

# CORSA Implementation: aeroplane operator perspectives

By International Air Transport Association (IATA)

## Introduction

Since news of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) first emerged in early 2020, people, businesses and governments around the world have been trying their best to manage and contain the pandemic while adjusting to a new way of life. Aviation, as one of the primary sectors providing connectivity for our global community, was hard hit. Travel restrictions and public health measures saw levels of international aviation activity drop to levels not seen since the 1980s. Despite the unprecedented crisis facing airlines, their commitment to address the industry's impact on the environment and transition toward a more sustainable future continued to strengthen.

## Support for CORSA

In October 2021, IATA's Member Airlines committed to increasing their long-term environmental ambition from previous goals established in 2009 to achieving net-zero emissions by 2050 and reinforced their strong support for the Carbon Offsetting and Reduction Scheme for International Aviation (CORSA). In parallel, the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) Member States continued to volunteer for the pilot phase of CORSA, bringing global coverage of the scheme to its highest levels yet. This sustained and even increasing support for CORSA can in many ways be attributed to the effective governance and flexibility of the ICAO Council in managing the implementation of CORSA and reacting to a crisis so severe that it could not have been foreseen when the design elements of CORSA were first agreed.

## CORSA implementation

Since the 39<sup>th</sup> Session of the ICAO Assembly in 2016, IATA has been working closely with its member airlines to prepare for the start of CORSA. These capacity-building initiatives, often directly supported by authorities in ICAO Member States, focused at first on ensuring that airlines were ready for the monitoring, reporting and verification (MRV) of emissions. With airline readiness varying between and within regions, airlines collaborated to build up knowledge and skills using the practical experiences of airlines already familiar with fuel monitoring procedures, fuel efficiency systems and third-party verification of data. This collaborative spirit, among what would otherwise often be close competitors, exemplifies the industry unity in support of CORSA as the best means of achieving immediate progress towards our climate commitments through a multilateral and global approach.

These discussions among airlines often raised new questions and highlighted areas where additional guidance would be helpful. The IATA Secretariat and airline experts relayed this information back to the experts of the Committee on Aviation Environmental Protection (CAEP) whenever relevant. IATA would like to commend and thank the CAEP, and the ICAO Secretariat, for their expertise, dedication, and hard work to address the numerous requests for clarification to ensure airlines understood precisely how to comply with their MRV obligations under CORSA. ICAO's ability to address emerging issues in a timely manner and issue new or revised standards, recommended practices, and guidance to clarify compliance for airlines has been essential to the successful implementation of CORSA. The COVID-19 crisis reinforced the importance of CAEP and its

expertise in responding to significant issues ranging from the implications for the CORSIA baseline of a collapse in international traffic in 2020, to the use of remote verification procedures in exceptional circumstances when verifiers are unable to travel for on-site visits. In all cases, CAEP responded with the careful consideration and deep expertise that characterizes its work to inform decision-makers in the ICAO Council – and did so all while meeting virtually.

ICAO's recognition of the important role of simplified compliance procedures and the ability of CAEP to deliver the tools and guidance needed to support them, has also been key success factor in ensuring the successful implementation of CORSIA. On this note, IATA would like to congratulate the members and organizations that have supported the CORSIA CERT Group (CCG) under Working Group 4 on the consistent delivery of the CORSIA Estimation and Reporting Tool (CERT) each year. It has made the lives of both small and large airlines much easier.

## Conclusion

As the industry emerges from the COVID-19 crisis, IATA will continue its capacity-building activities to support airlines as they return to a more normal rhythm of business activities and are able to begin preparing for future offsetting obligations. IATA welcomes the continued support of, and collaboration with ICAO Member States, the ICAO Secretariat and CAEP to ensure the airline community is prepared to continue on the trajectory of successful implementation for the world's first global market-based measure to address emissions from international aviation.