

~~Aircraft tests~~ ~~under review~~ at Kai Tak

By Michael Smith

THE government will review airline maintenance procedures at Kai Tak Airport following a compensation payout to Lufthansa Airlines for damage caused to its aircraft during a high-power engine test.

Legislators yesterday approved payment of a \$5 million out-of-court settlement to Lufthansa after the government accepted liability for damage when sections of the Kai Tak tarmac flew off and damaged the tailplane of an aircraft during an engine test in October 1990.

But members of the Legislative Council's Finance Committee questioned the government's liability and called for a review of the system used for allowing aircraft to test their engines at the overcrowded airport.

Chief Secretary Anson Chan said the government would conduct a review and consider asking airlines to sign an exemption clause excluding the government from responsibility if planes were damaged during engine tests.

The accident occurred in October 1990 when a Lufthansa Boeing 747 was directed to an area not designed for engine runs because the normal testing areas were busy.