Professor Alan Kin-tak LAU

Department of Mechanical Engineering
The Hong Kong Polytechnic University

Economic Impact:

The Development of the third runway system does help enhance the global competitiveness of Hong Kong's aviation industry (including businesses related to aircraft maintenance, aviation logistics, airport infrastructure development and airport/airline operation) in the future. Currently, Guangzhou (Baiyun Airport), Shenzhen (Bai' an Airport), Macau Airport and Singapore International Airport have rapidly expanded due to their projected figures on air transportation volumes (both passengers and cargos) reflecting an expanded need in the future. Their development includes the builds of new terminals and runways. No matter whether Hong Kong International Airport will be expanded or not, such need is still there and the only way to solve this problem is to land (aircraft) on other airports instead of Hong Kong. In such case, all aviation related business and thus employment opportunities, will be shifted to our neighborhood. In fact, the growth of aviation industry can benefit to also retailing, catering, aircraft maintenance, airport operation, logistics and transportation industries. Besides, because of an excellent location of Hong Kong (reach to half the world's population within 5 hours of air travelling distance), it also helps maintain the main transition centre for all other Asian countries.

Environmental Consciousness:

In environmental issues, the new runway will be built by using a new casting method (Hong Kong has never used this technique in the past. However it has been maturely used in Japan and Korea for many years and no evidence to show the damage of environment during construction and after-built periods). The cement mixing process can help minimize the risk of contaminating the seabed (the values measured on pH, salinity and dissolved oxygen in the water are all within the acceptable limits) and generating noise to affect sea animals. The investigation report also shows comprehensive monitoring data to demonstrate that the drilling area had no leakage of heavy metal particles. It therefore can conclude that the method used for establishing the foundation of the runway does not introduce any adverse effect to the sea.

With the construction of new runway, the use of southern runway can be minimized during the mid-night. In the current practice, as there is only two runways, if the northern runway is required for maintenance, there is no choice and the southern runway has to be used at night. Bearing in mind that low cost carrier may fly at the nighttime in order to minimize their operation and landing cost.

In terms of the air quality control, there is no doubt that Hong Kong is one of the best airports with restricted air quality control. As mentioned previously, the

number of aircraft will not decrease even there is no third runway in the future. Therefore, the scenario will be all aircraft will fly over to our neighbored airports in which their air quality control is less restricted than Hong Kong and might be even very poor. The polluted air (gas emitted from the engines and auxiliary power unit (APU) may be accumulated in the sky. With the help of the wind, they will be blown down to Hong Kong and worsen our air quality. In that case, if we can control those aircraft to use our airport and follow policies (restriction on the use of APU, intensive of using new aircraft (lightweight, low noise and less fuel consumption)) generated by The Airport Authority, it does help a lot on the control of air quality of Hong Kong in the future.

Conclusion:

Personally, I fully support the build of the three runway as it would help a lot on the economic growth in Hong Kong and also provide business opportunities for aviation—related industries too. Besides, it also provides employment opportunities for different levels of people living at Hong Kong. In fact, most current construction projects will be end in around 2017 to 2108, the current high-salary young people may face to an issue of unemployment or salary reduction if there will be no new construction projects for them to maintain their live. By that time, it would induce many societal problems. Therefore, based on the evidence and data shown in the investigation reports, we REALLY NEED this third runway to help HONG KONG.