



International Civil Aviation Organization

Summary of Discussion of the Middle East DGCA Teleconference/Meeting

(23 April 2020, from 10:00 to 12:00 UTC)

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. The Middle East DGCA Meeting/Teleconference was held on Thursday 23rd April 2020 from 10:00 to 12:00 UTC, using Zoom facility.

1.2. The meeting/teleconference was attended by a total of sixty-three (63) participants from nine (9) States (Bahrain, Egypt, Jordan, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, UAE, USA and Yemen) and ten (10) Organizations (AACO, ACAO, ACI, CANSO, IATA, IFATCA, IFALPA, TSA, DFT and ICAO). The list of participants is at **Attachment 1**.

1.3. The main objectives of the teleconference are the following:

- a. provide briefings on actions taken by States and Organizations in relation to COVID-19 and share best practices, challenges and lessons learned;
- b. identify the short and longer term needs of States and the aviation industry; and
- c. agree on necessary actions to ensure orderly and harmonized return to normal operations (recovery phase).

2. OPENING

2.1 Mr. Mohamed Rahma, MID Regional Director, welcomed all participants and thanked them for accepting the invitation to join the teleconference and wished everyone a Holy and Blessed month of Ramadan. He highlighted that this is an informal teleconference to share information, insights, best practices and to collect information and ideas on the way forward (Recovery Plan).

3. DISCUSSIONS

3.1 The ICAO MID Regional Director provided a presentation covering the COVID-19 Impact on Aviation Business, Measures taken by ICAO at the Global and Regional levels and the Planning for the recovery phase. The presentation is at **Appendix A**.

3.2 It was noted that the rapidly evolving COVID-19 crisis heavily affected all aspects of civil aviation. The urgent need to coordinate all efforts to reduce the risks of the spread of COVID-19 by air transport and to protect the health of air travellers and aviation personnel, while maintaining essential aviation transport operations and ensuring an orderly return to normal operations in due course was underlined.

3.3 The meeting was apprised of the guidance materials developed/being developed by ICAO in coordination with Stakeholders, such as the Quick Reference Guides (QRGs) available at:

<https://www.icao.int/safety/COVID-19OPS/Pages/QRGs.aspx>

3.4 The meeting noted with appreciation that the ICAO MID Office developed a COVID-19 web page, with useful links/information, and a Table showing the list of NOTAMs issued by MID States and measures taken related to COVID-19 at:
<https://www.icao.int/MID/Pages/COVID19/COVID19.aspx>

3.5 The Meeting was also informed about the newly established Council Aviation Recovery Task Force (CART) to provide recommendations on strategic priorities and policies with the aim of supporting States and industry to cope with such challenges in the immediate term, facilitating the restart of aviation operations in a sustainable, safe, secure and orderly manner as soon as practicable taking into consideration the evolution of the COVID-19 pandemic and decisions by International and National Public Health Authorities and build a more resilient aviation system in the longer term.

3.6 After the presentation, a round table discussion took place to address the following questions/subjects:

- Apart from the economic impact, what are the most difficult challenges faced by the States and the industry amid the COVID-19?
- What is expected from ICAO and the Organizations at this stage?
- What are the proposed measures for a smooth and orderly return to normal (recovery plan)?

4. CHALLENGES FACED BY STATES AND AVIATION INDUSTRY AMID THE COVID-19

- The severe decline in traffic created imminent financial threats to the aviation industry globally which might have impact on safety and security. Many other challenges are directly related to the financial impact.
- Due to the availability of a very limited amount of information in the beginning of the crisis, States reacted in different ways.
- The main challenge is to rebuild States' confidence in aviation, since aviation was considered as the main cause of spread of COVID-19.
- The CAAs do not have the authority to decide on the reopening of the Aerodromes and borders for commercial passengers' flights. The decisions are taken by the Governments at a higher level.
- Return to normal activity without contributing to the spread of the virus worldwide and while complying with health measures;
- High risk of flight crew infection.
- The lack of Guidance on how to manage repatriation flights amid the Pandemic are making the control of those repatriation flights more challenging.
- Operational readiness of Stakeholders to resume operations considering the economic impact of the Pandemic on their business.
- Lack of medical equipment and facilities in some airports may delay the return of commercial passengers' flights.

