



ASSEMBLY — 41ST SESSION

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Agenda Item 13: Facilitation Programmes

PASSENGER DATA REQUIRED BY STATES: EFFICIENT USE OF AVAILABLE INFORMATION WITH A VIEW TO A ONE-STOP ENTRY PLATFORM

(Presented by Chile and supported by 16 LACAC Member States²)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The COVID-19 pandemic has had an unprecedented impact on practically all industries, international passenger transport being among those most affected. As to the pandemic, the coordination and decision-making bodies established in Chile had adverse secondary effects on some airport processes, such as slowing down passenger entry, which affected the service delivery experience and quality. As a result and with a view to airport facilitation, one of the key factors identified to adjust and quicken these processes was information exchange between agencies and/or authorities tasked with controlling entry into the country, thus avoiding duplication of requests for passenger data and simplifying controls on arrivals by making use of existing technology and systems. It thus became obvious that it was necessary to harmonize and simplify the forms or declarations required for entry into the country.

Action: The Assembly is invited to instruct the Council to:

- a) elaborate on measures designed to minimize the amount of passenger information requested, whatever its nature, in terms of both data quantity and diversity of forms;
- b) promote access for any organization of a Member State to information that is at the disposal of another organization of the same State, in accordance with personal data protection laws;
- c) promote the capacity of States, depending on the scenario and needs, to work on collaboration agreements on the exchange of data, with the utmost safeguards always in place to protect personal data; and
- d) study the viability of establishing a one-stop international online platform (web portal), which enables passengers to upload information required by States, regardless of the port of departure or destination, and which simplifies data entry processing, while eliminating or minimizing duplication.

<i>Strategic Objectives:</i>	This working paper relates to the <i>Security and Facilitation</i> Strategic Objective
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<i>Financial implications:</i>	
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<i>References:</i>	
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¹ Spanish version provided by Chile.

² Aruba (Kingdom of the Netherlands), Belize, Brazil, Colombia, Cuba, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Dominican Republic and Uruguay.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The COVID-19 pandemic has not left any industry unscathed, the air industry being among those most affected. Accordingly, at the height of the pandemic, domestic traffic in Chile had plummeted by 91.2 per cent and international traffic by 98.9 per cent below passenger numbers for 2019. This impact was due mainly to restrictions imposed by the health authority on the movement of persons in order to contain the spread of the virus. It is noteworthy, moreover, that commercial flight activity in Chile never stopped, nor did airports close, thus maintaining the country's necessary air connectivity.

1.2 In the pandemic management response, the coordination and decision-making bodies established in Chile discussed ways and means of cushioning the impacts of the pandemic on health and on the various industries affected. In the case of the air industry, the coordination bodies addressed, among other matters, the conduct of health controls at airports, as well as adjustments and improvements to those controls, which as processes that were additional or new to the industry, lengthened the waiting and processing times experienced by the passenger primarily on arrival in the country.

1.3 In the last few months of 2021, the authorities and the coordination bodies undertook efforts to devise appropriate measures for sustained economic reactivation, as COVID-19 cases diminished gradually. Chile's commercial flight industry, too, was included in this process and both the authorities and public and private entities endeavoured to work together on the industry's "take off", drawing to that end on experience and on lessons learnt from the pandemic. The most important lesson concerned the need for more and better information in order to manage airport processes, and the pandemic generally, which would minimize impacts on, or even improve passengers' travel experience.

2. DISCUSSION

2.1 The incorporation of health processes into airport terminals was one of the major pandemic-derived changes to the air industry. Accordingly, additional health controls by the health authority had to be carried out in airports, which had not been designed for such processes. Furthermore, health control processes were conducted by teams whose members did not necessarily have knowledge of the specific operational features of an airport terminal or of the air industry in general.

2.2 The health controls in question consist of checking documentary proof of compliance with requirements for entry into, or travel within, the country, such as COVID-19 PCR test results. A health declaration, too, reflecting personal and travel data and compliance with the above requirements, may be required from the passenger and must be shown when boarding and on entering the country.

2.3 Moreover, many countries require declarations on matters unrelated to the COVID-19 pandemic, which are usually customs declarations. In particular, pursuant to its plant and animal health regulations, Chile requires an entry declaration that, in the same way as the health declaration, must comprise biographical and flight data. Accordingly, a passenger travelling to Chile must currently fill in both the COVID-19 health declaration and the declaration on the entry of plant and/or animal products, with some data entries being repeated.

2.4 *In situ* checking during health controls of documents that have not previously been validated constitutes one of the greatest process inefficiencies and gives rise to excessive and avoidable waiting and processing times. Furthermore, personal data or flight information, intrinsic to air transport, must be entered in the health declaration, although they are already available to the State through, for example, Advance Passenger Information (API) systems or government databases in the case of Chileans' and residents' biographical data. In summary, advance information is available, data already held by the

State are requested, ultimately to be requested and checked once more when boarding or during a more exhaustive control when entering the country.

2.5 The technology required to simplify passenger data capture currently exists, in addition to operating systems that, if better utilized, can eliminate the likelihood of a passenger being obliged to enter any datum more than once (the “one-stop window” concept in practice) and can minimize the need to check the same data again on arrival in the country. A valid example in this connection is the integration of the above-mentioned declarations into the database on Chile’s nationals and residents, which obviates the need for them to enter their biographical data in both declarations.

2.6 It is hoped that the above statements will continue to contribute to the improvement of the passenger’s pre-arrival experience, when boarding, as well as during the processing of entry into the country, and to greater efficiency in using the State’s economic and human resources.

3. CONCLUSION

3.1 In the light of the foregoing and under agenda item 13 — Facilitation Programmes, the Assembly is invited to instruct the Council to:

- a) elaborate on measures designed to minimize the amount of passenger information requested, whatever its nature, in terms of both data quantity and diversity of forms;
- b) promote access for any organization of a Member State to information that is at the disposal of another organization of the same State, in accordance with personal data protection laws;
- c) promote the capacity of States, depending on the scenario and needs, to work on collaboration agreements on the exchange of data, with the utmost safeguards always in place to protect personal data; and
- d) study the viability of establishing a one-stop international online platform (web portal), which enables passengers to upload information required by States, regardless of the port of departure or destination, and which simplifies data entry processing, while eliminating or minimizing duplication.

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