

## **A Quick Guide to Organising Cargo Charter Flights to/from China**

The Civil Aviation Authority of China (CAAC) are the regulatory authority. The CAAC application system is open to both domestic and foreign carriers/flight operators, especially those transferring medical supplies for use in the fight against COVID-19. CAAC has recently streamlined the application process, which is relatively straightforward.

### **Here is a quick guide to navigating the system:**

**Step 1:** Identify your Charter operator, and contract for the job. Establish if they have a licence to operate in China. If yes, skip to Step 3. If not, move to Step 2. While applying for the operating license/permit, the operator can simultaneously submit their pre-flight plan/slot arrangement, thereby combining Steps 2 and 3 into one application.

**Step 2:** Your Charter Operator will need to apply online for an operating licence. The procedure is clear, but requires a good deal of paperwork. Your operator and their local Handling Agent should be able to process this without too much difficulty (<http://1.85.12.35:8090/faopss>). CAAC has recently reduced the time this takes to be processed and it can theoretically be done in 24 hours. However, please bear in mind that the CAAC system is currently inundated with requests and is overloaded, so best to apply early.

**Step 3:** Once the operating licence has been issued by CAAC, and assuming you have not already done this as part of Step 2, your operator should then apply for flight clearances and landing slots at the airport you are proposing to operate from. If the operator has a registered username, it MUST apply for slots via this link ([www.pre-flight.cn](http://www.pre-flight.cn)). If not, they will need to apply via telegram at:

AFTN: ZBBBZGZX

SITA: BJSZGCA

Tel: +8610-64092134 (work day), +8610-64092111 (weekend)

CAAC recently reduced the time required for this step from 5 to 7 working days to just one day in advance. However, as above, please bear in mind that CAAC are currently struggling to keep up with demand, so do not submit at the last minute.

**Step 4:** Once all the paperwork is complete and permissions are in place, it is only then that your operator can proceed with the Charter.

### **Additional issues to be aware of:**

- Assuming your crew are foreign nationals, they may require a “C” Class visa to fly into China. There are exemptions for some nationalities, but not all. Current regulations state that if the crew stay airside and are not on the ground for longer than 24 hours, they would not need a visa. However, this is not a hard and fast rule, with restrictions on some nationals. Always double-check. If a “C” class visa is required a Chinese Embassy in a third country can issue it. Allow sufficient time to obtain visas as they may not be available on the same day.
- Expect your crew to be health checked. This is currently limited to a temperature check if the crew remain airside. However, if they attempt to go landside, they may be subjected to a full COVID-19 Nucleic Acid test. It is unclear how the Chinese will respond in the event of a positive test. Our strong advice is keep the crew airside for as short a time as possible.
- Due to current tensions in US-China relations there are different rules for US-registered carriers and US flight crew.

Finally, if in doubt, speak to the team at the British Embassy Beijing who can give you the latest information, as they understand it. They can be reached via: [China.logistics@fco.gov.uk](mailto:China.logistics@fco.gov.uk)