5. EXPECTATIONS OF STATES FROM ICAO AND THE ORGS

- The meeting highlighted the need for ICAO to develop more guidelines to support States in overcoming the current challenges facing the operation of cargo and repatriation flights, etc.; and to gradually reinstate full scale operations. In this respect the meeting was apprised of the guidance materials developed/being developed by ICAO in coordination with Stakeholders including but not limited to:

- ✓ Quick Reference Guides (QRGs) at:
<https://www.icao.int/safety/COVID-19OPS/Pages/QRGs.aspx>; and
 - ✓ Guidance material developed within the CAPSCA framework “Guidance on Protection and Safety of Operational Crew Under COVID-19 Pandemic Conditions”
- The meeting commended the work undertaken under the CAPSCA Programme and agreed that ICAO should continue to take the lead in the development of further guidance to States and operators, in close coordination with WHO and other stakeholders.
 - ICAO should take the lead in developing necessary guidance to ensure harmonization and alignment of States’ recovery plans, to support an orderly and successful recovery at regional and global levels.
 - The COVID-19 crisis had a big impact on the CAAs and stakeholders plans and priorities, accordingly, ICAO should consider the review of the priorities included in the global plans (GASP, GANP and GASeP) and regional strategies, roadmaps and plans.

6. THE PROPOSED MEASURES FOR INDUSTRY RESTART AND ORDERLY RETURN TO NORMAL (RECOVERY PLAN)

6.1 The meeting underlined the importance of taking all necessary measures to facilitate a collaborative approach for restarting commercial passengers’ flights, including:

- Measures by governments should be based on medical evidences and risk based approach.
- The harmonization of recovery plans among MID States; this necessitates, inter-alia, the sharing of information and best practices for the development of recovery plan.
- Cross-border cooperation, coordination, and exchange of information and best practices.
- The establishment of the MID Region Recovery Plan Task Force (RPTF) to provide necessary guidance and facilitate a harmonized restart of commercial passengers’ flights in a sustainable, safe, secure and orderly manner as soon as practicable taking into consideration the evolution of the COVID-19 pandemic and the decisions by International and National Public Health Authorities.
- The meeting took note that the RPTF will assist in developing regional recovery planning, taking into consideration the work done at global level in order to ensure alignment and avoidance of duplication of efforts. The TF would focus on the global developments, promote the implementation of the global material at Regional level and adapt/customize, as appropriate. The RPTF is to be composed of International and Regional Organizations (AACO, ACAO, ACI, IATA, ICAO and CANSO) and the Chairpersons of the RASG-MID, MIDANPIRG and MIDRASFG. Representatives from States and other International Organizations might be invited to participate on ad-hoc basis.
- To consider/review the airspace capacity in order to avoid airspace congestion during the restart of operations. In addition, the meeting agreed that Contingency Coordination Team (CCT) could be used as a platform to share/channel information during the recovery phase.

- The AACO proposed template to be reviewed by the RPTF for further review and refinement before circulation to States and industry for their inputs.
- Need to avoid implementation of permanent measures for temporary situation.
- The roles and responsibilities should be clearly defined and respected in implementing the response to COVID-19: who does what (Governments, CAAs, ANSPs, Airlines, Airports and Organizations).

7. AOB AND CLOSING

- The meeting noted that the MID Office Work Programme has been under regular review since the beginning of the COVID-19 crisis and all the events planned for March, April, May and June 2020 have been cancelled/postponed. Teleconferences with the Chairpersons of MIDANPIRG, RASG-MID and MID-RASFG are planned to discuss their future work programmes and working arrangements.
- The meeting encouraged aviation stakeholders to use opportunity of period of low activity, to
 - for CAAs and ANSPs:
Elevate, reduce or even remove the flow restrictions/schemas, which were originally imposed as AFTM measures to balance the capacity vs demand;
 - for Airport Operators:
Carry out the airport's maintenance tasks which are challenging under normal circumstances.

