been clearly documented and rehearsed in a co-ordinated manner cast doubts on whether the staff involved really had a clear understanding of how to execute the contingency plan.

5.157 As events on or about AOD showed, most of these did not work. In particular, the Select Committee is surprised that in the Operations Manual issued to RHOs quite close to AOD, there was no contingency plan for possible breakdown of FIDS and the Baggage Handling Systems[94]. Mr Chern HEED admitted that on AOD he found it difficult to cope with the problems that occurred, on the basis of his contingency plan.

5.158 The Select Committee cannot agree that most of the problems on AOD were not foreseen, as AA claimed, and therefore does not accept that no contingency plan could have been made. There had been sufficient signals prior to AOD to indicate that there could be problems in areas such as air-conditioning; insufficient telephone lines for communication; power interruptions; escalators and automatic people movers; plumbing; flushing; the Terminal Management System which had had problem and had not been tested in respect of the flight-swapping registration function; Stand Allocation System which had not been tested[95]; baggage tags; etc. In this regard, Mr Chern HEED has conceded[96] that perhaps these problems should have been foreseen, but they were not. He said, "We just didn't have the amount of people going through the Building to give it a full test. "

5.159 The Select Committee can understand the argument that some problems which occurred on AOD were the results of other problems which started the whole chaotic situation and could really not have been foreseen. But we question why, if every senior staff of the AA management had anticipated

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Source:

94 *Minutes of evidence of the 14th public hearing of the Select Committee, 5 November 1998, pages 7 and 21.*

95 *Minutes of evidence of the 22nd public hearing of the Select Committee, 26 November 1998 - evidence of Mr Alan LAM, General Manager, Airfield Operations, AA.*

96 *Minutes of evidence of the 13th public hearing of the Select Committee, 3 November 1998, page 47.*

some problems for AOD, there is no overall assessment of the problems in total and no overall contingency plan drawn up. The evidence given by the AA witnesses only points the Select Committee to the plausible conclusion that, because there were so many loose ends to tie up at the last-minute rush, AA could only leave it to luck and rely on the belief that things would work out all right on AOD. Whatever so-called contingency plans AA might have, they were patchy and disorganized. How can any one convince the Select Committee otherwise, in the light of Mr Douglas OAKERVEE's evidence that[97]:

> "Nobody knew where the teething problems (with the systems) were going to occur, and that's why the contingency plan was to have experts from each of the contractors involved having full knowledge of all the systems and all the facilities installed available so that they could immediately react."
>
> "What was known was that the areas of outstanding works that existed which impacted in quite a few areas. That was known by all parties involved."
>
> "As to (whether I had told AA and/or ADSCOM about) the teething problems … the mere fact that I got the contingency plans … I believe, clarifies the fact that we were all expecting teething problems but didn't know where they were coming from. But I obviously wasn't able to define them."

5.160 Good management is, among other things, about the ability to organize, consult, coordinate, conduct and control, to anticipate problems in order to avoid or reduce them as far as possible. The Select Committee considers that these qualities are especially demanded of those who manage such a world-class project as the new airport. Given the many known problems with FIDS which is the heart of all other systems on which the entire operation of the new airport relies, the Select Committees remains unconvinced that any responsible person who believes that the airport could have been operational on

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Souce:

[97] *Minutes of evidence of the 8th public hearing of the Select Committee, 15 October 1998, page 43.*

AOD could have ignored the need for a pre-conceived, well-thought out contingency plan to trouble-shoot. The Select Committee cannot accept Mr OAKERVEE's statement[98] that many of these problems would have been experienced no matter how much time was available to prepare for AOD, that they related to the inevitable settling down period needed for the PTB and the staff of all parties concerned.

