

## **CHAPTER IV**

### ***THE REASONS SINGAPORE TAKING OVER AIR TRAFFIC CONTROL***

#### ***ABOVE RIAU AND NATUNA ISLANDS FROM INDONESIA***

This chapter will be discussing the reason why Indonesia cannot take over the ATC in Riau and Natuna Islands from Singapore. The analyses will consist of geography factor, technology factor, military factor, and other factor that are relating each other.

##### **A. History and Geographical Factor**

As the impact of the broad area of Indonesia, Indonesia needed a very good technology to cover all of the space in Indonesia. Unfortunately, due to the lack fund post-independence era, Indonesia could not have it. Indonesia thought that there were other important problems than that. At the first meeting that was held by International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) in 1946. ICAO thought that it would be necessary to conduct a professional ATC in Malay strait due to the numbers of flight that passed through Malay strait. ICAO invited Indonesia to join the meeting with British colonial in Singapore. Unfortunately, Indonesia could not send a representative because Indonesia still struggled for its independence. Thus, ICAO gave the ATC in Malay strait to Singapura or officially to British colonial.

Indonesian territory also was changing time by time. Indonesia had some agreements with Dutch that made Indonesian territory was changing. There were three agreements that had a very significant effect on the changing of Indonesian territory; Linggarjati Agreement, Renville Agreement, and Round Table Conference. The agreements made Indonesian borders were

unstable. Even Sumatera, an islands where this dispute happens, did not include as Indonesian border because of Renville Agreement.

Post- independence, Indonesia tried to secure its archipelago whether in sea or on air. Indonesia made some agreements with Malaysia and Singapore. Singapore tried to make a proposal to Indonesia to secure the ATC around Malay strait. Through Regional Air Service I (RAN I), Singapore proposed it to Indonesia. Indonesia agreed so Indonesia did not have to spend more efforts to secure this area. Indonesia still got advantage on Regional Air Service Charge (RANS Charge), a price for airlines for passing this area.

Indonesia also made an agreement with Malaysia called *Hukum Rejim Negara Nusantara* in early 1982. This agreement allowed Malaysia to connect Western Malaysia and Eastern Malaysia over Natuna Islands without any charge. And in return, Malaysia acknowledged this region to Indonesia.

In late 1982, UNCLOS about archipelagic state was signed by UN. This allowed all archipelagic states to secure their naval territory. This gave an advantage to Indonesia because Indonesian border was determined from the most outside Indonesian sea shores. All sea inside the border was considered as Indonesian area although the sea was located more than 12 mile from beach. Indonesia also did not have to make any agreement with neighbor state to secure its area.

Post UNCLOS 1982, Indonesia tried to regain the airspace areas above Riau and Natuna Islands through an agreement called RAN II with Singapore. Unfortunately, Indonesia failed to regain these areas since it was rejected by ICAO. ICAO saw that Indonesia had not fulfilled the

qualification to conduct FIR over Riau and Natuna Islands. Indonesia did not have any sufficient technology and independent institution.

The conflict between Indonesia and Singapore about FIR continued for many years. Indonesia proposed a working paper on flight plan over Natuna Islands to ICAO. Unfortunately, Singapore also proposed a counter paper to ICAO. Later, ICAO gave this problem to be solved by Indonesia and Singapore. At the end, Indonesia and Singapore made an agreement called RAN II that will be discussed in institutional factor.

### **B. Institutional Factor**

At that time, Indonesia did not have an independent institution to control and maintain its ATC. Indonesian government still relied on Angkasa Pura, an institution which responsible for airport management in Indonesia as explained in Chapter II. Angkasa Pura did not have qualification for managing ATC in Indonesia. Also, Angkasa Pura had so many task to manage the Indonesian airports. As the result, Indonesian Air Traffic System management was not reliable to control the Malay strait. It became worse, the diplomatic position of Indonesia became worse since Indonesia did not have a good civil radar in Soekarno Hatta airport to control Air Traffic System in Malay strait. Thus, Indonesia had to give the Air Traffic Control in ABC sector or above Riau and Natuna Islands to Singapore.