MID DGCA Teleconference- Thursday 23rd April 2020

List of Participants

STATE/ ORGANIZATION	NAME	TITLE	EMAIL
STATES			
Bahrain	H.E. Mohamed Thamir Al-Kaabi Mr. Ali Ahmed Mohamed Mr. Kamal Hefiny Riyadh	Under-Secretary for Civil Aviation Advisor Air Navigation Advisor Air Transport	m.alkaabi@mtt.gov.bh aliahmed@mtt.gov.bh kriyadh@mtt.gov.bh
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STATE/ ORGANIZATION	NAME	TITLE	EMAIL
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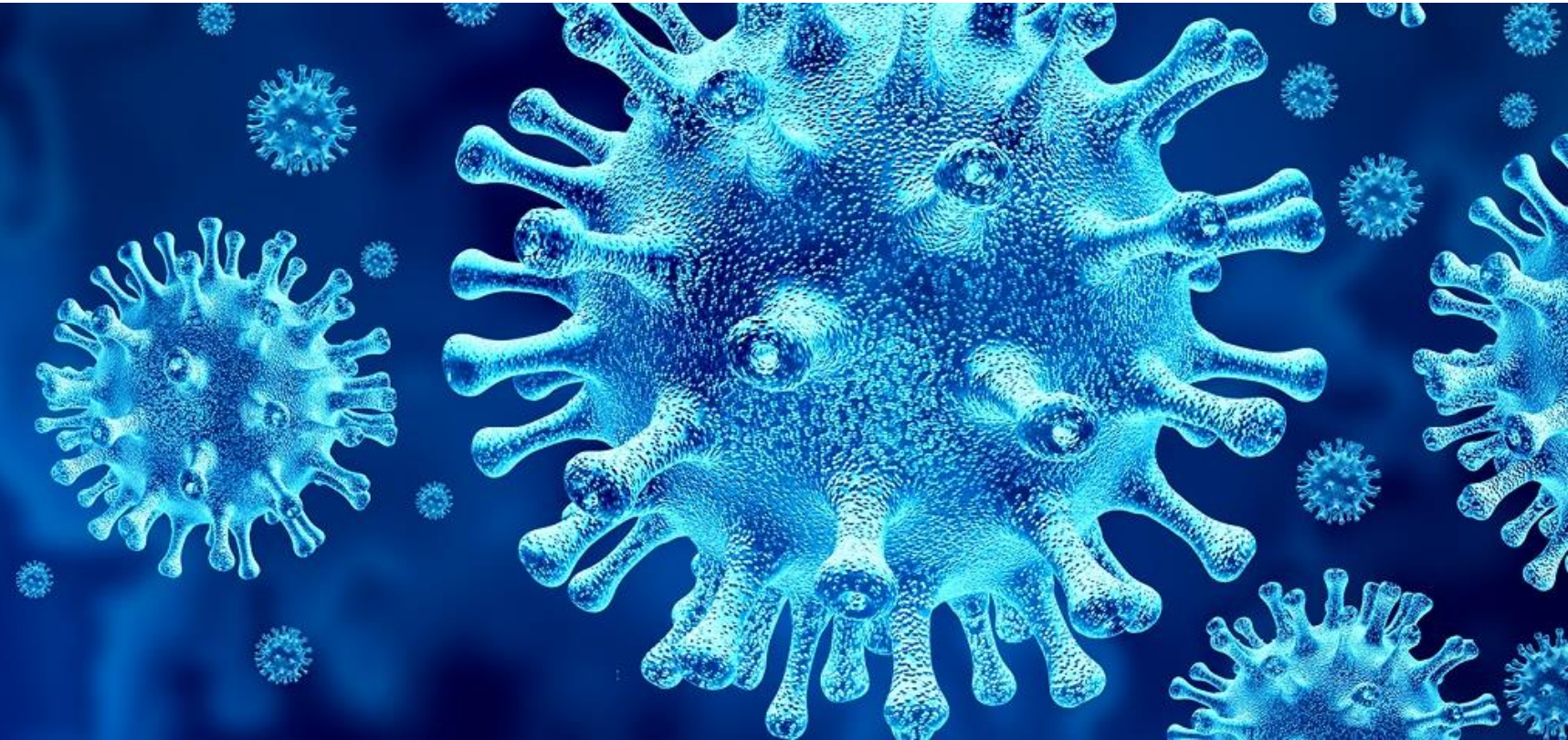
ICAO MID

