



**Agenda Item 1A: Current situation and regional priorities**

**Evolving Travel Facilitation & Passenger Services in the Region**

(Presented by IATA)

**SUMMARY**

In the past two years, the industry has focused on the recovery of air travel. The removal of restrictions on international traffic in the region allowed the Americas Region to recover. In some countries, the traffic already surpassed the 2019 numbers. The recovery is once more putting pressure on all airports' infrastructure, particularly on services such as immigration, customs, and security. In the region, some airports are understaffed to adequately perform the above-mentioned services, and at times the processes are lengthy and manual, thus creating dissatisfaction among passengers due to long queues and transaction times that they must endure.

IATA understands the mid-term solution to this challenge requires evolving the regulatory framework and the implementation of modern technologies to process passengers, allowing to achieve greater effectiveness and efficiencies, while strengthening the security of air travel.

Acknowledging that the above process requires time and resources, IATA urges the governments to adopt both short and medium-term solutions, by ensuring the appropriate staffing is scheduled during airport operations, and concurrently reviewing the regulatory framework to allow current processes to evolve and thus improve the passenger experience in the region.

**Action:** The Meeting is invited to:

- a) Recognize the need to urgently review and make available the necessary staffing needed at immigration, security, and customs processes at airports.
- b) Recognize the need to review and evolve current passenger processing procedures, including the regulatory framework.
- c) Leverage the implementation of technological solutions to improve the passenger experience and strengthen national security.

**References:**

- Annex 9 of the Chicago Convention

**ICAO Strategic Objectives:**

Security & Facilitation

## 1. **Introduction**

1.1 Aviation is essential for the growth and sustainability of the global economy. In 2019, the aviation industry contributed US 187 billion dollars on the regional for Latin America GDP and supported 7.6 million regional jobs. Governments must ensure appropriate resources are allocated to support the aviation industry in terms of Security and Facilitation.

1.1 Furthermore, some countries in the region have already surpassed their 2019 passenger numbers.

1.2 Looking into the future, the demand for air transport services will continue to grow. North America is expected to reach 537 million passengers in 2040. On the other hand, Latin America and the Caribbean are estimated to achieve 117 million passengers by 2040. Member States must consider the need to review and evolve the regulatory framework and the implementation of short, medium, and long-term measures to be able to provide such services in an efficient and effective manner, reducing queue and processing times, while achieving better security outcomes and improved passenger satisfaction, thus increasing their competitive edge and benefiting from the positive socio-economic effects generated by aviation.

## 2. **Discussion**

2.1. The current lack of staffing at immigration, customs, and security services at several airports in the region - greatly affected by the consequences of the pandemic - is creating an unsustainable situation where travellers must endure long queues – at instances for several hours – to be processed, negatively impacting the passenger experience, negatively affecting the connectivity, and therefore discouraging air travel.

2.2. States must consider the implementation of urgent short-term measures, such as scheduling the proper number of staff to handle passenger flows and, where legally possible, implementing Automated Border Control for foreign citizens of selected countries to decongest immigration areas.

2.3 States shall review their regulatory frameworks to allow for the implementation of biometric solutions, which coupled with efficient use of API and PNR data provided by the airlines will allow for higher accuracy, quicker processes, better passenger experience, and more effective allocation of the limited control authority staffs.

2.4 States and regulators should also consider the utilization of risk-based screening differentiation at security checkpoints. Possible benefits from deploying such measures include more targeted security processes, enhanced operational efficiency, reduced pressures at airport checkpoints, and improved passenger experience.

2.5 States should continue to promote the use of randomness and unpredictability in the implementation of security measures even if risk-based differentiation is undertaken.

## 3. **Suggested action**

3.1 The Meeting is invited to:

- a) Recognize the need to urgently review the number of staff needed at immigration, security, and customs processes at airports, especially during peak airport operations.

- b) Recognize the need to review and evolve the current regulatory framework and passenger processing procedures, including the use of risk-based passenger screening differentiation.
- c) Develop a roadmap for the implementation of technological solutions based on biometrics to improve passenger experience and strengthen national security.

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