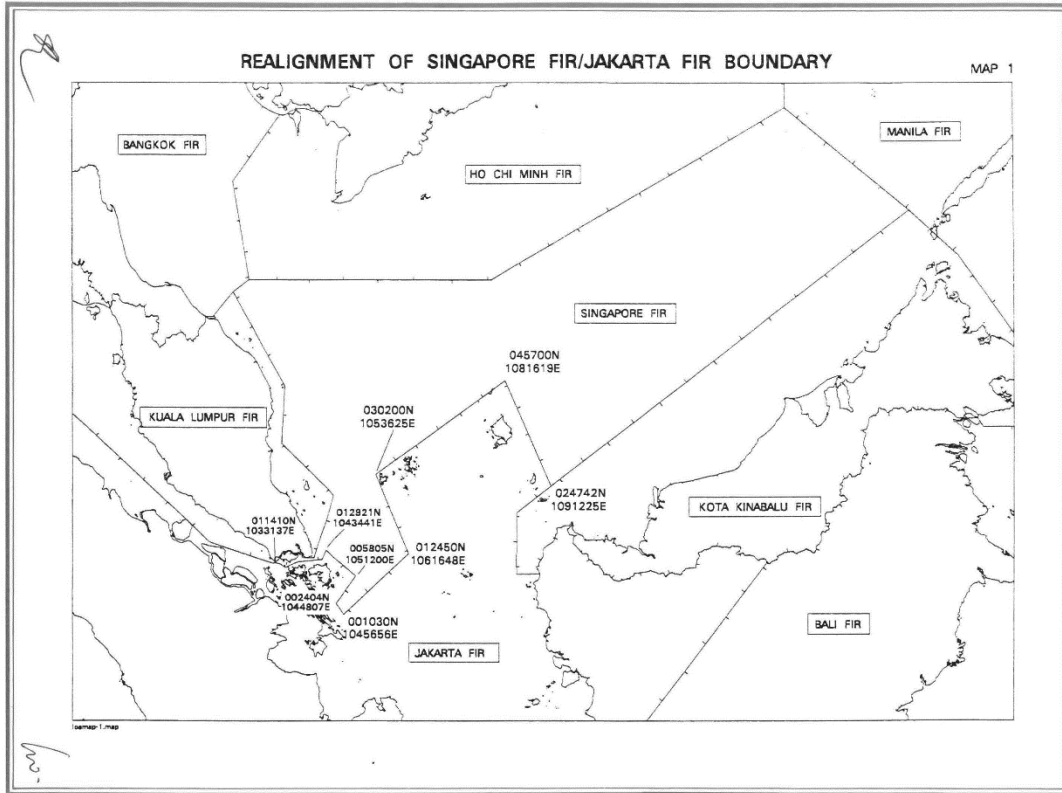
To ease the job description of Angkasa Pura, Indonesia decided to give the air traffic management over 5000 feet to Singapore. It made the work of Angkasa Pura easier. Angkasa Pura only needed to guide a plane which wanted to landing in Batam and Riau Islands airports which that duty is usually done by local airports. This type of cooperation is justified by ICAO as the main international aviation organization in the world. This practice made Indonesia did not

need to spend more money to build a sufficient infrastructure to manage this area. Indonesia even got more money because of Regional Air Service (RANS Charge). RANS Charge is a charge that an airline has to pay as a return for using and passing through a state territory, in this case is Indonesian territory. RANS Charge over ABC area was collected by CAAS<sup>1</sup> and later will be given to Indonesian government through Department of Transportation of Indonesia.

