UNITED ARAB EMIRATES
MINISTRY OF HEALTH & PREVENTION

الهيئة العامة للطيران المدني
GENERAL CIVIL AVIATION AUTHORITY



Strengthing Public Health Prepardness at the UAE Airport Operators & Airline Operators

International Health Regulations (IHR) Office
Ministry of Health and Prevention (MOHAP)

Background

Increasing international travel and the emergence of infectious diseases have reinforced the need for stronger public health preparedness at airports.

The UAE programme was developed in accordance with:

- International Health Regulations (IHR 2005)
- ICAO CAPSCA Guidance Material
- WHO Technical Guidance
- IATA Communicable Disease Guidance
- GCC Unified Health Procedures Guide

Airports play a critical role in:

1. Preventing public health threats
2. Detecting public health events
3. Responding to public health emergencies
4. Maintaining safe international travel and trade

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Multi-sectoral Collaboration for Airport Public Health Preparedness

National Coordination Mechanism

NCEMA ⇄ **Ministry of Health and Prevention (MOHAP)** ⇄ **General Civil Aviation Authority (GCAA)**

Key Areas of Collaboration:

1. National Committee for Preparedness and Response to Public Health Risks
2. Joint risk assessments for public health events
3. Development of CAR-CDMP
4. Airport preparedness assessments
5. Joint preparedness and response planning
6. Joint simulation exercises and continuous improvement

IHR Core Capacity Assessment at Points of Entry

IHR Core Capacities Assessed

Assessment Methodology

Assessment conducted jointly by MOHAP and GCAA

Based on:

- WHO IHR (2005) Core Capacity Requirements at Points of Entry
- WHO Airport Assessment Tool
- ICAO Annex 9 & Doc 10152
- ICAO CAPSCA Guidance Material
- National legislation and operational guidance
- GCAA CAR CDMP

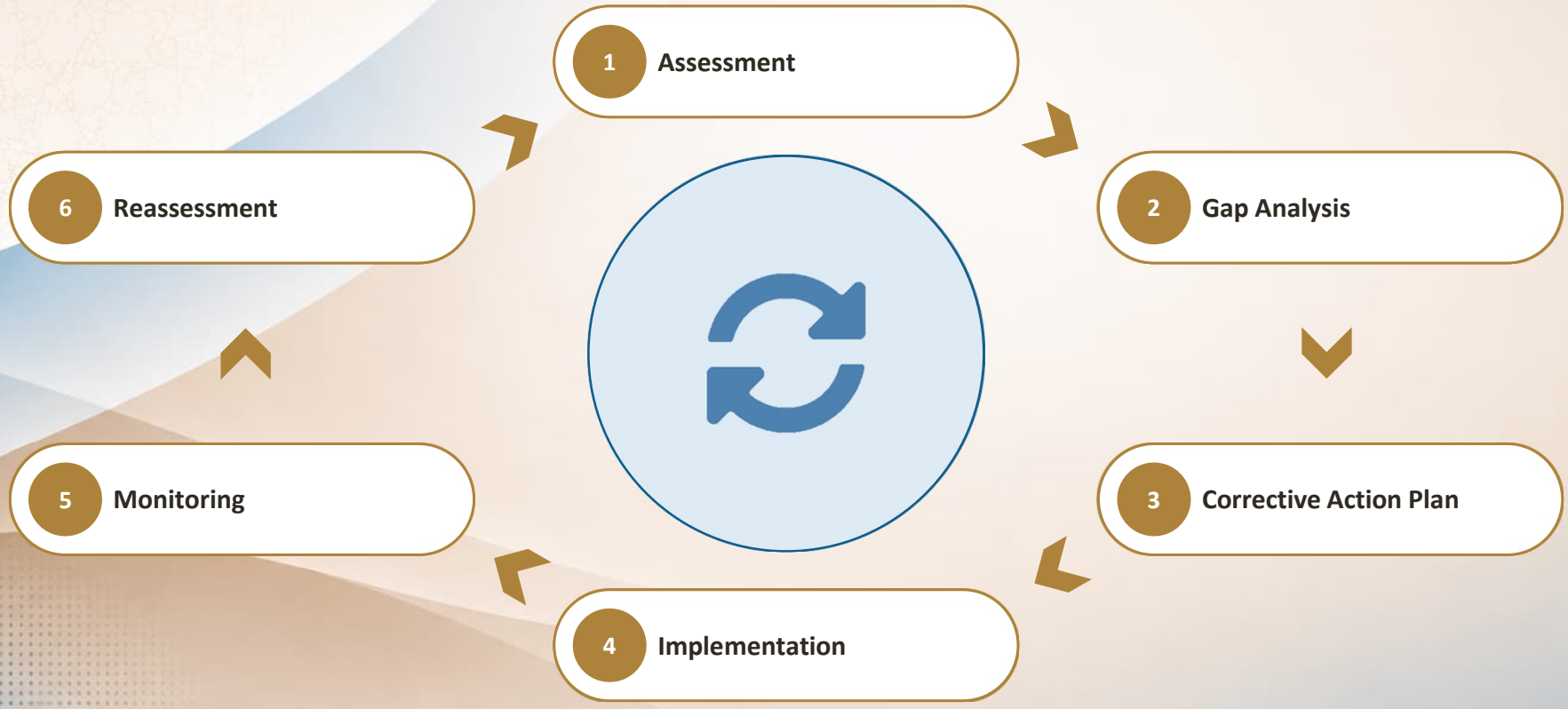
Routine Capacities

- Public health emergency planning
- Coordination and communication
- Medical services
- Safe environment (water, food, waste, vector control)
- Inspection programmes
- Trained personnel
- Risk communication

