

## **A quick guide to organising charter flights to China**

The Civil Aviation Authority of China (CAAC) are the regulatory authority. The process for arranging a charter is straightforward, but bureaucratic and takes time. Depending on whether your Charter Operator already holds an operating licence for China will dictate whether the process from contracting to delivery of service will be five or 15 days.

Here is a rough guide to the process:

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:

Step 2: Your Charter Operator will need to apply on-line for a licence to operate. The procedure is all on-line, but requires a good deal of paperwork. Your operator and their local Handling Agent should be able to process this without too much difficulty. However, once filed, the CAAC may take up to a week to process the application, returning with questions and requests for additional information, which will further delay the application. Anticipate that this will take seven to ten days.

Step 3: Once the operating licence has been issued by CAAC, you can then apply for flight clearances and landing slots at the airport you are proposing to operate from. This process is also on-line and should be undertaken by the Operator in conjunction with their Handling Agent. The process is straightforward, but can take up to four-five days to complete.

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. But this is not a hard and fast rule, with restrictions on some nationals. Rule of thumb: always double-check. If a “C” class visa is required, then this can be obtained from a Chinese Embassy in a third country. Allow sufficient time to obtain these as it 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 that test proving positive. Our strong advice is keep the crew airside for as short a time as possible
- Due to the current scratchy relations between China and the US, 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 very latest information as they understand it. They can be reached via: [China.logistics@fco.gov.uk](mailto:China.logistics@fco.gov.uk)