5.161 In the case of HACTL, the Select Committee could not find any evidence that AA had fully appreciated the position of ST1 for AOD. All that AA claims it had relied upon was its blind faith that HACTL would deliver. Hence, it would be unrealistic to expect AA to have attempted to work out a contingency plan with HACTL in regard to ST1. Mr Anthony CHARTER has maintained that HACTL had a contingency plan in that the systems at ST1 had made allowance for bypassing some system faults in the automatic mode. As this was considered sufficient, HACTL had not anticipated the need for manual operation, as it would not only be effective in an emergency but would also upset the inventory of the system.[99] Given the physical state of ST1 prior to AOD and the fact that the staff had not had enough time to be trained on site, this contingency plan could not have been effective. The disaster that occurred on AOD leading to the intervention by Government and the decisions to re-open Kai Tak and to seek help from neighbouring airports cannot be more illustrative of the need for the contingency plan that HACTL claimed it had.

5.162 Even Dr Henry TOWNSEND agreed[100] that "As to the totality of all of those (contingency) plans and back up programme, there was no global evaluation of what might happen under that situation", and that "What we did not do was to necessarily look at unrelated functions to try to attempt a greater overall risk assessment." The Select Committee notes, however, that the bulk of the events which occurred cannot be said to be unrelated. What happened was — the cumulative effects of related and fundamental problems were

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Source:

98 *Witness statement of Mr Douglas OAKERVEE to the Commission of Inquiry on the New Airport, 8 October 1998.*

99 *Minutes of evidence of the 5th public hearing of the Select Committee, 29 September 1998, page 16 to 18 and 87.*

100 *Minutes of evidence of the 20th public hearing of the Select Committee, 23 November 1998, pages 5 and 12.*

serious enough to throw the airport into disarray and, together the addition of consequential problems, almost brought PTB to a grinding halt in the first week.

5.163 Against the background of the absence of a true contingency plan, it would not be difficult to understand why the problems were able to mushroom to an almost disastrous scale, without effective measures being taken to nip the problems in the bud when warning signals started to flash on AOD. Mr Alan LAM's witness statement[101] to the Select Committee states that malfunction of the Stand Allocation System started to occur at 2:00 am on AOD. Then, malfunction of the Terminal Management System occurred at 4:40 am. According to Mr Chern HEED, at 6:00 am the Airport Information Data Base and Airport Operations Data Base interface went down. Then at about 7:00 am, the problem worsened when the monitor displaying Expected Time of Arrival and aircraft landing sequence froze. So, in the scramble for information that followed, telephones were used to gather and convey information and, we were told, temporary signs and whiteboards started to be used, if at all then. A state of frenzy then ensued, with problems surfacing and escalating in other areas: FIDS, FDDS, baggage, gate allocation.

5.164 It was not until 10:00 am that an emergency meeting, convened by Mr Chern HEED with representatives of airlines and RHOs, was held to ascertain what the problems were. At 10:30 am it was decided by Mr HEED and Mr CHATTERJEE to reboot FIDS instead of activating the standby FIDS which, the Select Committee now learns, had only limited functionality due to time and resource constraints; a fact, incidentally, which had not been known by either the AA Board or ADSCOM. Another fact not previously known is that the standby FIDS would only be switched on after it had been determined that FIDS would be down for three hours or more.

Source:

[101] *Witness statement of Mr Alan LAM, General Manager, Airfield Operations, AA, to the Select Committee, 23 November 1998, page 14.*

5.165 The Select Committee is not sure whether, even at that stage, the problems were being appreciated by the parties involved. Mr Chern HEED told the Select Committee[102], "I think what happened here on that day, even by 10:00 am none really understood the extent of the problem. The contingency measures that we put in place were working to a fashion", and "Talking to the various people that I was, I didn't get the feeling that it was that serious."

5.166 In his witness statement to the Select Committee dated 4 November 1998[103], Mr Kiron CHATTERJEE stated, "At 3:00 pm, I attended a meeting of senior management in the Airport Operations Control Centre (AOCC) at which we discussed the problems which seemed to be occurring with the new airport. This was an internal meeting to review the position and agree appropriate contingency plans … The impression I had at the time was that Apron Control Centre (ACC) and/or AOCC were not inputting data on time." then, "At 4:00 pm an emergency meeting was held, attended by the ramp handlers, the airlines, AA chaired by Chern HEED. I still thought at this time that the principal problem was the late inputting of data by ACC staff … In view of the problem being experienced, it was agreed that the ACC would telephone the flight and stand allocation information to the Airport Emergency Centre … where it would be displayed on a "whiteboard" for use by ramp handlers, airlines and others. It was during this meeting that I heard for the first time from RHOs that FDDS appeared to be supplying inaccurate information …"

