

1. Aviation public health-related measures sub-group (PH/SG)

1.1. Summary of the Public Health Sub-group activities

1.1.1. The Aviation Public Health-related Measures Sub-group (PH-SG) was established by the ACCRPG at its first meeting held on 5 June 2020 in order to focus its inter-plenary work on CART Phase I Recommendations 4 and 5 on aviation public health-related measures released in June 2020.

1.1.2. The High-Level Cover Document (HLCD) adopted by the ICAO Council in November 2020 through CART Phase II introduced new Recommendations 13 and 14, which comes under the purview of the PH-SG related to testing and cross border risk management measures, and the formation of Public Health Corridors (PHCs) respectively.

1.1.3. The work of the PH-SG was expected to incorporate the recommendations introduced through the CART Phase III process, which includes the revised Recommendation 14 on PHC, Recommendation 17 on Test Certificates, Recommendation 18 on facilitation access for aircrew vaccination, and Recommendation 19, which specifies not to consider vaccination as a prerequisite for international travel.

1.1.4. The PH/SG comprises 23 Members from nine States and six International/Regional Organizations since inception and the composition remained unchanged. The sub-group held 11 Sub-group meetings the proceedings of which are available for reference in the ICAO APAC website. Dr. Chong Chun Hon, Chairman, Civil Aviation Medical Board, Civil Aviation Authority of Singapore serves as the rapporteur for an interim period while Mr. S L Wong, Head Technical Affairs, Safety, Capacity and ATM of ACI Asia-Pacific acts as the alternate.

1.1.5. The direction for PH-SG was formally established by the following Deliverables of the Sub-group adopted at the second Meeting held on 18 June 2020, which were drawn keeping in line with the Key Functions of the ACCRPG.

- 1) Appoint State Focal Points for CART guidance implementation;
- 2) Provide advice and clarifications to States on CART guidance implementation and deliberate on implementation challenges as highlighted by States and Industries. For this purpose, States are to respond to the 'CART guidance implementation - Response Checklist' circulated to States/Administrations through the APAC Regional Office;
- 3) Share best practices/experiences of States/Administrations in CART guidance implementation amongst APAC States/Administrations; and
- 4) Assist ACCRPG to improve awareness at State level of guidance in the CART '*Take-off Guidance*' through CAPSCA.

1.1.6. As for the current status of its work, the PH-SG is expected to be reconvened in June in order to support the ACCRPG in the regional implementation of the relevant Recommendations of ICAO CART Phase III. The Subgroup will also support the 14<sup>th</sup> meeting of the 'Collaborative Arrangement for the Prevention and Management of Public Health Events in Civil Aviation Asia Pacific – Asia Pacific (CAPSCA-AP) scheduled to be held on 17 June 2021.

1.1.7. The continuation of the PH-SG will be crafted on the future scope and functions of the ACCRPG and the tasks to be assigned to the Subgroup accordingly.

## 2.1 Work progress and A

2.1.1 The Subgroup based its work on the established deliverables, conducted its meetings and performed activities decided by the Subgroup to accomplish the deliverables and to meet the expectations of ACCRPG. The Subgroup was able to set timelines for key activities and complete them to achieve the expected output.

2.1.2 As the work progressed, and the Subgroup's focus was centered on three top challenges as assessed mainly in terms of assisting the States and the aviation industry recover from the economic and air travel downturn. Of these, the Subgroup was able to complete substantial amount of work in regard to two of them, namely, establish structured communications between Aviation and PH Authorities which emerged as a key priority from the 13 CAPSCA-AP meeting held on 16 July 2020 and the second, which was the follow up on collation and analysis of States' challenges in implementation of initial CART Take-off Guidance document aviation related public health mitigation measures. The third challenge identified, which was on Testing / Quarantine / Recovered Persons (International harmonised regime), the Subgroup agreed to monitor the work undertaken by the CART process to avoid work duplication and rely upon the expertise of CART.

2.1.3 The Joint ICAO - WHO Webinar conducted in the APAC Region in October 2020 had a considerable impact in enhancing awareness on the need to work collaboratively between the public health and civil aviation authorities to address impediments to aviation recovery and strengthen public confidence in air travel, which also marked the first collaborative event of ICAO and WHO in the APAC Region.

2.1.4 The ICAO Aviation – Public Health Experts' Roundtable conducted in November 2020 provided a platform for aviation and public health thought-leaders to exchange ideas, strategies and national experiences, and promote understanding to build consensus for safe resumption of international air travel. The panel discussion converged on the relevance of commonly agreed risk assessment framework focused on both equal risk levels and equal response capacity as an enabler to build the trust between States for travel resumption.

2.1.5 In realization of the Deliverable of the Subgroup, the following action were completed.

- 1) Ref. deliverable 1) - As recommended by the sub-group to the 3rd ACCRPG meeting of 26 June 2020, ICAO APAC Office issued a State Letter on 7 July 2020 which requested States to nominate their focal points for the COVID-19 Response and Recovery Implementation Centre (CRRIC) and where necessary similar focal points for the communication and coordination of the works of the ACCRPG and its three sub-groups. The main role and responsibility of a CRRIC focal point is to ensure accurate and timely input of the State's implementation of the Recommendations and Guidance from the ICAO CART Report and its Take-off Document. Of the 39 APAC Member States, 38 States have nominated CRRIC focal points;
- 2) Ref. deliverable 2) and 3) – The sub-group identified *Take-off Guidance* Document implementation issues/challenges submitted by fourteen APAC States in response to the CART Take-off Guidance Implementation Response Checklist (International Operations and Domestic Operations respectively) developed by the Sub-group and circulated through ICAO APAC State Letter in June 2020. The reported challenges and issues were consolidated and analysed by the Subgroup and the recommendations were submitted to ICAO HQ through the APAC Regional Office in October 2020. Some of these challenges and issues had been addressed in the CART Phase II review process. This submission also contained several non-CART issues identified through the work of the Subgroup and the CAPSCA Meetings.

