
The International Health Regulations and Aviation Operations

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William Cocksedge, IHR Revision Project

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GLOBAL
HEALTH
SECURITY

EPIDEMIC ALERT & RESPONSE

INTERNATIONAL HEALTH REGULATIONS

**Contain
known risks**

**Respond to
the unexpected**

**Improve
preparedness**



GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP

IHR purpose

“ensure the maximum security against the international spread of disease with a minimum interference with world traffic”

“Real time” Event Management

Notification/verification of “public health emergencies of international concern”

– both disease events and risks

unofficial sources used

verification support offered

response support if required

WHO provides a “template” of recommendations & measures

electronic publication and updates

IHR National Focal Points

- **National technical co-ordinating site (public health institution) for the IHR revision process**
- **Co-ordinate the analysis of national public health events and risks**
- **Advise national authorities on notifications made to WHO and recommendations from WHO**
- **Disseminate information to, and co-ordinate input from, key national areas: disease surveillance, port, airport and ground crossing public health services, medical facilities and other government departments**

Disease risks for aircraft operations

- Respiratory spread the most problematic, but other risks can and do occur - e.g. vector-borne disease
- Precautions for crew and passengers necessary in some instances
- Application of on-board measures requires up-to-date information, both background and technical
- Measures must be carefully considered, with input from all impacted agencies

SARS

- SARS was spread rapidly by airline travellers
- International agencies and industry closely linked with WHO for response
- Some issues not fully resolved (e.g. passenger contact information)
- Public health contingency plans were not fully operational at airports

Preparations for future disease events

- Inter-agency planning underway to address international disease risks - ICAO, IATA, ECAC, ACI, WHO, Member States
- Both emergency and routine capacities addressed in revised International Health Regulations draft
- Proposed addition of Airport contingency plans in ICAO documents
- Joint work (IMSO/IHO/IMO/ICAO) to send urgent public health messages to aircraft and ships

Core point of entry capacities

Core Requirements for public health at points of entry:

- Detect and report the importation of public health risks (in persons, conveyances, goods) that indicate disease events in other countries**
- Provide routine services, like sanitation inspections of airport facilities**
- Provide “elastic” capacity at point of entry and local public health level for public health emergencies of international concern**
- Establish pre-set reporting and response linkages with public health agencies**

Core point of entry capacities

Activity areas

Routine:

- ensure facilities for travellers are safe, e.g. clean food/water, vector control
- review/provide documents for travel - e.g. vaccination certificates, aircraft/ship certificates
- inspect conveyances when required to issue certificates or investigate a possible public health risk
- eliminate vectors and other public health risks if found on board (designated ports only, not during public health emergencies)

Point of entry capacities

Activity areas

For international public health emergencies:

- develop a rapid communication/reporting system to link points of entry with local and national public health support
- elastic “surge” capacity required to implement emergency measures, as required, e.g. supplementary public health staff, logistics like dedicated ambulances and hospitals, coordination role between public health agencies and airport/aircraft operations

Work related to implementing the IHR

- The health part of the current Aircraft General Declaration is out of date, in terms of capturing new disease risks
- During public health emergencies, urgent public health information may be needed by aircraft in-flight
- This information could include the nature of the risk, the specific public health measures to be taken on board, and the measures recommended for application by airport health authorities on arrival