

Sichuan Airlines to partner with Viasat and China Satcom



Sichuan Airlines is China's first domestic carrier to partner with Viasat and China Satcom

[Sichuan Airlines](#), [Viasat](#) and AeroSat Link (a subsidiary of [China Satcom](#)) announced today that the airline has selected Viasat's inflight connectivity technology and equipment for installation on its A320 aircraft. When in service, the Viasat terminal installed on the aircraft will connect to China Satcom's Ka-band satellite network and AeroSat Link's digital IFC service to provide IFC service to passengers and crew.

In a joint statement, China Satcom and ASL stated: "We are very pleased to partner with Viasat. The combination of its cutting-edge technology, reliable equipment, and rich experience with China Satcom's powerful high-throughput Ka-band satellite network enables us to provide Sichuan Airlines an IFC experience comparable to that on the ground. We will provide high-speed, reliable, and excellent network services to more airlines and users."

The combination of Viasat's IFC equipment, China Satcom's satellite network and AeroSat Link's digital services will enable video streaming, internet browsing, messaging, social media, business applications and more to each connected device on these equipped aircraft. "Enhancing in-flight connectivity is a key part of furthering Sichuan Airlines' position as an industry leader in China and reflects how the carrier is embracing passenger demand for staying connected in the air while continuing to enrich the onboard digital experience," the December 15 release said.

China's aviation sector has been growing very quickly. According to the Civil Aviation Administration of China (CAAC), 2021 ended with approximately 4,000 active commercial aircraft operated by

Chinese carriers, of which just 842 offered onboard Wi-Fi, most of which only allowed streaming onboard content. While China's domestic aviation market was already the largest in the world in 2020, the IATA estimates China will support 1.6 billion annual passengers in 2037 (up from 0.6 billion in 2018), the vast majority of whom will board with internet-enabled personal electronic devices (PEDs).

"This model is focused on resource integration, business innovation, technology empowerment, and operative efficiency. The objective is to improve airline operation efficiency and customer service quality and create an enjoyable IFC experience for passengers. With the joint efforts of Viasat and AeroSat Link, we believe that Sichuan Airlines will continue to launch aviation internet products with a better experience and better service so that more passengers can enjoy faster and more convenient IFC services on Sichuan Airlines," the airline stated.

Viasat, China Satcom and AeroSat Link will each maintain its own intellectual property and will operate its equipment using a multi-layered approach to network services.

"Sichuan Airlines continuously seeks ways to enhance the onboard customer experience, and we are proud to be a part of the airline's pioneering effort to deliver high-quality, high-speed in-flight internet within China," said Don Buchman, VP and GM, Commercial Aviation, Viasat, Inc.