5.167 Mr Billy LAM's witness statement to the Select Committee dated 2 October 1998 stated (paragraphs 20 and 22) that the 10:00 am meeting decided that immediate action should be taken to ascertain the actual problems at the Apron Control Centre and the Baggage Reclaim Hall. A further meeting at 4:00 pm at the Airport Emergency Centre with representatives from the airlines and ramp handlers set up an Emergency Coordination Centre (ECC). By around 7:45 pm, the ECC and the contingency measures started to function in a generally satisfactory manner.

Source:

[102] *Minutes of evidence of the 13th public hearing of the Select Committee, 3 November 1998, page 22.*

[103] *Witness statement of Mr Kiron CHATTEEJEE, Head, IT/AA, to the Commission on Inquiry on New Airport, 4 November 1998, paragraphs 53, 54 and 56.*

5.168 Mr Allan KWONG, Chairman of CLK Ramp Operators Working Group, told[104] the Select Committee that the decision to set up whiteboards to provide information at the AOCC from 4:00 pm was made at about noon at the meeting that had started at 10:00 am. At that meeting, three options had been discussed for the first time, before the decision was made that, from 4:00 pm airport operators could station their representatives there to monitor and to relay information to their respective control rooms/centres. He did not think that the use of whiteboards had been in AA's mind before the decision was made.

5.169 Mr KWONG said that the RHO's operation relied heavily on correct information. The lack of information and/or the confusing information received on AOD, which was not helped by the overloading of telephone lines and network, made their contributions to the chaos in baggage and cargo handling. He said his own company, Jardines Air Travel Services Limited, contacted HACTL about the confusion but no clear solution was offered by HACTL. At the 4:00 pm meeting, which Mr KWONG said was chaired by Mr Richard SIEGEL, the questions of how centralized white boards should be used and when they should be updated were then discussed, and eventually the agreed arrangements were implemented.

5.170 Mr KWONG also said that, at the time, neither AA nor other participants had anticipated the global effects of the problems. The actions taken were reactive to the problems. The meetings that were held on the days following AOD were, according to Mr KWONG, run by Mr Richard SIEGEL. His impression was that Mr SIEGEL chaired the meetings.

5.171 Such was the situation at the new airport and how the crisis was being handled on AOD and thereabout. When the Select Committee asked Dr Henry TOWNSEND where he was and what he did on AOD, as Commander-in-chief of AA, Dr TOWNSEND said[105] he learned about the problems from DCEO/AA between 9:00 am and 10:00 am, returned to the airport at around noon and

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Source:

[104] *Minutes of the evidence of the 25th public hearing of the Select Committee, 3 December 1998, pages 33, 45 up.*

[105] *Minutes of evidence of the 20th and 22nd public hearings of the Select Committee, 23 November 1998, page 35 up, and on 26 November 1998, page 66 up.*

walked around the PTB "to make observations and offer any suggestions I could, but it's really up to getting it to the level of the managers with their hands-on responsibilities on the airport". Asked why he was not in the driving seat to make decisions to tackle the problems, he replied that, "My role is not to get too involved in their issuing of instructions, but I concurred with what they were doing", and "I believe that the incidents that were occurring were being handled at the appropriate level, which is quite important and the directors had their specific responsibilities and authorities … and there were certainly many of them better qualified than I am to lead in those decision". When he was asked whether there was any direction that he had issued on AOD and about, Dr TOWNSEND did not give a direct answer but said, "That was a matter of having PD [Project Division] support AMD [Airport Management Division], contractors supporting AMD and areas of that type".

5.172 Dr TOWNSEND also confirmed that he did not contact either Chairman/ADSCOM or DCA on AOD as he considered that was not necessary.

5.173 The Select Committee considers it totally unacceptable that no leadership in AA could be found, at a time when it was most needed during such a major crisis at the airport on AOD.