



International  
Civil Aviation  
Organization

Organisation  
de l'aviation civile  
internationale

Organización  
de Aviación Civil  
Internacional

Международная  
организация  
гражданской  
авиации

منظمة الطيران  
المدني الدولي

国际民用  
航空组织

Ref. SN 5/1 – AP092/20 (RD)

8 April 2020

**Subject:** Establishment of ICAO APAC COVID-19  
Contingency and Recovery Planning Group (ACCRPG)

**Action required:** Please reply by **6 May 2020**

Dear Sir/Madam,

I refer to the DGCA *Information Sharing web-conference* on the subject of COVID-19, hosted by the ICAO APAC Office on 31 March 2020, to facilitate APAC States in coordinating their approach to management of the civil aviation system in the COVID-19 pandemic. Documentation related to the web-conference is available at the ICAO APAC Office website (here: <https://www.icao.int/APAC/Pages/COVID-19-BCP.aspx>).

The above web-conference provided the DGCAs a timely opportunity to discuss key issues requiring coordination among States, International Organizations and other stakeholders. One of the outcomes from the discussion was a proposal to form a Task Force or Group to assist the DGCAs in coordinating their approach to the management of civil aviation through, and out of, the current extraordinary circumstances resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic.

As necessary follow-up to the DGCAs' proposal, above, I am now pleased to share with you the first draft of the terms of reference (ToR) document for the aforementioned Group. I would appreciate very much your assistance by reviewing the attached, draft ToR and providing the ICAO APAC Office with your comments as well as nominations of suitable candidates for membership on the Group. ICAO will consider all comments and nominations it receives and convene a first meeting of the Group (via web-conferencing) as soon as practicable.

Fundamentally, the proposed Group will focus on issues concerning both the coordination of measures to manage civil aviation contingencies of the COVID-19 pandemic as well as the recovery of the aviation system through post-COVID-19 scenarios.

In accordance with the essence of the DGCA web-conference discussion, the functions of the proposed Group would be focussed on obtaining information, prioritizing issues and making soundly-based recommendations for the consideration of the DGCAs, ICAO and other key stakeholders. The Group would work in close coordination with other relevant ICAO and international programmes to enhance the benefits and avoid duplication of efforts.

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You will find with the attachment an Appendix to the draft ToR document, which provides a list of detailed suggestions (from DGCAs, International Organizations and ICAO) that the proposed Group could consider as a basis for its deliberations.

I will be grateful to receive your administration's comment/s on the draft ToR and nomination/s (Name, Title, State or Organization, Email address) for the membership on the Group **no later than 6 May 2020.**

Yours sincerely,



Arun Mishra  
Regional Director

**Enclosure:**

Draft terms of reference (ToR) and Appendix

## **DRAFT TERMS OF REFERENCE**

### **1. Name and establishment of group**

1.1. ICAO APAC COVID-19 CONTINGENCY AND RECOVERY PLANNING GROUP (ACCRPG)

1.2. The ICAO APAC DGCA *Information Sharing web-conference*, on the subject of COVID-19, 31 March 2020, decided to form a task force/group to assist the DGCAs in coordinating their approach to the management of civil aviation through, and out of, the current extraordinary circumstances resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic.

### **2. Membership and appointment**

2.1. The size of the group should be commensurate with the need for expeditious and efficient handling of group's business.

2.2. Membership should provide the group with ready access to required research and supporting expertise, demonstrated experience in contingency management, post recovery and adequate geographical representation.

2.3. Members should be nominated by the Civil Aviation Authorities and international organizations concerned and confirmed by ICAO.

2.4. The term of the group will be for one year. However, the term may be extended by the DGCAs as necessary.

2.5. The Secretary of the group is the ICAO APAC Regional Director; with assistance from additional ICAO staff as necessary.

### **3. Chairing**

3.1. The group shall elect a Chairperson at its first meeting from experts nominated by the members.

### **4. Frequency of meetings and quorum**

4.1. The group will determine an appropriate frequency and schedule for its meetings.

4.2. A simple majority of members is required for the group to carry a motion.

### **5. Record of meetings**

5.1. The group will record key discussion and outcomes of each meeting in the form of a progress report.

5.2. The Secretary will be responsible for the records of the group's meetings.

### **6. Reporting mechanism**

6.1. The Secretary will deliver oral and/or written progress reports to the DGCAs, ICAO and other key stakeholders as necessary.