APPENDIX A

23 April 2020

MID DGCA Teleconference COVID-19 Crisis

Mohamed Rahma
RD, ICAO MID Office



Outline



Introduction

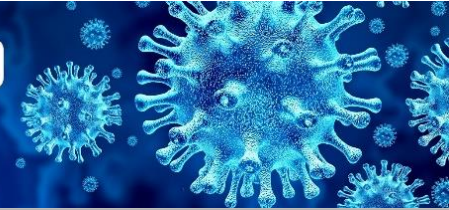
COVID-19 Impact on Aviation Business

Measures taken by ICAO at the global level

Measures taken by ICAO at the Regional Level

Planning for the recovery phase

Round table discussion



Introduction

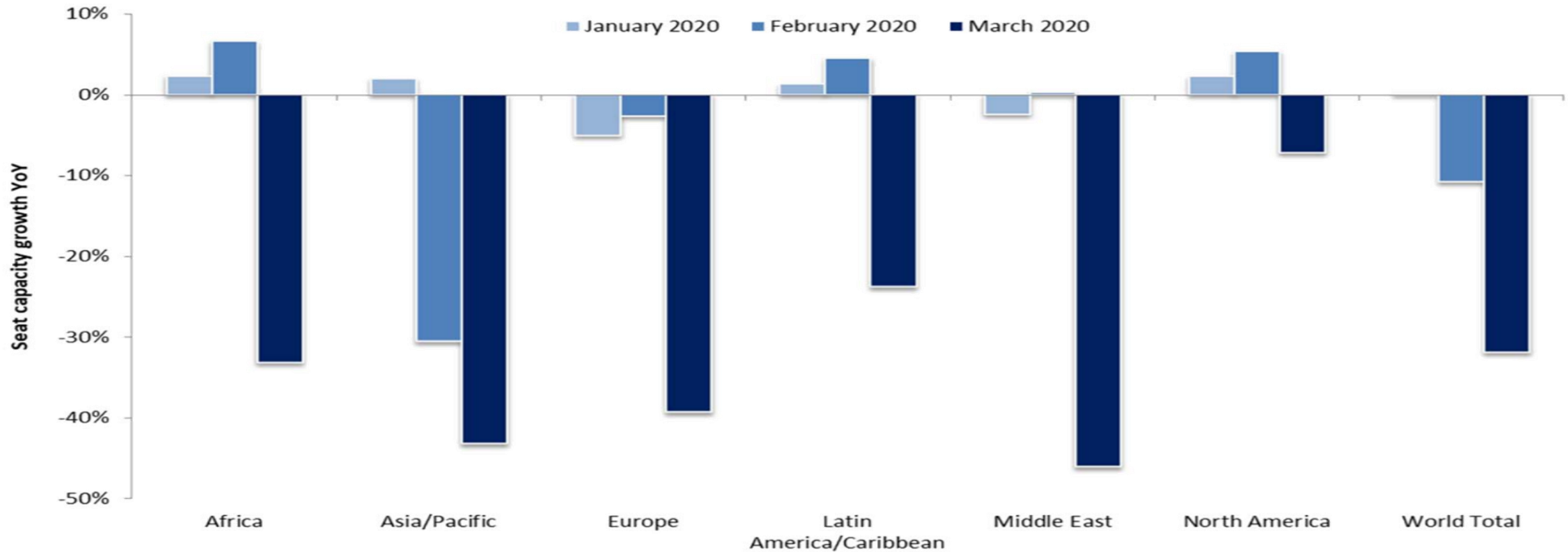


Since its emergence in late-2019, COVID-19 has infected more than **2,6** million people, with over **183** thousand deaths. In an attempt to mitigate its global spread, border restrictions have been imposed (and are continuing to be imposed) by many States.

As the rapidly evolving COVID-19 crisis is heavily affecting all aspects of civil aviation, there is an urgent need to coordinate all efforts to reduce the risks of the spread of COVID-19 by air transport and to protect the health of air travelers and aviation personnel, while maintaining essential aviation transport operations and ensuring an orderly return to normal operations in due course.