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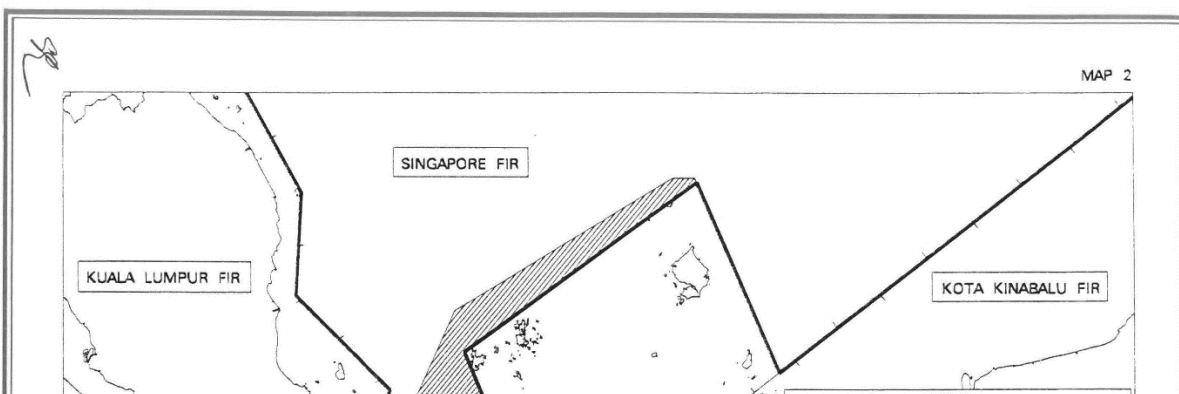
<sup>1</sup> Civil Aviation Authority of Singapore

Figure 4. 1. . The Area of Flight Information Region between Indonesia and Singapore



Source: Agreement Between The Government of Indonesia and The Government Of Singapore on The Realignment of Singapore Flight Information Region and Jakarta Flight Information Region 1995.

Figure 4. 2 . The Area of Flight Information Region between Indonesia and Singapore



Source: Agreement Between The Government of Indonesia and The Government Of Singapore on The Realignment of Singapore Flight Information Region and Jakarta Flight Information Region 1995

The taking over of ATC from Indonesia to Singapura continued for over 50 years. Indonesia delegated Singapore to conduct the Air Traffic Control management to Singapore. This allowed Singapore to control all flights which pass this ATC. Every flight from Batam and Riau needs to ask permission to take off to Changi Air Traffic Control.

### **C. Technological Factor**

It is not fully because of Singapore, in other perspective, Indonesia made a mistake in this problem. In national interest by Jack C Plano, territorial integrity is very important for a state, especially a state that has wide territory like Indonesia. It is imperative to integrate all the territory in Indonesia whether it is land territory, sea, or airspace to create a fully authorized territory. Indonesia, for a long time, did not do what it supposed to do, that is to integrate its territory. At the beginning, it was excusable to give ABC sector above Riau and Natuna Island to Singapore due to lack of radar technology. However, as the time went by, Indonesia did not

solve this problem yet and continued to delegate the management of ATC in ABC sector to Singapore.

Technology became problem of Indonesia for some years. Civilian and military radars in Indonesia were left behind compared to other states in South-East Asia. Radar in Soekarno-Hatta International Airport, as the main gate for entering Indonesian territory, in some occasion was off due to the lack of electricity supply. In fact, the radar in Soekarno-Hatta International Airport had to guide so many planes that cross over the western sector of ATC in Indonesia in cruise mode. Based on the data, it was noted since 2010 there were seven accidents of power failure that made the radar in Soekarno-Hatta International Airport stopped working. The latest of power failure that happened in Soekarno-Hatta International Airport was in 2012. Same problems also happened in military radars. As explained in chapter II, it is obvious that military radar cannot oversee Indonesia fully 24 hours a day.

#### **D. Military Factor**

The ATC control of Singapore in Indonesia also makes Singapore get an 'extra territory'. As a small state, Singapore's area is only 719,1 km<sup>2</sup>. This limited area makes it is very hard to fly a fighter jet as explained in chapter III. Singapore, based on the agreement, has a right to control the air traffic until Natuna Islands near South China Sea.

