

MAC Strongly Protests Mainland China's Unilateral Changes to Flight Route Operations Undermining Cross-Strait Relations and Threatening Regional Flight Safety & Regional Peace and Stability

MAC Press Release No. 007

The Mainland Affairs Council (MAC) strongly protests unilateral changes to the operations of the M503 flight route and W122 and W123 connecting routes announced by mainland China on January 30. The MAC demanded that mainland China immediately cease this inappropriate action and negotiate with Taiwan promptly through existing mechanisms to ensure regional flight safety.

The MAC stated that, based on confirmed information, there has been a sharp decline in the number of mainland China's international flights compared to the pre-pandemic level, meaning there are no obstructions or congestion on the current M503, W122, or W123 routes. In addition, the existing M503 southbound offset route is more conducive to flight safety. Clearly, mainland China's claim that its activation of these routes is to alleviate the pressure of the growing number of flights and to ensure flight safety is completely inconsistent with the facts. This move has a clear political purpose, which is to unilaterally alter the status quo in the Taiwan Strait, and will seriously undermine cross-Strait relations and threaten regional peace and stability.

The MAC emphasized that flight safety is a basic requirement prioritized by the international community and the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO). Mainland China initiated operational changes to the flight routes, including the W122 and W123 connecting routes, without prior communication with Taiwan. This not only impacts the safety of Taiwan's existing flights serving Kinmen and Matsu, but also poses safety risks to all international flights using these routes. The MAC calls on relevant countries to jointly express concerns and protest mainland China's politically-motivated actions in disregard of regional flight safety.

The MAC indicated that mainland China's actions completely contradict its repeated verbal promises to respect, care for, and benefit Taiwan compatriots. The present issue marks yet another flight route alternation announced by mainland China without prior consultations. The MAC strongly protests this aggressive, unreasonable, and unilateral action, which has sparked unease across the Taiwan Strait and in the region. We demand that the other side immediately retract this irrational decision and hold consultations with Taiwan through existing mechanisms; otherwise, mainland China will have to bear all consequences of its actions.