## 7. Functions and delegated authority

7.1. The role and purpose of the group is to take into account the priority of ICAO's strategic objectives and work proactively in close coordination with the DGCAs, International Organisations, ICAO (HQ and Regional Offices) and other relevant programmes to:

7.1.1. Obtain and share information on the implementation by Member States, ICAO, International Organizations, industry and other key stakeholders of measures to manage civil aviation contingencies of the COVID-19 pandemic;

7.1.2. Inform the DGCAs on a regular basis of the coordinated measures to manage civil aviation contingencies of the COVID-19 pandemic to encourage harmonised application;

7.1.3. Identify, anticipate and prioritize specific matters\* concerning the management of civil aviation in the COVID-19 pandemic, and in its recovery, which require, or will in the future require remedial or preventive action by Member States and/or ICAO;

7.1.4. Recommend to the DGCAs specific, prioritized remedial or preventive action, which Member States and/or ICAO should take, to address matters\* concerning the management of civil aviation in the COVID-19 pandemic, and in its aftermath; and

7.1.5. Review the function of the CAPSCA (Global and Asia Pacific) and work in close coordination to strengthen the CAPSCA programme while avoiding duplication of efforts and improving PHE preparedness planning.

**\*Note:** These may include, but are not limited to, matters such as the coordination and management of emergency operations and contingencies as well as other matters related to the broader aspects of business continuity plans and recovery plans for aviation, such as the anticipation of possible post-COVID-19 scenarios for the civil aviation system in the APAC Region. The **Appendix** to this document provides additional suggestions.

7.2. The group would do the following:

7.2.1. Obtain and share relevant information, when and as necessary, from Member States, International Organizations, industry and other key stakeholders;

7.2.2. Make soundly based recommendations, when and as necessary, for action by Member States and/or ICAO, with consideration to the immediate and future issues impacting the sustainable growth of the global civil aviation system; and

7.2.3. Inform and advise the DGCAs, when and as necessary, in order to ensure coordinated action by Member States, International Organizations, industry and other key stakeholders.

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## **APPENDIX TO THE DRAFT TERMS OF REFERENCE**

**Matters for consideration by the group** may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Operational Issues concerning the regulators and the service providers during the continuance of COVID-19.
  - Possible areas of external support to the regulators and the service providers by States and International Organisations to deal with ongoing operational issues including capacity building of CAAs.
  - Operational Issues anticipated post COVID-19 for both the regulators and the service providers.
  - Financial Impact of COVID-19 on the sector and suggested measures to recover – (inputs will be required by Industry such as IATA, ACI, CANSO, etc.)
  - Strengthening of CAPSCA mechanism to prepare ourselves to deal with similar public health emergencies in future.
- **How to support continuity of operations during the COVID-19 situation?**
- Facilitation of repatriation (stranded passengers) and relief flights;
  - Maintain the availability of alternate aerodromes for emergency diversions;
  - COVID-19-related NOTAMs;
  - Share best practices for airlines and for airports to prevent the spread of COVID-19;
  - Facilitation of aircrew (extension of licensing, reduced/simplified quarantine measures....);
  - Recommendations for passengers (e.g., health documents required);
  - Collect and share financial measures taken by States and stakeholders to reduce the burden on the aviation sector;
  - Arrangements for Personnel licensing and maintenance of competency;
  - Encouraging States to review/improve their contingency planning (from ATM perspective, procedures, routes, etc.) for limited service or no service, and coordination with neighbouring States to facilitate avoidance of the airspace by operators choosing to do so;
  - Promulgation of contingency arrangements/plans/contact details - for instance, on Regulator, ANSP and aerodrome operator websites;
  - Alternative POCs for routine and non-routine business in cases where illness or quarantine/isolation/curfew make normal channels unavailable.
- **Coordinate through specific online meetings and communications**
- States send regular updates of national measures and documents to manage civil aviation contingencies of the COVID-19 pandemic to the ICAO APAC RO email [apac@icao.int](mailto:apac@icao.int) with the subject COVID-19.
  - Review and publish these national measures on the ICAO APAC COVID-19 webpage.
- **Alleviating the reputational damage to Air Transport**
- Mitigating against negative reaction/perception of general public towards Air Transport (unfortunately air transport is being seen as the conduit for pandemics spread, similar damage to the 'cruise ship' industry has occurred)
  - Request travel associations collaborating with local tourism agency to consider reinforcing that air travel is safe (in the health context) in their usual tour/destination promotions
  - Introduce harmonised proper medical pre-screening procedures prior to allowing passengers to embark.

