

ICAO Aviation – Public Health Experts’ Roundtable:
Future of Aviation: Facing the New Normal with COVID-19

Background

The COVID-19 pandemic is an unprecedented crisis that has impacted every society. It demonstrated the inextricable relationship between aviation and a public health event of international concern. There is no doubt that aviation fueled the spread of COVID-19 globally triggering border closures and other varying border restrictions by many States to mitigate the risk of importation and exportation of cases. This has disrupted the aviation sector on devastating scale, with more than 90% of flights suspended globally since March 2020.

International civil aviation is also tightly coupled with the global economy. The sharp decline of international civil aviation operations has crippled the global economy and ruined livelihoods of many across the world. The world needs to recover urgently from this crisis while sustaining efforts to contain and control the pandemic. To bring about recovery, Civil Aviation Authorities (CAAs), Public Health Authorities (PHAs) and International Organisations, need to work closely to find a way to re-open borders safely before a vaccine is available.

The Aviation – Public Health Experts’ Roundtable, held under the auspices of the ICAO Asia Pacific Regional Office, serves as a platform for aviation and public health thought-leaders from the Asia Pacific Region to exchange ideas, promote understanding and build consensus to help pave the way for the safe resumption of international air travel, taking into account the new normal brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Objectives

1. Discuss latest developments and ideas to mitigate risk of cross border transmission of COVID-19 in order to encourage States to re-open their borders;
2. Deliberate on the way forward for the safe and gradual resumption of international air travel even before an effective vaccine is available in a scalable manner;
3. Expound ideas on a globally-harmonised testing regime that can be sustainable for international aviation in the long run, including air travel for recovered COVID-19 persons; and
4. Establish the building blocks for a trusted international accreditation system for tests, testing centres and vaccinations.
5. Explore approaches for piloting internationally accepted protocols for testing with the engagement of institutional and industry stakeholders.

Date/Time

4th November 2020, from 10:00 – 12:00 hours Bangkok time (UTC+7)

Format

The roundtable will be conducted on a virtual platform. It will feature opening remarks by ICAO followed by two segments with their respective theme.

Roundtable members will engage in an interactive conversation around the theme of each of the segments. Discussions will be facilitated by the moderator. At the start of each segment, the moderator will frame the main issues before inviting comments from roundtable members to facilitate deeper discussion.

Moderator

- *Professor Teo Yik Ying, Dean of Saw Swee Hock School of Public Health in the National University of Singapore.*

Roundtable Members (restricted numbers in order to allow effective discussion)

- 1 CAA and/or 1 PHA nominee

Agenda

Time	Topic
(20 mins)	Opening
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Welcome Remarks by Mr. Arun Mishra, Regional Director, ICAO Asia Pacific Regional Office• Remarks by WHO (<i>TBD</i>)• Opening Remarks by Dr. Fang Liu, Secretary General, ICAO
	Introduction
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Roundtable scene setting by Moderator• Update on risk assessment framework for travel (by Professor David Heymann, Chair of the WHO Strategic and Technical Advisory Group for Infectious Hazards)
Segment 1: Examining strategies to recover air travel	
(40 mins)	The panel discussion will touch on areas such as:

Time	Topic
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key concerns of PHAs when re-opening borders and how to address the concerns • Is risk budget an acceptable approach to deal with the tradeoffs for re-opening borders • How would testing feature in the strategy to manage risk and how would a standardised guideline for a global testing regime be helpful to implement it at national and regional level. • Can quarantine measures be calibrated based on the risk assessment • Can the testing regime cater for recovered COVID-19 persons who continues to test positive on PCR • Key concerns of CAAs when re-opening borders and how to address the concerns • What are the top challenges faced by CAAs/States in implementing public health related measures & CART recommendations and how to address the top challenges
Segment 2: Enhancing mutual trust	
(40 mins)	<p>The panel discussion will touch on areas such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fundamental considerations for reducing friction in a traveler’s journey in the new normal • Certification of tests, testing facilities and vaccinations for credibility & providing assurance • Building blocks for an international accreditation system • Other complementary measures: Sharing experiences about contact tracing • How to build consensus and increase in-country mutual trust and collaboration between Aviation and Public Health • Harmonization at national levels between policies, communications and guidance material from Aviation and PH entities
(15 mins)	Q and A opportunity

Time	Topic
Closing	
(10 mins)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Summary of discussion and consideration of future steps by moderator• Closing remarks by ICAO Asia Pacific Regional Office