COVID-19 IMPACT ON AVIATION

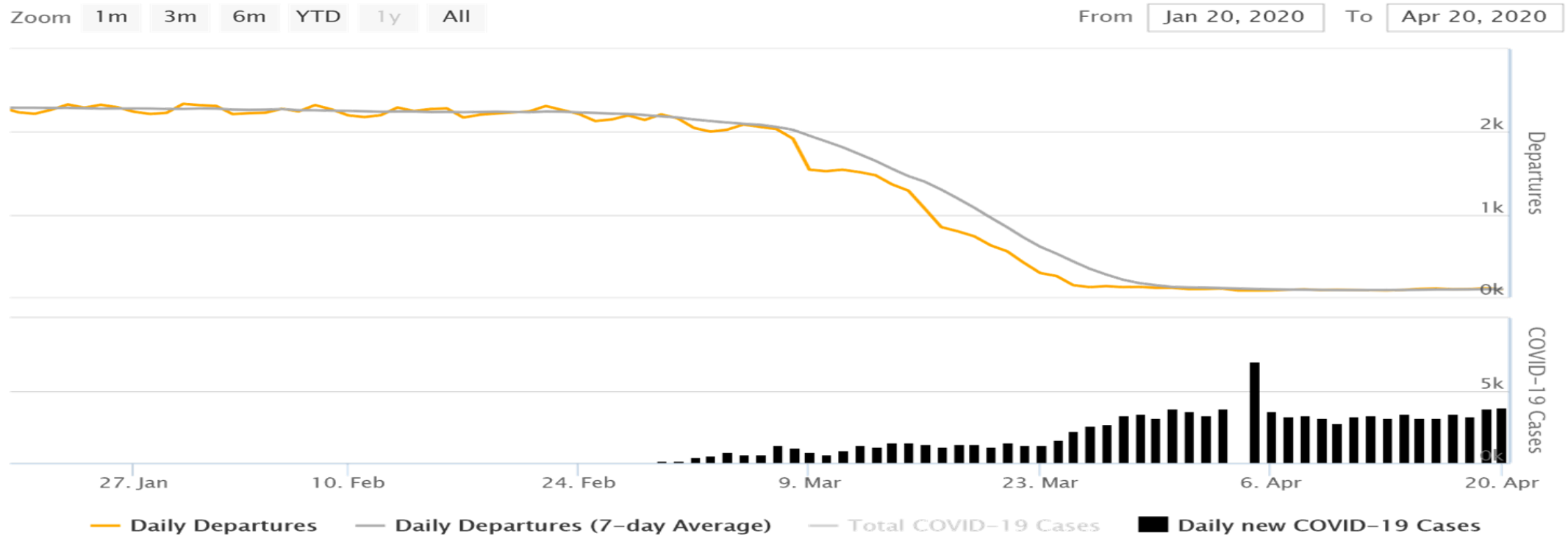
Monthly seat capacity change compared to 2019 by region (total international and domestic)



COVID-19 IMPACT ON AVIATION

Middle East

Daily number of Departures and COVID-19 Cases



MEASURES TAKEN BY ICAO AT GLOBAL AND REGIONAL LEVELS

The screenshot shows the ICAO Security and Facilitation website. The main navigation bar includes links for About ICAO, Global Priorities, Meetings and Events, Information Resources, Careers, Uniting Aviation, and Subscribe. The page features a large image of a virus particle. The main content area is titled "Aviation and COVID-19" and contains a paragraph explaining the risk of COVID-19 to air travel and the collaborative effort by ICAO, WHO, IATA, TIACA, and ACI to develop guidelines. A sidebar on the left lists various resources, with several items highlighted in red boxes: "Joint ICAO-WHO Statement on COVID-19", "the ICAO Council News Releases", "Reference Material ICAO CAPSCA", "Economic impacts of COVID-19 WHO", and "WHO advice for Travellers". At the bottom, there is a Q&A section for States, Air Transport Operators, and the General Public, with a search bar.