- 3) Ref. deliverables 3), (also as follow up to deliverable 4)) - The Subgroup assisted the APAC Regional Office in the successful conduct of the WHO-ICAO Joint Webinar (VTC) themed “*Considerations and Challenges in Resuming Air-Travel in the Context of COVID-19 - Multi-Sectoral Approach*” on 5th October 2020. 424 participants attended including National IHR Focal Points (NFPs), public health sector professionals, and Aviation Sector representatives. Two informative Sessions were conducted separately by aviation sector and PH sector, which were focused on ‘*Taking off: Safety in air travel in the time of Covid-19*’ by aviation sector with presentations and updates from ICAO, CAA Singapore, ACI and IATA followed by the PH sector session focused on ‘*Infection Prevention and Control considerations for passenger air travel in the context of COVID-19*’ with presentations from WHO and Lao PDR.
- 4) Ref. deliverables 3), (also as follow up to deliverable 4)) - The sub-group assisted the APAC Regional Office to successfully conduct the ICAO Aviation – Public Health Experts’ Roundtable (VTC) on 4<sup>th</sup> November 2020 themed “*Future of Aviation: Facing the New Normal with COVID-19*”. Secretary General, ICAO delivered the opening remarks. There were over 200 participants who attended including national public health professionals and Ministries, aviation sector representatives, WHO and ICAO. Twenty public health and aviation experts from 9 APAC States (Australia, China, India, Japan, Malaysia, Republic of Korea, Singapore, Sri Lanka and Thailand) participated as panelists in the roundtable which consisted two segments, viz. ‘*Examining strategies to recover air travel*’ and ‘*Enhancing Mutual trust*’ which was moderated by Singapore.
- 5) Ref. deliverables 4), (also catering to 3)) - Thirteenth CAPSCA - APAC (Special) meeting with the theme “*Harmonized Implementation of CART Take-of/Guidance for air travel through COVID-19*” was conducted on 16 July 2020 in collaboration with WHO and supported by ACI, IATA and IFALPA. Twenty-nine States, 12 industry organizations and five International Associations, WHO HQ, WHO SEA Regional Office and ICAO attended with 135 participants. Meetings was updated by ICAO and WHO on PH related developments. CAA Singapore briefed the meeting on UK-SIN CART Crew Module On-going Trials and PH-SG presented it’s work on the CART Implementation Response Checklists. A panel discussion was included in the meeting where presentations centered on “*Implementing PH Mitigation measures in Aviation*” were delivered with an ensuing discussion with Q and A. Challenges/Issues/Ideas brought forward were subsequently followed up by the PH-SG.

### 3.1 Relevance/Impact of the Subgroups work

3.1.1 The PH-SG was able to make a pioneering impact on a key enabler of the aviation restart, which was the collaboration between the national public health authorities and aviation authorities.

3.1.2 WHO and ICAO published a joint statement on 6 March 2020, providing updated advice regarding COVID-19 and International Civil Aviation, which reaffirms their commitment as UN specialized agencies to foster greater international cooperation to contain the virus and to protect the health of travellers. The statement also stressed the importance of greater public-private cooperation and inter-agency dialogue, and reminded the government aviation and health officials to enhance cross-sector collaboration at the national level and establish National Facilitation Committees as required by ICAO Standards.

3.1.3 The 13<sup>th</sup> CAPSCA-AP meeting in July 2020, Joint ICAO-WHO Webinar in October 2020 and the ICAO Aviation – Public Health Experts’ Roundtable in November 2020 marked three specific event

in the APAC Region organized with the main support from the PH-SG to promote the multi sectoral collaboration, especially between the public health sector and the aviation sector authorities at national level. However, there still is room to strengthen this collaboration towards a meaningful opening of borders for international commercial air transport operations.

3.1.4 The PH-SG provided regular updates to every ACCRPG meeting. There were several recommendations, which were endorsed by the ACCRPG for implementation including the need for enhanced collaboration between the public health and aviation sectors at national level, which was encouraged by the events such as the Joint ICAO-WHO Webinar, and the ICAO Aviation – Public Health Experts’ Roundtable.

3.1.5 The PH-SG conducted its work within the available resources from the Subgroups members who made a considerable contribution to the success of the Subgroups work performance and accomplishments.

#### 4.1 PH-SG’s future work plan

4.1.1 The PH-SG would continue its work based on the direction the ACCRPG takes in future and adjust its deliverables and workplan accordingly.

4.1.2 Some of the key areas for the Subgroup to focus would be to support the ACCRPG to assist implementation of the ICAO CART Phase III Recommendations related to public health aspects and other tasks as required by the ACCRPG within the resources and the competencies of the Subgroup.