

Long-Term Vision for COVID-19 Related Border Control Measures



COVID-19 Update

- Transition from pandemic to endemic continues in almost all countries.
- Widespread population protection through vaccination, prior infection or a combination
- Hospitalizations and death rates much lower than previously despite high infection rates
- Latest sub-lineages of the Omicron variant increasingly transmissible, but not more virulent so far
- Viruses such as RSV, influenza circulating due to return to “normal” patterns of behavior
- Global trend towards targeting protection of vulnerable groups (vaccination boosters) rather than imposing restrictions on travelers (masking, testing, proof of vaccination status)

Asia-Pacific Restrictions have largely been removed

All travel restrictions lifted regardless of vaccination status	26
Open to vaccinated travelers without pre-departure and/or post arrival testing	10
Open to vaccinated travelers with pre-departure testing and/or post arrival testing	3
Significant restrictions remain, even for vaccinated travelers	1
Mask mandate on board	14

Restart ➡ Recovery ➡ Normalization: need to review and remove remaining measures



Lessons Learnt from COVID-19

Key Challenge: Fragmented response to COVID-19 delayed recovery.

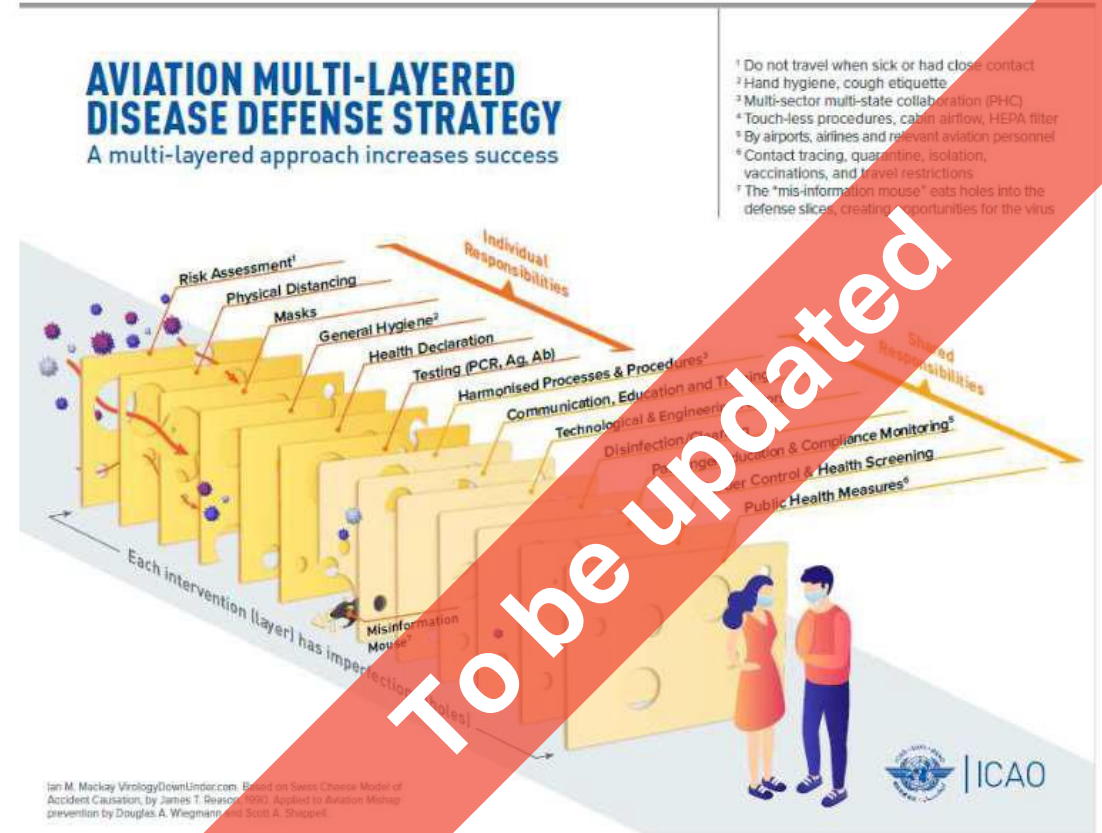
- Lack of coordination between States in terms of measures applied
- Patchy collaboration and engagement between travel and health sectors
- Absence of transparency around risk assessments
- Confused communication of measures
- Lack of global standard for health credentials – vaccine certificates, test results
- Collection of traveler information - Industry became *de facto* health inspector
- Particular challenge around treatment of crew



