Setting the scene: Is Hong Kong aviation hub leading or lagging the regional competition?

Witness a clash of convictions set to shape your views

James Tong
Director, Corporate Affairs, Cathay Pacific Airways

Andrew Cowen
Chief Executive Officer, HK Express

Michael Beer
Vice President, Asia Pacific Transportation, Infrastructure & Logistics Research, Citi Research, Citigroup

Hon Frankie Yick
Legislative Councillor (Transport), HKSAR

Danny Lee
Journalist, South China Morning Post

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Andrew Cowen is Chief Executive Officer for HK Express, Hong Kong’s low-fare airline. Andrew provides strategic direction for the airline, leading and growing the team through the transition from full service carrier to a low-cost carrier (LCC). With a targeted fleet number of 30 by end of 2018, Andrew is applying his skills and experience gained at 7 LCCs across the world to guide HK Express’ LCC transformation and rapid growth.

Andrew has close to 25 years’ experience in the aviation industry, including management roles at low-cost carriers in the UK, Middle East, Vietnam, the Philippines, and Japan. Prior to his appointment at HK Express, Andrew guided the establishment of Japanese LCC Peach, an Osaka-based JV between Japanese and Hong Kong interests. Between 2005 and 2009 he was CEO of Saudi Arabian airline Sama Airlines, guiding the start-up through initial concept development to funding, licence acquisition and launch. In 2009 Andrew acted as the CEO of Jazeera Airlines, based in Kuwait. Andrew started his aviation career in 1989 with British Airways. He eventually went on to manage the airline’s financial affairs for its American business unit, before being promoted to Head of Strategy for BA’s LCC, Go. Andrew graduated from City University, London in 1989 and qualified as a Chartered Management Accountant in 1992.

Hon Frankie Yick
Legislative Councillor (Transport), HKSAR

Frankie Yick joined Wharf group in 1994. He is now responsible for, inter alia, overseeing the Wharf group’s public transport and terminals portfolio. Mr. Yick has extensive industrial and management experience in the public transportation and logistics industry, and is a member of the Legislative Council of Hong Kong representing the Transport Functional Constituency. He holds directorships in various Wharf group companies. Mr. Yick is a non-executive director of Harbour Centre Development Limited (stock code: 51) and The “Star” Ferry Company, Limited and also a director of Modern Terminals Limited, all being subsidiaries of Wharf. He is also a director of Hong Kong Air Cargo Terminals Limited which is an associate of Wharf. Other than the private sector, Mr. Yick has also been appointed as a Board member of the Airport Authority Hong Kong since 1 June 2014. Mr. Yick is a chartered engineer. He holds a Bachelor Degree in Industrial Engineering awarded by the University of Hong Kong and a Master Degree in Industrial Management awarded by the University of Birmingham, United Kingdom.

James Tong
Director, Corporate Affairs, Cathay Pacific Airways

James Tong took up the position of Director Corporate Affairs at Cathay Pacific in August 2014. His main responsibility is to oversee every aspect of the airline’s activities in respect of government and stakeholders relations, corporate communications and environmental affairs.

Prior to taking up his current position, Mr. Tong was General Manager Revenue Management, a position he assumed in August 2011 with responsibility for managing the passenger revenues of both Cathay Pacific and Dragonair.

Mr. Tong joined the Cathay Pacific Group in July 1987. His other senior appointments in the Group include Chief Executive Officer of Dragonair, General Manager Sales Pearl River Delta & Hong Kong, and General Manager Commercial for Air Hong Kong.

Mr. Tong studied at the Chinese University of Hong Kong where he graduated with a BSc Hons in Computer Science.

Michael Beer
Vice President, Asia Pacific Transportation, Infrastructure & Logistics Research, Citi Research, Citigroup

Michael Beer is a Senior Equity Research Analyst at Citibank in Hong Kong, focusing on the regional transportation, infrastructure and logistics space. As an astute market observer, Michael tracks current and anticipated visitation, consumption and export trends across Asia (as well as the demand drivers in the US and Europe) to better project future earnings/listed share price performance. Further, by leveraging Citi’s regional/global presence, Michael is able to better understand the significant changes in trade/consumption patterns as well as new investment in regional infrastructure projects around the region.

Prior to joining Citi Research in Asia, Michael looked at the U.S.-based Airfreight & Logistics service providers (such as FedEx, UPS, Expeditors International and C. H. Robinson, amongst many others) as well as the North American Railroad operators, initially at Bear Stearns and subsequently Wolfe Research (an independent transportation-focused research boutique) in New York.

Michael received his BSc degree in Finance and Entrepreneurship from the University of Arizona and has subsequently completed executive education coursework at INSEAD.

Danny Lee
Journalist, South China Morning Post

Danny Lee reports for the South China Morning Post, Sunday Morning Post and SCMP.com, focusing on original reporting, investigative and breaking news for the Hong Kong newsdesk.

Writing about aviation, he focuses on issues ranging from aviation policy and regulation, flight safety, passenger experience and frequent flying. Danny was one of the lead reporters reporting on the missing Malaysia Airlines flight MH370 story delivering exclusive news, insights and interviews reporting from Kuala Lumpur.

He is a self-confessed mileage runner with a terrible carbon footprint and, to date, has spent 540 hours up in the air or the equivalent of travelling 11.5x around the globe.