6 March: Joint Statement with WHO and associated news releases with quotations from industry

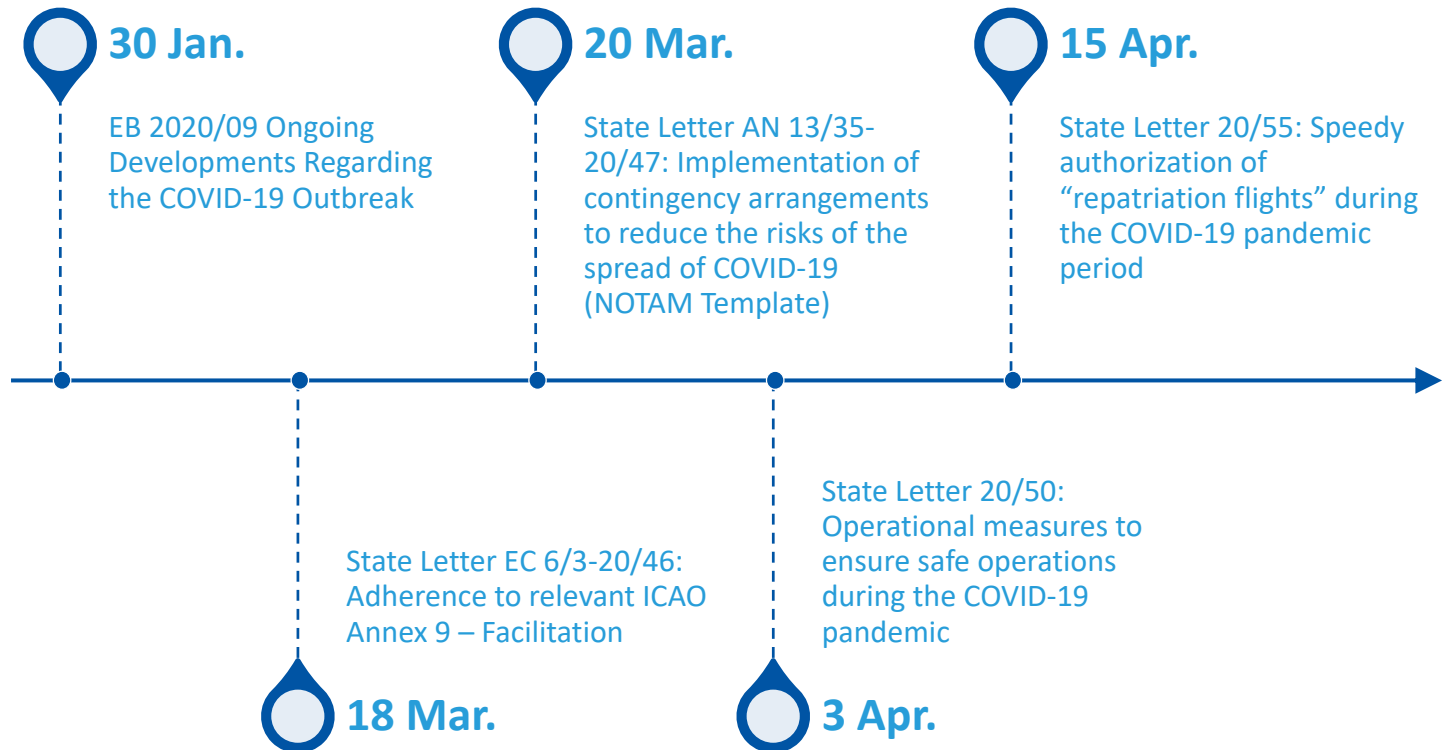
9 March: Council adopts COVID-19 Declaration

Continuous update of the ICAO Website on COVID-19 and civil aviation

Release of a new application providing comprehensive information on airport closures

In-depth daily economic analyses on the impact of COVID-19

MEASURES TAKEN BY ICAO AT GLOBAL AND REGIONAL LEVELS



MEASURES TAKEN BY ICAO AT GLOBAL LEVEL

COLLABORATIVE ARRANGEMENT FOR THE PREVENTION & MANAGEMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH EVENTS IN CIVIL AVIATION (CAPSCA)