Proportionate, risk-based & time-limited health measures

Fragmented response and lack of coordination has delayed recovery of air travel

- Science-based review of multilayered COVID risk measures
- “Pathogen neutral” framework for responding to future health emergencies
- Transparency around risk assessments
- Air crew prioritized as essential workers



Mutual recognition of digital health credentials

EU DCC and other digital certificate platforms were a COVID success story

- Capabilities developed during COVID-19 maintained and enhanced
- Mutual recognition between 4 main health credential standards
- WHO "Yellow Card"
- Government Portals in place for the collection of traveler information



Clear and timely communication from governments

Frequent, short-notice rule changes caused confusion and undermined confidence

- Governments communicate response measures directly with consumers and industry
- Coordination between States in terms of measures applied
- Effective collaboration and engagement between travel and health sectors
- ICAO and WHO as global data repositories of measures in force



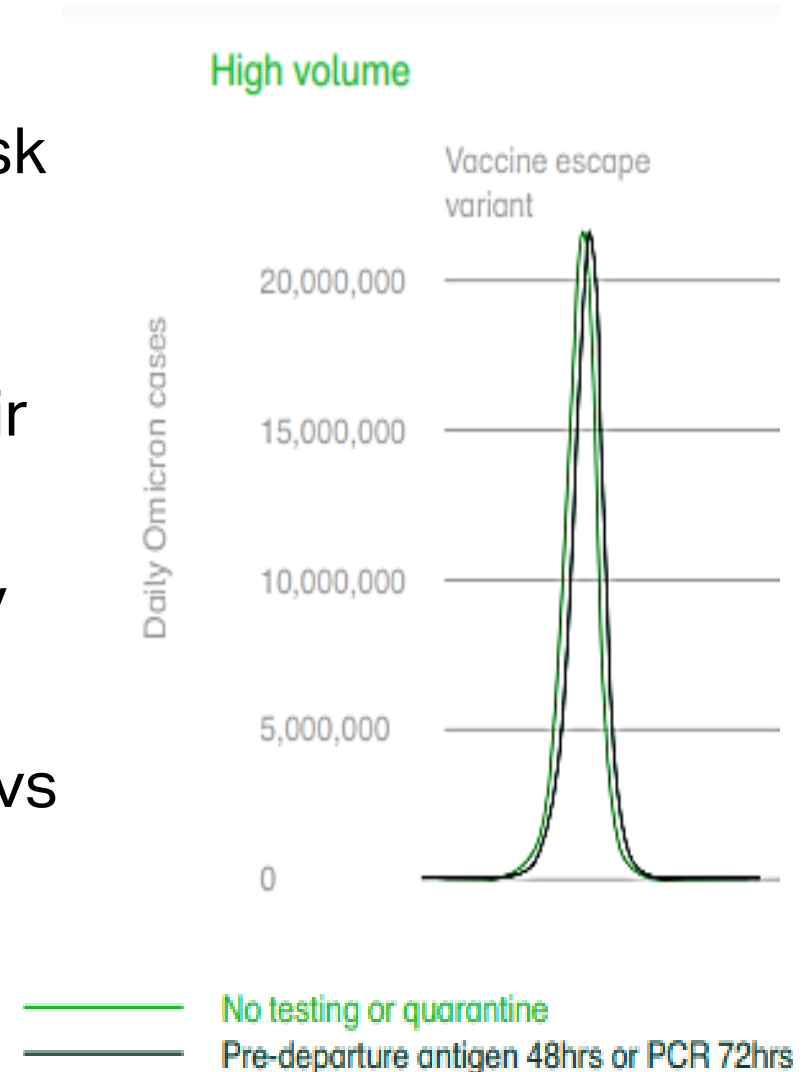
Economic & social cost of travel restrictions recognized

Impacts on wider economy and society could take years to become apparent

- COVID border measures put \$1.7 trillion of economic activity and 44.6 million jobs at risk in 2020*
- 85% of businesses surveyed reported the negative impact of COVID measures on their businesses
- Keeping aviation operating critical to supply of vaccines, medicines and PPE
- Border measures had only marginal impact vs Omicron despite huge cost of testing and quarantine regimes

*ATAG figures

Source: OXERA



Pandemic Preparedness Priorities

1. Proportionate risk-based and time-limited health measures
2. Mutual-recognition of health credentials
3. Clear and timely communication from governments
4. Recognition of Economic and social cost of travel restrictions



Thank you

Vinoop Goel
goelv@iata.org

www.iata.org

