Chinese domestic air travel recovery gathers pace, according to Air4casts

The gradual recovery in Chinese domestic air travel is gathering pace, according to analysis from Air4casts, published on 30 March.

Recent Air4casts analysis, reported by this publication indicated Haikou Meilan and Phoenix Sanya International Airports, which handled 23.1 million and 19.9 million passengers travelling to and from the Mainland in 2019, respectively, were set to take advantage of China’s grip on containing the spread of the coronavirus (Covid-19).

Between 24 March and 25 March 2020, total arriving and departing Chinese passengers increased to 496,000 passengers (25 March) from 417,000 the previous day. This represents an increase of 6.3%.

The rise, however, does not offset the significant -73.4% and -67.1% drops in Chinese passenger traffic on 24 March and 25 March 2020, respectively, compared with the same dates last year.

Air4casts said: “The 6.3% improvement day-on-day is encouraging as is the announcement that Wuhan Airport will re-open on 8 April.”

WEEK-ON-WEEK PAX INCREASES AT HAIKOU AIRPORT

Weekly passenger data from Haikou Airport on Hainan Island, also suggests things are improving. In each of the past three weeks, the airport has reported steady week-on-week passenger number increases.

In the week ending 11 March 2020, arriving and departing Chinese passengers amounted to 138,000 at Haikou Airport. This number rose to 151,000 for the following week ended 18 March 2020. By the end of the week after that (26 March) the total number of arriving and departing passengers had reached 166,000.

“Numbers are still obviously significantly down on last year, but the cumulative year-to-date -54% drop is considerably better than the huge decreases that occurred throughout February.”

China’s hotel occupancy rates have also steadily increased in the period 26 February (12.2%) to 18 March (21.2%).

The company concluded: “Each of these small measurements indicate the start of a gradual improvement after plummeting February data. Domestic air travel at the big Chinese Airports was down over 85% percentage points in February compared with last year which makes last weeks 67% drop a welcome improvement.”

* The Air4casts bulletin distributed on 30 March looks at a range of indicators from China which show there are clear signs of a gradual recovery in domestic air travel.

All tables courtesy of Air4casts.