Singapore, as a small territory state, of course saw this as an opportunity, this could extend the area of Singapore. In the September 21<sup>st</sup>, 1995, Singapore made two agreements with Indonesian government, the extending of Flight Information Region and Military Training Area. In FIR agreement, it was stated that if Indonesia wanted to conduct a military exercise in ABC sector, Indonesia should notify the Singaporean government. While, MTA stated about Indonesia

allowed Singapore to conduct its military exercise in Indonesian area. The area that usually became a military training area of Singapore can be seen as the figure below.

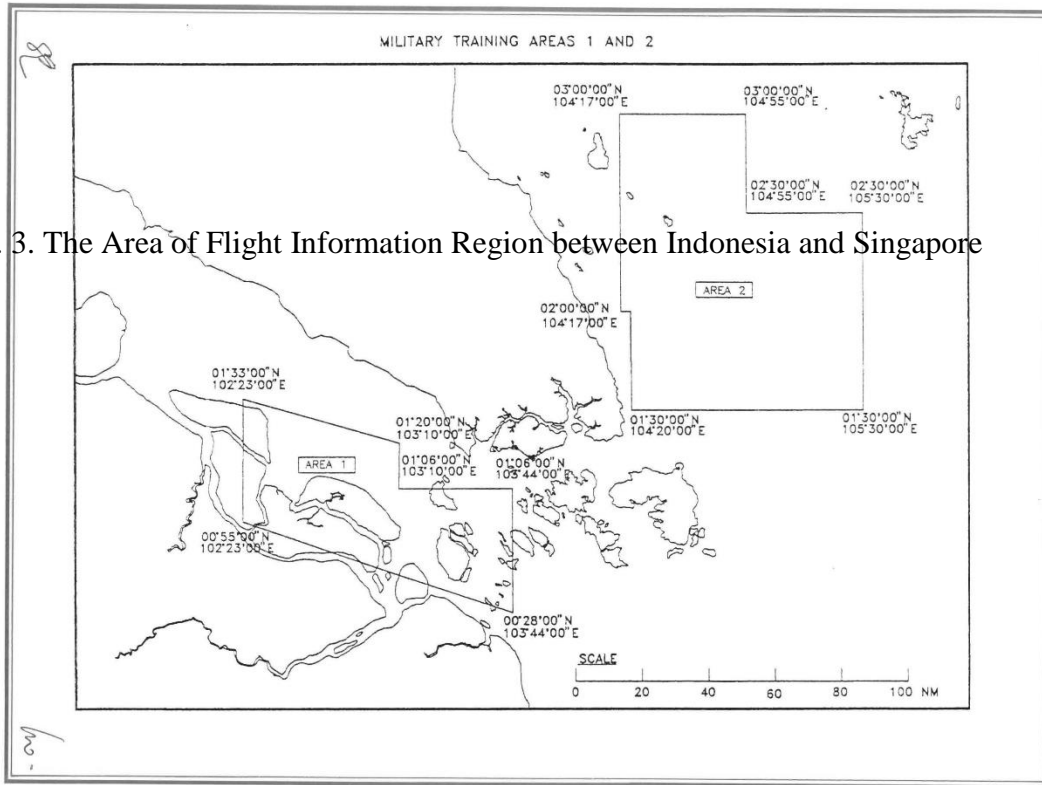


Figure 4. 3. The Area of Flight Information Region between Indonesia and Singapore

