



INFORMATION BULLETIN 2020-04

Issue 01

Date of Issue: March 08, 2020

SUBJECT:

OPERATIONAL RECOMMENDATION FOR THE NOVEL CORONAVIRUS ('SARS-COV-2') OUTBREAK

REFERENCE PUBLICATIONS:

See Appendix

REASON:

Based on the reports published by the World Health Organization (WHO) and the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) related to the novel coronavirus ('**SARS-CoV-2**') outbreak, the GCAA is issuing this **Information Bulletin** to provide guidance to Aircraft Operators and Airport operators with the objectives of:

- a) reducing the risk of the spreading of the virus;
- b) adopting coordinated approach with all involved international and federal organizations to combat the spreading of the virus.

The GCAA remains actively engaged with local and international organizations and closely monitors developments related to the SARS-CoV-2 outbreak.

Note: Affected countries are, in addition to the PRC, other countries where human-to-human transmission of the 2019-nCoV infection was confirmed without the history of travel to the PRC, in accordance with the latest Situation Report as published by WHO.

INFORMATION:

- a) Aircraft Operators and Airport Operators should implement and maintain a system for managing communicable disease (e.g. acute respiratory infections) in aviation with the aim to reduce the current risk of the transmission of SARS-CoV-2.
- b) The above system should, as applicable, ensure that:
 - 1) recommendations issued by WHO, ICAO, IATA, and ACI are taken into consideration;
 - 2) they develop and disseminate promotional materials to the attention of their personnel and passengers to increase their awareness and preparedness to cope up with a person suspected with SARS-CoV-2, in particular information to crew members and personnel regarding the management of a case with acute respiratory infection on board an aircraft or within their vicinity;
 - 3) sufficient equipment, products and procedures are available to personnel while on duty to detect SARS-CoV-2 cases and protect themselves and others from the spread, such as, UPK, masks, disinfectant gel or gloves; Aircraft operators performing passenger flights to or from the affected countries are recommended to be equipped with one or more Universal Precaution Kits



(UPKs). Such kits may be used to protect crew members who are assisting potentially infectious cases of suspected communicable disease and in cleaning up and correctly discarding any potential infectious contents;

- 4) crew obliged to have a lay-over in any other affected areas with the necessary and continuous information and material as recommended by the local authorities for their inhabitants. Special consideration should be taken when rostering crews on immune suppressant medicine to affected countries;
 - 5) a sufficient quantity of potable water is available in the water tank of aircraft prior to departure;
 - 6) while on the ground with passengers onboard, the maximum time without air conditioning/ventilation should be less than 30 minutes;
 - 7) active collaboration is established with all local stakeholders including: Border Control, Ground Handlers, Health Authorities, etc. to:
 - (i) Reduce the importation and local transmission of the virus;
 - (ii) Proactively establish contact with public health authorities prior to encountering a suspected case and provide support in passenger tracing and epidemiological investigation in the event of flights where the COVID-19 has been confirmed; and
 - (iii) Clean-up, disinfect aircraft, facilities, etc. and correctly discard any potential infectious contents;
 - 8) at any point of time, passengers and personnel can freely self-report if they feel ill;
 - 9) their staff are trained and encouraged to proactively identify persons having signs and symptoms indicative of acute respiratory infections, and having been in the affected areas or in contact with people potentially infected with SARS-CoV-2 or with people arriving from an affected area within 14 days prior to onset of symptoms. In the event of such a symptomatic passenger being identified, the personnel should be encouraged to:
 - (i) Use the health part of the aircraft general declaration to register the health information on-board and submit it to the Point of Entry health authorities when required by a State's representative;
 - (ii) Report to the destination aerodrome that they have on board a passenger presenting symptoms suggestive of COVID-19 and follow the instructions received;
 - (iii) Ask the passengers to fill in the Passenger Locator Card (PLC) forms in order to collect information (see Note below) regarding the passengers' position in the aircraft as well as other information regarding their immediate travel plans and contact details. The information is intended to be held by public health authorities in accordance with applicable law and is to be used only for authorized public health purposes. A passenger locator form can be downloaded [here](#); and
- Note:** For an aircraft where the deck is divided in sections using rigid separation walls, the priority is to collect the PLC from all the passengers sitting in the same sections with the suspected case and from the ones using the same lavatory facilities that may have been used by the suspected case.



