Singapore Ops Update: Two New Rules to Know Before You Go

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If you're planning ops to Singapore this year, expect it to be **busier than ever.** Traffic into Singapore exceeded previous records last year, and slots and parking are already harder to secure than they used to be.

In addition to the capacity challenges, there have also been **changes to immigration and operator procedures** that can catch you out if they're not on your radar. They're not complicated, but they do mean doing things earlier than before. These include the new **No-Boarding Directive (NBD)** for passengers and updated requirements around the **Singapore Foreign Air Operator Certificate (FAOC).**

NBD – No-Boarding Directive

Effective 30 Jan 2026, all operators (private or commercial) must check passengers in advance for a clearance (or refusal) to enter Singapore.

You can check the official announcement on this here. The process sounds more complicated than it really is. In the past, passengers who were denied entry would only be identified **after arrival**, once immigration determined they were ineligible to enter Singapore. This could be due to a lack of visa, being assessed as an undesirable or prohibited traveller, or a red flag arising from their SG Arrival Card submission.

Previously, the system waited until the passenger was already on Singapore soil, which was always somewhat counter-intuitive. From 30 January, however, an operator **must receive confirmation that a passenger is cleared to enter (effectively a green light).** If you carry a passenger into Singapore without this clearance (even if that passenger ultimately would have been approved) the operator is liable for significant penalties under the Immigration Act.

So what do you need to do?

As the operator, your role is actually very simple. You must submit your general declaration / passenger manifest to your agent or handler ahead of departure. Current guidance is **no later than two hours before departure**. This allows the handler to submit the passenger details via a dedicated ICA portal.

That portal will return one of two responses: **“OK to Board”** or **“Do Not Board.”**

The key takeaway is this: **you must receive one of these two responses before departure**. In this case, no news does *not* mean good news.

The upside is that operators do not need access to the portal themselves (and cannot access it anyway). **Everything is handled by your agent.** Your only responsibility is to ensure the passenger manifest is submitted in good time before departure.

FAOC – Singapore Foreign Air Operators Certificate

In Singapore, **any foreign AOC holder** (Part 121 or Part 135) must apply for a FAOC – a local validation of your AOC – via the Flight SG portal.

Allow at least several weeks for approval. Initial FAOCs are typically issued with a relatively short validity period (often around 3-6 months), with longer validity possible on renewal. In practice, **first-time applications can take longer than expected**, so plan well ahead.

The FAOC itself is not new. What *has* changed is the introduction of ANR-129, now in force, which **replaces the previous FOSP (Foreign Operator Surveillance Programme)** and associated permit rules.

So what does ANR-129 change?

Any aircraft listed on an AOC must now hold **both a valid FAOC and a permit** to operate into Singapore. CAAS no longer exempts ferry, positioning, or “private” flights if the aircraft is on an AOC.

The only operations exempt from the FAOC requirement are true private aircraft (Part 91 / CAT 2) and certain emergency situations. Overflights are also exempt. **This means that any AOC aircraft (even on a maintenance visit or owner-only flight) must still hold a FAOC.**

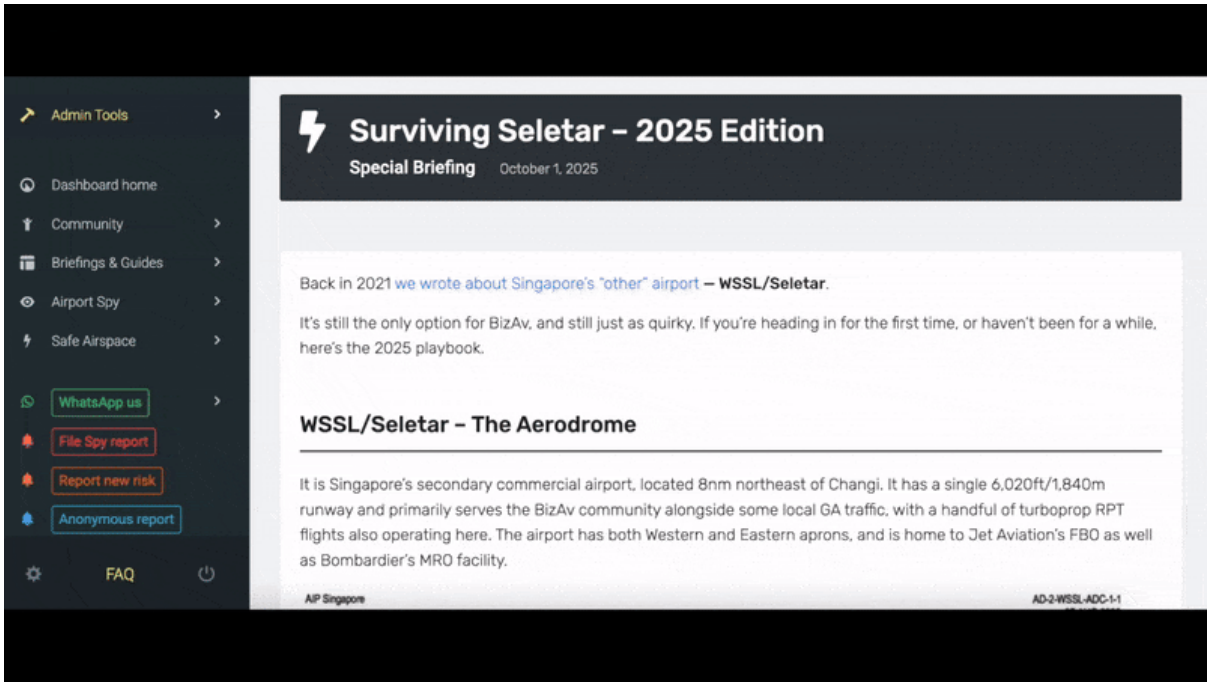
CAAS is actively enforcing this. **Ramp checks are routine, and operators may see increased scrutiny around FAOC issuance and renewal.** Ground handlers are also checking FAOC status before confirming slots.

The FAOC application process is well documented on the CAAS website, so the key takeaway is simple: **apply early and expect admin overhead.**

For a real-world example of **how this works in practice**, see this report from an OPSGROUP member.

More info on Singapore ops

If you’re flying a bizjet into Singapore, **WSSL/Seletar is your only option.** Our recent guide covers the key survival tips – from managing the visual-only arrivals to dealing with limited parking and other quirks that can catch you out. **OPSGROUP members can access the guide** via your members dashboard here.


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Surviving Seletar – 2025 Edition
Special Briefing
October 1, 2025
Back in 2021 we wrote about Singapore's "other" airport — WSSL/Seletar.
It's still the only option for BizAv, and still just as quirky. If you're heading in for the first time, or haven't been for a while, here's the 2025 playbook.
WSSL/Seletar – The Aerodrome
It is Singapore's secondary commercial airport, located 8nm northeast of Changi. It has a single 6,020ft/1,840m runway and primarily serves the BizAv community alongside some local GA traffic, with a handful of turboprop RPT flights also operating here. The airport has both Western and Eastern aprons, and is home to Jet Aviation's FBO as well as Bombardier's MRO facility.
AIP Singapore
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