Intersection of Airways A593 - B576/Y722 & Y711 (also known as the ‘AKARA Corridor’)
This is not possible when a controller does not have radio contact with, or control over, all the aircraft operating in the affected airspace underneath.

Obviously, this would not be an issue if the control of all the traffic at the crossing points of A593 with B576/Y722 and Y711 was vested in a single air traffic unit, as is normally the case.

The published outcomes of the Twenty-Second Meeting of the Asia-Pacific Regional Airspace Safety Monitoring Advisory Group (RASMAG/22, 10-13 July 2017, Bangkok) contained the following observations:

The safety assessment of the AKARA Corridor in the southern portion of the Incheon Flight Information Region (FIR) noted that due to the high opposite direction passing traffic frequency, only one vertical deviation per annum of more than 0.125 minutes (approximately 7.5 seconds) would breach the Corridor Target Level of Safety (TLS), highlighting the extreme sensitivity of the airspace to any Large Height Deviation (LHD) event. Moreover, operational factors which may contribute to deviations were noted as including the:

a. Operation of several Area Control Centers (ACCs) in the same portion of airspace on different frequencies, which is non-compliant with Annex 11;

b. Possible presence of non-Reduced Vertical Separation Minimum (RVSM) aircraft;

c. Possibility of turbulence (reported regularly southwest and south of Japan), either not allowing adequate height-keeping, or necessitating a descent or climb;

d. Lack of any emergency descent procedures;

e. Possibility of non- or under-reporting (in some cases due to lack of awareness of all traffic due to the Flight Level Allocation Scheme (FLAS));

f. Lack of voice communication link between Shanghai and Incheon ACCs (including Air Traffic Services (ATS) Inter-Facility Datalink Communication – AIDC); and

g. Inconsistent use of Strategic Lateral Offset Procedure (SLOP).

Based on the above, The Fifth Meeting of the Asia Pacific Air Navigation Planning and Implementation Regional Group (APANPIRG) Air Traffic Management Sub-Group (ATM/SG/5, Bangkok, 31 July-04 August 2017) noted that China, ROK, Japan, and ICAO should endeavour to normalize ICAO standard compliance within the AKARA Corridor.

ATM/SG/5 urged that until the AKARA Corridor arrangements were such that the safety risks were acceptable and compliant with the ICAO standards and relevant States should consider short-term measures.

Operators should note the above information and know that IATA is committed to resolving the situation by continuing to work with the relevant States, ICAO, and operators.
Figure 1 Shanghai ACC hands traffic off to Fukuoka ACC at SADLI on AS93 and vice versa. Incheon ACC controls traffic North/southbound on Y711/Y722. Chart ©Lido (2017)