

Preparing for the A380

1. Overview

Airbus Industries' A380 has a wing span that is 15.4 meters wider than the B747-400 and a fuselage that is 2 meters longer. It can seat 525 passengers under normal configuration, 25% more than the B747-400 and can board and deplane more passengers simultaneously.

At 560 tonnes, the maximum take off weight of the A380-800 is 40% heavier than the B747-400 at 397 tonnes.

Comparison

	A380-800	B747-400
Length	72.7m	70.6m
Width	79.8m	64.4m
Height	24.1m	19.4m
Standard seating capacity	525	416
Max. take-off weight (MTOW)	560t	397t
Cruising mach number	0.85	0.85
Range	15,200km	13,450km

2. A380 at Narita Airport

Discussions on the use of A380 between NAA, Airbus Industries and the airlines began in 2003. They formed the foundations for the following facility modifications at Narita Airport.

① Runways, taxiways

The width of Narita Airport's taxiways and two runways and the separation between runway and taxiway and taxiway and taxiway meet ICAO Code F standards and do not prevent Narita from accommodating the A380.

② Aircraft stands

Two A380-compatible gates in Terminal 1 and one stand in the Maintenance Area are already operational.

In future, a total of eight gates in Terminal 1 and two fixed stands in Terminal 2, along with four stands for cargo and two for maintenance, will be capable of accommodating the A380.

③ Boarding bridges

Upper deck boarding bridges connect directly from existing fixed boarding bridges to the upper deck of the A380 (approximately 2.8 meters above existing boarding gates). This allows passengers to board and disembark easily and improve services to disabled passengers and also to passengers in premier seating classes.

NAA has one upper deck boarding bridge operational with further gates to be made available as required by the airlines.

④ Baggage claim

With the larger number of passengers per flight, arrival baggage will also increase and, therefore, baggage claim facilities need to be expanded. However, because of space restrictions, Narita is looking at operational strategies to resolve this such as using two conveyors.

⑤ GPUs

The A380 has four GPU connection points for power and four for air conditioning and requires almost double the capacity needed by aircraft like the B747. This means that there are not enough fixed GPUs and some power and electricity is supplied by vehicle-mounted units.

3. Airlines operating the A380

Singapore Airlines made its maiden A380 flight into Narita on May 20, 2008. Air France, Lufthansa and Korean Air also have plans to introduce the A380.

