



IMPORTANCE OF REGIONAL HARMONISATION OF SANITARY CONTROLS IN THE STATES OF THE REGION

(Prepared by ANAC of Argentina)

SUMMARY

This working paper presents a proposal for the cooperative development by the States and the industry of health protocols for sustainable support of aviation in the Region, meeting the requirements of international organisations regarding sanitary controls in face of the COVID-19 pandemic, in order to safely and promptly reactivate regional and global air transport in SAM States. Ideally, the protocols so developed will be implemented by the States, and if this were not possible due to local requirements, they would serve as a reference for the identification and filing of differences by States adopting different measures.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Novel Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic was first identified in December 2019 in the city of Wuhan, capital of the Hubei province in central China. The World Health Organization (WHO) recognised it was a global pandemic on 11 March 2020 and, on 14 April 2020, more than 1.99 million cases of COVID-19 were reported in more than two hundred countries and territories, resulting in more than 126,000 deaths and more than 475,000 recovered patients. The countries with the largest number of infected individuals are United States, followed by Spain, Italy, Germany, France, United Kingdom and China.

1.2 On the week of 9 March 2020, the vulnerability of South American States started to be felt, upon the clear spread of this virus to the American continent. On Friday, 13 March 2020, information was received of the closure of air borders in some States of the Region, and of initial contingency measures related to sanitary controls at airports at the regional level and to crews and personnel participating in humanitarian flights and cargo transport operations.

1.3 At present, there is a need to take action in anticipation of the gradual resumption of aviation activities, with all the necessary guarantees to prevent the spread of COVID-19 among crews and the public using these services.

2. **PROPOSAL**

2.1 Currently, ICAO, WHO, the industry and the States are working towards the development of guidelines to minimise risks that might emerge when operations are resumed. However, their successful implementation will depend on the level of harmonisation and acceptance of sanitary controls at the regional level, and increasingly, at the global level.

2.2 In this regard, taking into account that the Regional Safety Oversight Cooperation System (SRVSOP) has a standing Licensing and Aviation Medicine Panel made up by medical experts representing each of its twelve member States, this is deemed to be the appropriate forum to develop, together with members of industry associations, a standard sanitary control protocol to be applied by States, based on guidance provided by ICAO, WHO and CAPSCA. This would help the industry to gradually resume its activities, avoiding dissimilar approaches to sanitary requirements that could hinder the resumption of activities or limit activities to a few destinations, which could prevent reactivation of the aviation industry and the economic development of our States. Recognising that there is still uncertainty as to what will be the guidelines defined by local health authorities in each State, if overall implementation of the protocols developed under the tool were not possible, the proposed work will serve as a regional reference for States to indicate their differences, and to quickly identify potential impacts and actions to be taken by the other agents of the sector.

2.3 If this proposal were accepted, it would start being developed immediately in order to have this tool ready as soon as possible for use by the States of our Region, as appropriate, for the benefit of the aviation industry that has been so adversely affected by COVID-19.

3. **SUGGESTED ACTION**

3.1 The Virtual Meeting of Civil Aviation Directors of the South American Region is invited to:

- a) take note of the information presented in this working paper; and
- b) approve the development of a standard protocol for sanitary control in our States, aimed at minimising the risk of COVID-19 when resuming aviation activities, to be implemented, to the extent possible, by all South American States.