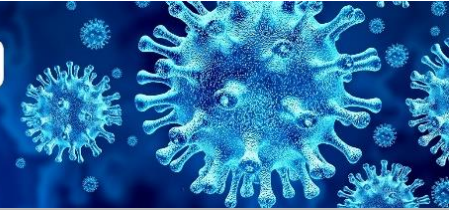
Regular updates, information/guidance material from ICAO, WHO, IATA, ACI, EASA, EUROCONTROL, States, etc. has been regularly shared with CAPSCA Regional Focal Points

CAPSCA survey (only 6 States replied: Bahrain, Iran, Kuwait, Qatar, Sudan and Syria)

Draft CAPSCA Harmonised Guidance on Protection and Safety of Operational Crew Under COVID-19 Pandemic Conditions “Management of public health events in civil aviation: protection and facilitation of air crew across borders in view of covid-19”

- Protection and facilitation of air crew across borders
- Harmonising measures applicable to air crew for State Civil Aviation Authorities

Public Health Corridor Concept



MEASURES TAKEN BY ICAO AT GLOBAL LEVEL

OPERATIONAL SAFETY MEASURES

Quick Reference Guidance (QRGs) issued by ICAO related to Aircraft Operations (Annex 6)

- Variations to existing flight and duty time limitations
- Recent experience requirements - pilot-in-command, co-pilot and cruise relief pilot
- Flight Crew Member Training Programmes
- Minimum Cabin Crew Requirements when Transporting Cargo in the Passenger Cabin:
- Cabin Crew Recurrent Training Requirements

Additional guidance published on Airworthiness of Aircraft : REPURPOSING AIRCRAFT PASSENGER CABIN FOR TRANSPORT OF CARGO

The Safety management guidance is in the process to be published which will be of use to CAAs in dealing with the aviation safety risks arising from the COVID-19 pandemic.

COUNCIL AVIATION RECOVERY TASK FORCE

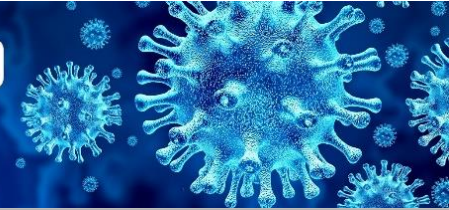
ICAO Council decided to establish the **Council Aviation Recovery Task Force (CART)** to provide recommendations on strategic priorities and policies with the aim of supporting States and industry to cope with such challenges in the immediate.

Objectives

cope with the challenges faced by States and industry due to the COVID-19 pandemic in the immediate term

facilitate the restart of aviation operations in a sustainable, safe, secure and orderly manner as soon as practicable taking into consideration the evolution of the COVID-19 pandemic and decisions by International and National Public Health Authorities

build a more resilient aviation system in the longer term



MEASURES TAKEN BY ICAO AT THE REGIONAL LEVEL

Regular updates, information/guidance material from ICAO, WHO, IATA, ACI, EASA, EUROCONTROL, States, etc. has been regularly shared with States/CAPSCA Focal Points

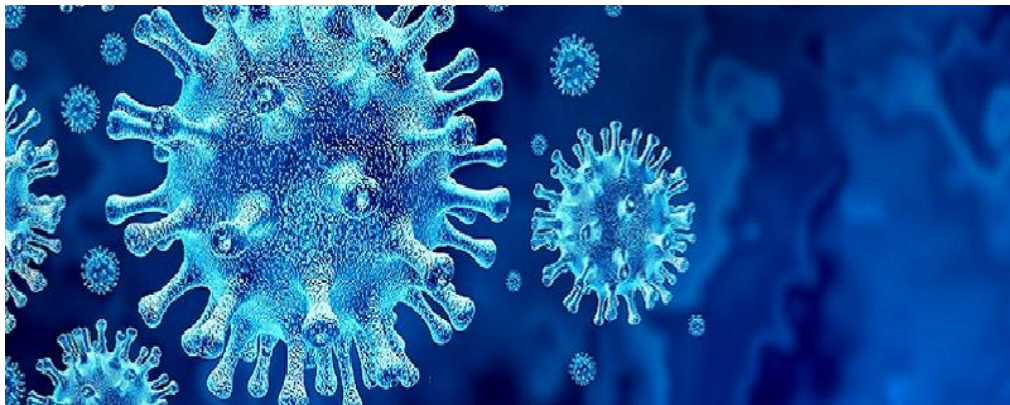
The ICAO MID Office, took the initiative to organize teleconferences with ALL the 15 member States, to inter-alia:

