

## IATA revises HK's aviation recovery forecast

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The International Air Transport Association (IATA) has revised its outlook for Hong Kong's aviation sector recovery following the reopening of Mainland China's borders in January.

The aviation body, which represents 290 airlines, said that passenger traffic may return to pre-pandemic levels by the end of 2024, 3 years earlier than previous projections.

It said that this revision brings Hong Kong in line with expectations for a faster recovery in the Asia Pacific.

The association also welcomed the Hong Kong government's efforts to address the city's manpower shortage in the aviation sector.

IATA Director General Willie Walsh said: "The situation is looking bright for Hong

Kong. China's earlier than expected reopening is providing a much-needed boost to passenger recovery. By the end of 2024, we expect to see Hong Kong's traffic return to pre-crisis levels.

"And it is encouraging to see the Hong Kong government preparing for this with measures to ensure that the workers needed to support the recovery are available."

The positive forecast is good news for Hong Kong International Airport and its partners

The Hong Kong government introduced a labour importation scheme to ramp up the airport workforce by 6,300 workers, most from Mainland China.

While demand for air travel has been strong, airlines in Hong Kong have been hit by worker scarcity and supply chain issues.

Walsh added: "The last three years have been devastating for the aviation sector. As we look ahead to the recovery and prepare for future growth, it is important that the entire Hong Kong aviation community, including airlines, airport, regulator, and government, work together to address the challenges and are well prepared to tap on future opportunities.

"I look forward to being in Hong Kong in August to meet with various partners and engage in fruitful discussions."

IATA and Airport Authority Hong Kong have meanwhile teamed up to organise the Hong Kong Aviation Day from 2 to 3 August.

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