- (iv) Follow the basic principles to reduce the general risk of transmission of acute respiratory infections as presented by WHO in their Travel Advice; and
- 10) In case of a person presenting symptoms compatible with those of an acute respiratory infection a medical face mask is provided for the symptomatic passenger or personnel to reduce the risk of spreading the potential 2019-nCoV infection and try to minimize the contact between the suspected infected person and others. If a face mask is not available or cannot be provided, ask the suspected person to cover their mouth and nose with tissues when coughing or sneezing until other precautionary measures are taken. In addition, where possible and when in the aircraft, the individual air supply nozzle for the symptomatic person should be turned off in order not to exacerbate the spread of droplets;
- 11) Staff should take protective measures while dealing with a medical emergency on a person presenting symptoms compatible with those of an acute respiratory infection to prevent contracting an infection while saving the person's life;
- 12) The following actions are considered while handling the flights arriving from affected areas:
 - (i) Personnel involved in the handling of the relevant flights are instructed on the procedures for detecting a person presenting with an infectious disease on board an aircraft and equipped with respiratory masks, rubber gloves and hand disinfectants;
 - (ii) Special carpets, treated with a disinfectant solution are installed on the stairs. All passengers step on a special carpet before getting to the airport terminal;
 - (iii) The airport is to reserve special aircraft parking spaces. In case of detecting a person with signs of infectious disease on board, an officer-on-duty of the sanitary-quarantine unit subordinated to the Ministry of Health, gives an instruction to tow the aircraft to the designated sanitary parking place;
 - (iv) In different Airport areas were located bins for used personal protective equipment: gauze facial masks, rubber gloves etc;
 - (v) Vehicles, used for handling the flights arriving from the countries with the complicated epidemiological situation are decontaminated with special disinfectant after operation; and
 - (vi) Airport medical service specialists are prepared to assist the officer-on-duty of the sanitary-quarantine unit in case of detection of people suffering from symptoms of the infection.

CONTACT:

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APPENDIX

GCAA:

- **SAFETY DECISION 2020-01**

National Crisis & Emergency Management Authority (NCEMA):

- <https://www.ncema.gov.ae/en/media-center/awareness-messages/mers-cov.aspx>

European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC):

- <https://www.ecdc.europa.eu/en/novel-coronavirus-china>

World Health Organization (WHO):

- <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/advice-for-public>
- <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/situation-reports/>
- https://www.who.int/ihr/ports_airports/locator_card/en/

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC):

- <https://www.cdc.gov/quarantine/air/managing-sick-travelers/commercial-aircraft/infection-control-cabin-crew.html>

International Air Transport Association (IATA):

- Emergency Response Plan: A template Emergency Response Plan for public health emergencies has been developed. While every airline will have its overall crisis response plan, this provides specific guidance and checklists for dealing with public health emergencies.
- IATA guidelines in the event of a public health emergency are available on the IATA website. Of particular interest are: Cabin Announcement Scripts, Universal Precaution Kit Contents, Cabin Air Quality Briefing, Guidance for Maintenance Crew, Cargo and Baggage Handlers, Cabin Crew, Cleaning Crew, and Passenger Agents; and a standard Passenger Locator Form that has been endorsed by ICAO and WHO.
- Border Control and Government Measures: With the increase in confirmed COVID-19 cases, many Governments are expanding entry requirements. These are updated on Timatic as and when announced and verified by the IATA team. The information can also be accessed publicly via the IATA Travel Centre. Beyond border control requirements, many Governments have introduced other measures that may have an impact on airlines operations and/or passengers. For the easy reference of airlines, IATA has captured these measures to the best of our knowledge at: <https://www.iata.org/ncov-measures>

Airport Council International (ACI):

- <https://aci.aero/news/2020/01/24/aci-world-issues-guidance-on-global-communicable-disease-transmission/>