Core Capacities for Responding to Public Health Emergencies

- Detection and reporting
- Public health emergency response
- Isolation and case management
- Referral and medical transport
- Infection prevention and control
- Contact tracing
- Multi-agency coordination

POE rediness program in UAE



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Airport Assessment Programme Timeline using IHR 2005 Assessment Tools & CAR-CDMP

Programme Implementation Timeline

2022

- Dubai Airport

2023

- Abu Dhabi Airport
- Sharjah Airport
- Muscat International Airport

2024

- Ras Al khaimah Airport
- Fujairah Airport

2025

- Bahrain Airport

5 UAE International Airports Assessed

Serving more than 150 million passengers annually

From Assessment to Action

Assessment Findings

The assessments identified opportunities to further strengthen:

- Standardized communicable disease procedures
- Governance and stakeholder responsibilities
- Notification and reporting mechanisms
- Multi-sector coordination
- Public health emergency response arrangements
- Training and exercise programmes

Key Outcome

Development of the Civil Aviation Communicable Disease Management Programme (CAR-CDMP)

From Collaboration to Standardization

Development of the CAR-CDMP

Why was the CAR-CDMP developed?

Following joint preparedness activities and airport assessments, MOHAP and GCAA recognized the need for a **national standardized framework** to standardize the management of communicable diseases across the civil aviation sector.

Jointly developed by: MOHAP + GCAA

Objectives

- Standardize communicable disease procedures across all UAE international airports
- Define clear roles and responsibilities for all aviation stakeholders
- Align aviation procedures with IHR (2005), ICAO and WHO guidance
- Strengthen preparedness, detection, reporting and response
- Support safe and uninterrupted international air transport while minimizing the risk of communicable disease transmission.

Version	Key Development
2020	Initial programme developed in response to COVID-19
2024	Expanded to cover all communicable diseases
2026	Comprehensive revision incorporating assessment findings, updated international guidance, and lessons learned from preparedness activities



Protocol to Prevent the Spread of Communicable Diseases within Airports and National Air Carriers

Integration with Communicable Disease Management Program

Operator Stations

Front-line implementation and monitoring of health protocols.

GCAA Operations Room

Central coordination and oversight of all protocol activities.

MOHAP

National health authority providing guidance and support.

WHO

International oversight and alignment with global standards.

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Validating Preparedness Through Exercises

Preparedness Activities

1 Tabletop Exercise

Scenario (Imported Ebola Virus Disease case arriving in the UAE)

Objectives:

- Test national coordination
- Review decision-making
- Validate communication pathways
- Assess interagency roles

2 Field Readiness Drills

Conducted at

Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Sharjah Airport

Objectives:

- Validate CAR-CDMP implementation
- Test operational procedures
- Validate airport operational readiness
- Evaluate interagency coordination among aviation and public health stakeholders

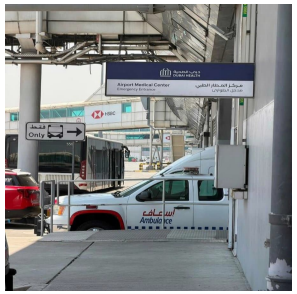
Continuous Improvement

Lessons learned incorporated into preparedness plans and CAR-CDMP.









Alignment with IHR (2005)

The protocol supports IHR obligations while adding aviation-specific implementation mechanisms.

IHR basis	IHR requirement / function	UAE GCAA protocol alignment
Article 6	Timely assessment and notification of events that may constitute a public-health emergency.	Station reporting and escalation supports rapid national assessment and notification.
Annex 1B	Core capacities at designated points of entry, including emergency response, trained personnel and coordination.	CAR-CDMP standardizes aviation preparedness, detection, reporting, response and stakeholder roles.
Article 44	Collaboration, assistance and cooperation in detection, assessment and response.	Formal coordination across GCAA, MOHAP and relevant international aviation/public-health partners.
Article 46	Protection and handling of personal data under the IHR.	Relevant where identifiable health information is collected or exchanged; data handling must remain IHR-compliant.

Correction: Article 46 concerns personal-data handling; international cooperation and assistance are principally addressed by Article 44.

Alignment with ICAO: Annex 9, CAPSCA and Assembly Resolution A40-14

The UAE approach broadens disease coverage and strengthens implementation while remaining within the international framework.

ICAO Annex 9 – Facilitation

Contains aviation public-health provisions covering communicable-disease events, disinfection/disinsection, quarantine and related facilitation measures.

The UAE model supports coordinated preparedness and response at airports and across aviation stakeholders.

Final regulatory cross-references should use the applicable Annex 9 edition and verified provision numbering.

A40-14 & CAPSCA

A40-14 addresses mitigation of disease spread, including aircraft disinsection and vector-control methods, and recognizes the importance of CAPSCA.

CAPSCA promotes the multi-sectoral aviation–public-health coordination required for preparedness and response.

UAE enhancement

Covers a broader spectrum of communicable-disease transmission risks.

Uses airline station personnel as an operational surveillance layer.

Adds risk-tiered activation, structured reporting and digital monitoring from detection through response.

Position the UAE model as an implementation enhancement to the IHR/ICAO framework—not as a replacement for it.

Conclusion

Collaboration is the key to preparedness

The UAE's experience demonstrates that effective airport public health preparedness is built upon:

- Strong governance and institutional leadership
- Sustained collaboration between MOHAP and GCAA
- Joint risk assessment and preparedness planning
- Standardized operational procedures
- Regular validation through simulation and field exercises
- A culture of continuous learning and improvement

Together, these efforts have strengthened the UAE's capacity to prevent, detect, assess, report, and respond to public health events while ensuring the safe and uninterrupted operation of international civil aviation.