➤ **Business continuity planning**

- Regional Business Continuity Plan for Aviation / Regional Contingency Plan for AT
- Control and maintain sound development of global civil aviation
- Facilitating the flow of goods and cargo; relevant security operations need to be maintained during the period of reduced traffic as required and especially for cargo operations;
- National and airport level facilitation programmes and committees should work to ensure adherence to relevant ICAO Annex 9 (and other relevant Annexes) SARPS
- Encourage States to position/prepare for ongoing operations under any current or potential further degradation in services or key capabilities, e.g. further reduction of capability/capacity, possible progressive or sudden withdrawal of ATS, loss of recency/qualifications/medical certification, etc.
- Flexibility in CAAs' regulatory approach in order to support the aviation industry, e.g.:
  - General exemptions for authorizations/permissions, which are designed to proportionally manage safety risks; and
  - Decisions designed to make it as easy as possible for the aviation industry to continue current operational activities while ensuring aviation safety is maintained and operational risks are managed.

➤ **Business recovery planning**

- What is the 'new normal' going to look like in the coming back?
- Remodelling of the regulators' approach to well-being of the industry
- What will the new way to travel ? More checks, new costs ?
- Aviation Sector operating with a lower cost base would be looking for reduction of Infrastructure Costs? Reduced ANS/ATM, Airport, AvSEC Screening fees
- Phased resumption of air traffic operations should take into account the need for:
  - Availability of trained security personnel (in many instances security operations at airports will have been significantly reduced due to the lack of traffic during the pandemic);
  - Recurrent and/or initial training should be conducted prior to the phased re-commencement of operations and re-certification of aviation security screeners as appropriate; and
  - National appropriate authorities for AVSEC should increase oversight and quality control activities during the re-commencement of security operations in-line with increased traffic.
- Definition of possible future (Scenario Analysis)
  - Identification of possible different Post COVID-19 scenarios
  - Resume domestic flights before international flights
  - Coordination of travel demand recovery between States to minimize demand surge in air travel to allow time for support services to catch up
  - Phase-in activities and re-activate the needed resources to support the aviation industry when situation improves
  - Reduced activity /traffic scenario (as airlines may have closed down)
  - Consider delaying imposition of service/regulatory fees (says, between 1-3 months later) to provide a period of stability/recovery for aviation industry post COVID-19.
- Initial Focus of Recovery Plan Proposals:
  - Staff safety and well-being remains a priority
  - Maintain critical activity and essential functions
  - Any action taken should not negatively impact national social and economy i.e. support the broader national recovery strategy (i.e. airports and aviation infrastructure as national economic sustainability conduits)
  - To assist the nation, maintain connectivity
  - Guidance material for maintaining a sound development of Civil Aviation.

- Positioning for recovery
  - Consider short, medium and long term recovery strategy/plan
  - Recovery Plan needs to have a few dimensions:
    - Consider the aviation sector as a whole
    - What Government Action is required? How should the aviation sector be assisted?
    - Considering the unprecedented work arrangement and diverted resources of all affected parties, ICAO to review and where applicable, adjust the compliance deadlines of various initiatives
    - Regulatory compliance
      - Sustainable solutions for regulatory issues in the context of various requirements from ICAO SARPs.
    - Recovery OPS:
      - Flight crews who have been extended (i.e. training, PPC, medical) will need to be revalidated. Note that this could cause a significant backlog in the availability of simulators, thus causing more extensions. This is something that needs to be carefully planned. Same thing for the renewal of medicals;
      - In relation to the above, States/CAAs should conduct enhance surveillance to ensure that the above is in compliance;
      - In addition, some crews may experience PTSD from this COVID19 situation thus affecting their mental health (which is essential for a valid medical). Crews should receive counselling to help them re-establish a normal mental psych.
    - Operational aspect - airlines, airports, ANSPs etc.
      - Implement improved ATM procedures that also allow for reduction of wasted fuel and CO2 emissions
      - Trial out improved separations and systems (since traffic is at its minimum) - UPRs, Direct Tracking
      - Preparations for a managed or phased resumption of normal levels of service, supported by sub-regional or collaborating State capabilities where available.
    - Financial aspect - bailouts, tax reductions, fiscal measures like tax holidays etc.
      - Relief measures for the aviation sector.
      - Reduction of direct infrastructure costs (e.g., Airport fees, ANS fees, AvSec screening fees)
- **Update related guidance materials** (As epidemics /pandemics may occur again sooner or later):
  - Elevating status/strengthening delivery of the CAPSCA Programme
  - Draw lessons learnt from COVID-19 outbreak
  - Propose guidance for Civil Aviation industry for navigating through epidemics:
    - Crisis cell management
    - Stock of Personal Protection Equipment for aviation personnel
    - Specific training of aviation personnel.