



ICAO VDS gains acceptance for global health proof verification

For immediate release

Montréal, 27 August 2021 – With countries working to re-establish global travel and trade through aviation, the need to provide internationally verifiable health proofs to travelers has become an urgent global concern.

The new ICAO [Visible Digital Seal \(VDS\)](#), originally adopted by countries for travel document verification, is now gaining expanded international acceptance as an affordable and efficient solution to this critical global challenge.

“This is an urgent priority for the international community, and a number of countries are now actively engaging with ICAO on suitable formats for their national health proofs,” confirmed ICAO Secretary General Mr. Juan Carlos Salazar.

“Considering the core security and information aspects involved, the new VDS is an important part of our recommendations for facilitating travel under the current circumstances,” he noted, “and we’re also cooperating closely with industry and others, now issuing similar 2D barcode systems, to ensure a seamless global system is the end result.”

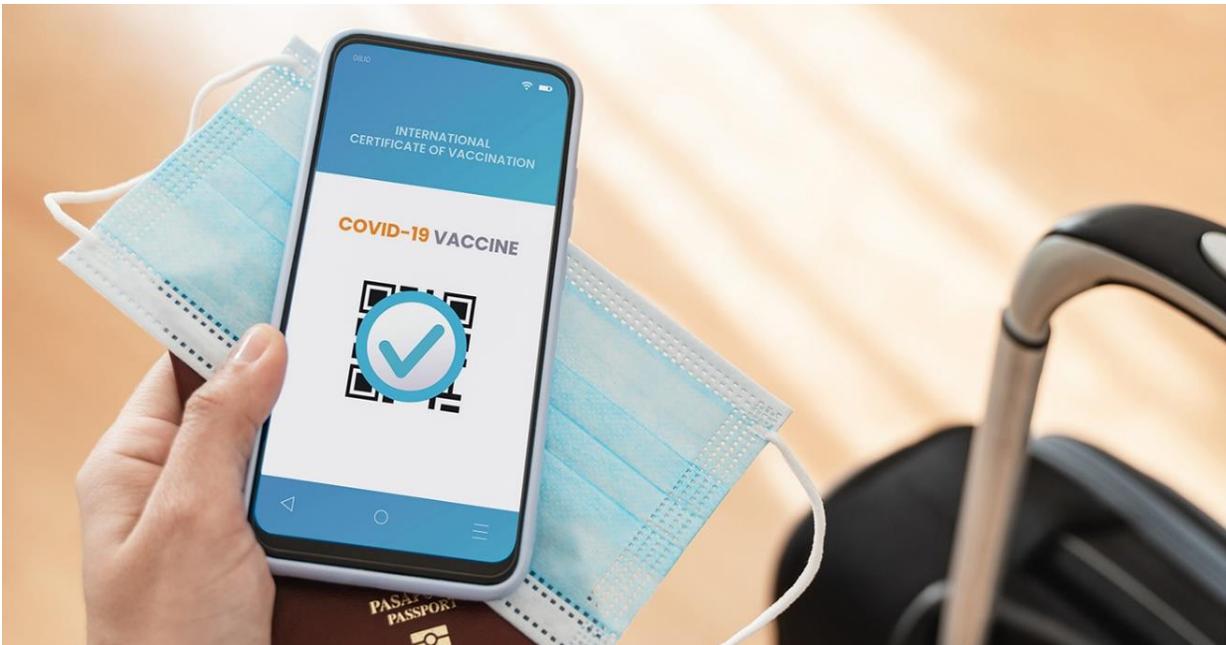
ICAO and the European Union are currently working to ensure compatibility between the VDS and European Digital COVID Certificates, with specific international implementation guidelines expected shortly.

Other regions and countries are conducting their own assessments as they continue to leverage the positive health outcomes being realized through vaccination.

“Global consensus on secure and conveniently-implementable solutions, like the ICAO VDS, greatly benefits the security and efficiency of international aviation. It also benefits the many millions of people all over the world who depend directly on air connectivity for their basic economic survival,” Mr. Salazar explained.

ICAO VDS [Guidelines](#) and [specifications](#) are publicly available to support their efficient global deployment.

The use of certificates attesting to vaccination status and test outcomes, as part of a State’s overall COVID-19 risk mitigation strategy, is outlined in the [detailed aviation response and recovery guidelines](#) issue by the ICAO Council’s Aviation Recovery Task Force (CART).



Resources for Editors

[ICAO's COVID-19 Portal](#)

About ICAO

A specialized agency of the United Nations, ICAO was created by governments in 1944 to support their diplomacy on international air transport matters. Since that time, countries have adopted over 12,000 standards and practices through ICAO which help to align their national regulations relevant to aviation safety, security, efficiency, capacity and environmental protection, enabling a truly global network to be realized. ICAO forums also provide opportunities for advice and advocacy to be shared with government decision-makers by industry groups, civil society NGOs, and other officially-recognized air transport stakeholders.

About the CART

The [ICAO Council Aviation Recovery Task Force \(CART\)](#) was established in March 2020 to provide practical, aligned guidance to world governments and aviation industry operators in order to restart the international air transport sector and recover from COVID-19 on a coordinated, global basis.

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