- provide an update on the actions taken by ICAO in relation to COVID-19
- collect information on the measures taken by Governments, including NOTAMs related to COVID-19, update on Airports Operability, Operational measures to ensure safe operations (licensing, certification, notification of differences, etc), and planning for the recovery phase
- address other subjects such as: CAPSCA, CORSIA, USOAP CMA, MID Office Schedule of meetings, etc

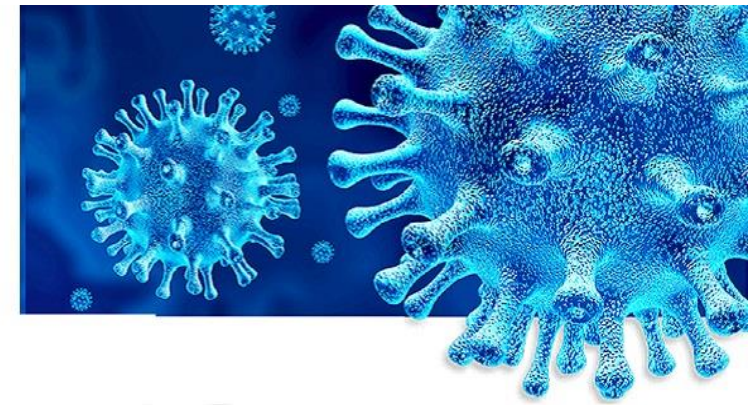
MEASURES TAKEN BY ICAO AT THE REGIONAL LEVEL

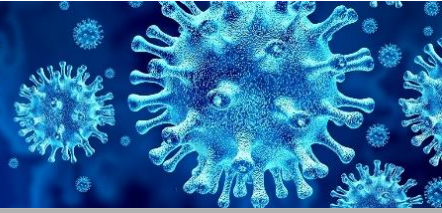
A COVID-19 web page was developed on the ICAO MID Office Website, with useful links/information, and a Table showing the list of NOTAMs issued by MID States and measures taken related to COVID-19

<https://www.icao.int/MID/Pages/COVID19/COVID19.aspx>



**ICAO MID
COVID-19**





MEASURES TAKEN BY ICAO AT THE REGIONAL LEVEL

Teleconferences with the International and Regional Organizations conducted on 9 and 22 April. The objectives were to share information on actions taken by each Organization in relation to COVID-19; Identify the short and longer term needs of the aviation industry; and plan for a smooth and orderly return to normalcy (recovery phase)

Need to establish a **Recovery Planning Task Force (RPTF)**

- The **RPTF** will follow-up and monitor the global developments and harmonize/customize the implementation of the global guidance at Regional level
- RPTF TORs are being drafted
- RPTF proposed composition: International and Regional ORG and Chairpersons of RASG-MID, MIDANPIRG and MID-RASFG
- Representatives from States and other Intl ORGs might be invited to participate on ad-hoc basis

ROUND TABLE DISCUSSION



Apart from the economic impact what are the most difficult challenges faced by the States and the industry amid the COVID-19



What is expected from ICAO and the ORGs at this stage?



What are the proposed measures for a smooth and orderly return to normal (recovery plan)?

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

MIDANPIRG, RASG-MID and MID-RASFG work programmes and working arrangements

How could we best use this period of low activity ?

- **For CAAs and ANSPs**
 - Elevate, reduce or even remove the flow restrictions/schemas, which were originally imposed as AFTM measures to control the capacity vs demand.
 - Facilitate and expedite the flight permission process, for such flights.
- **For Airport Operators**
 - RWY inspections, removal of rubber deposits, grass cutting, remedial repairs to paved areas for cracking and spalling of concrete, maintenance of markings and lighting, etc.)
- **Others**



كل عام وانتم بألف خير وصحة وعافية
Wishing you a joyous and blessed month of Ramadan

Ramadan Kareem

ICAO Middle East Regional Office- Cairo



Thank you for your Attention