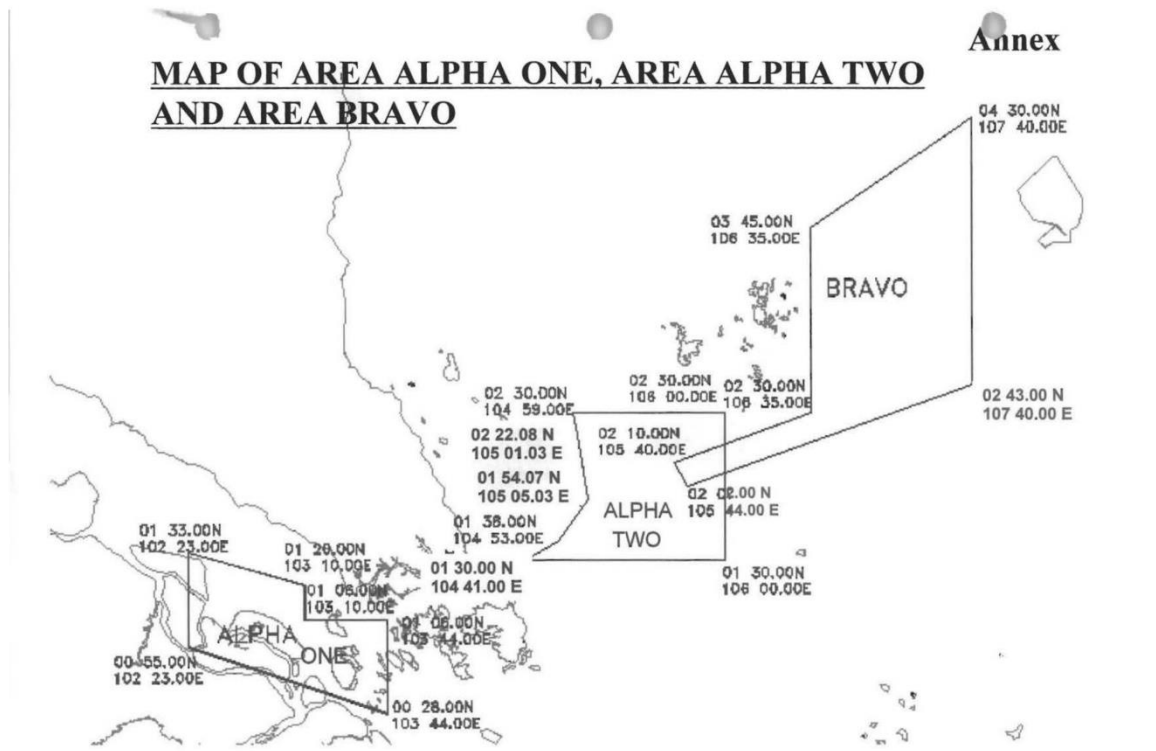
Source : Agreement Between The Government Of The Republic Of Indonesia And The Government of The Republic of Singapore On Military Training In Areas 1 And 2 1995

These two agreements, at a glance, give Indonesia two disadvantages. The first was Indonesia needed to report Singapore to conduct a military exercise inside Indonesian area. Second, Indonesia provide some its areas to Singapore to conduct military exercise. In Military Training Area 1, it is clearly above Riau Islands.



Those agreements were continued in 2006. Indonesian Government and Singapore government signed the Defense Cooperation Agreement. This agreement stated that Singapore and Indonesia would conduct Joint Military Exercise, military personnel exchange, intelligent information exchange, technology exchange, etc. Singapore also could use Indonesian area to test its military armaments. Indonesia allowed Singapore to conduct military exercise in its territory which called Alpha One, Alpha Two, and Bravo. Alpha One would be used by RSAF to test its aircrafts, technical handling, and training flight. Alpha Two would be used by RSAF to conduct military training and exercise. Bravo would be used by RSN to conduct naval maneuvers and exercises including missile live firing test. Singapore also could conduct a Joint Military Exercise with other states in those areas.

Figure 4. 4. Map of Area Alpha One, Alpha Two, and Bravo Area



Source: Agreement Between The Government of The Republic of Indonesia And The Government of Republic of The Singapore On Defense Cooperation.