

Asia Pacific COVID-19 Contingency and Recovery Planning Group (ACCRPG)

First Annual Report

Jim Wolfe and Conrad Clifford, Co-Chairs

6 July 2021

YEAR ONE – FOCUS ON INFORMATION SHARING AND INFORMING

- COVID-19 has been, and continues to be, one of the **greatest challenges** aviation has ever faced.
- The ACCRPG has provided Government agencies and industry the opportunity to address this challenge by being **better informed** of global, regional and national responses to COVID-19.
- The Group has had one of the **highest participation** rates of any Group ever formed in this region throughout its first year – a testimony to the impacts on all States and industry participants and that COVID-19 affects all of ICAO's strategic objectives – safety, air navigation, security, environmental, economic development and facilitation
- The ACCPRG congratulates the Council Aviation Recovery Taskforce (CART) on its recommendations and guidance material to **assist States in responding** to many aviation aspects of COVID-19.
- ACCPRG has also received a range of **advice and information shared by States** and industry in the region on how they have put in place specific measures to respond to COVID-19, and facilitated valuable and ongoing, **engagement with the public health community**.
- Given the ongoing waves of COVID-19 there has been a continued **focus this year on risk mitigations** to reduce the threat and impacts of COVID-19 on aviation in the region rather than on recovery measures.

COVID-19 – AVIATION LESSONS LEARNT SO FAR

- There is no escaping that the **international aviation industry has been seriously impacted by COVID-19**, the effects of which are still being felt around the world and will last for years to come.
- Nevertheless, aviation has again shown its ability to **evolve its operations to respond to global challenges** – even as one as devastating as a global pandemic.
- This has led to a **range of measures** being put in place by Government agencies and industry to reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission to passengers, industry staff and the community.
- These measures reflect **working in cooperation with health experts** – a cooperative process that need to be part of ongoing contingency planning and recovery work in international aviation.
- We have also seen the development of some **safe travel zones/corridors/bubbles** based on the countries involved establishing a **shared understanding** of what outcomes they are seeking to achieve and how countries will handle subsequent COVID-19 outbreaks.
- While it is likely that individual States across the region and the rest of the world will be in varying positions in terms of their recovery from COVID-19 this year, States and industry will be looking for **consistency but also flexibility in future measures and requirements** that will help facilitate an increase in safe international travel.

YEAR TWO – CONTINUE SHARING; HELP GREEN SHOOTS OF RECOVERY

- We will need to **continue with mitigation measures** that our aviation industry and agencies can safely and effectively implement to reduce the risk to the travelling public, aviation staff and the community from COVID-19 and any future pandemics.
- However there is also the **opportunity to work together on more “recovery” type measures** including those that will facilitate international travel through mutually recognised passenger information and certification while making sure that we do not ignore the needs of those States with less resources to implement these measures or who may still be dealing with ongoing impacts of COVID-19 on their States.
- The key functions of the group going forward as set out in the **proposed updates to the Terms of Reference**.

ACCRPG – PROPOSED UPDATES TO THE TERMS OF REFERENCE

- **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;
- **Inform the DGCA on a regular basis** of the coordinated measures to manage civil aviation contingencies of the COVID-19 pandemic to encourage harmonised application;
- **Identify, anticipate, prioritize and make recommendations** to address specific issues arising from the ICAO *Council Aviation Recovery Task Force* (CART), which require, or will in the future require remedial or preventive action by Member States and/or ICAO; and
- **Coordinate work and assist States and industry** with the implementation of the CART's work.
- In accordance with the recommendations set by the CART and the WHO, work in a proactive, consistent and coordinated manner to aim at reaching, to the maximum extent possible, **regionally harmonized, flexible and mutually accepted measures, protocols and tools**, in full respect of national needs, capabilities and risk assessments run at local level.
- **Facilitate the dialogue with health authorities and other relevant authorities** at regional and national level to manage civil aviation contingencies of the COVID-19 pandemic.



Thank you