



ICAO Council adopts COVID-19 Declaration

For immediate release

ICAO HQ, Montréal, 9 March 2020 – Affirming the urgent need to reduce the risks of the spread of COVID-19 by air transport, and to protect the health of air travellers and aviation personnel, the ICAO Council adopted a special Declaration on COVID-19 today during the fourth meeting of its 219th Session.

The Council:

Recalled in particular, Articles 14 and 44 of the Convention on International Civil Aviation;

Affirmed the urgent need to reduce the public health risk of the spread of COVID-19 by air transport and protect the health of air travellers and aviation personnel;

Stressed the importance of:

- a) ensuring that response actions and measures are based on science and facts;
- b) engaging in cross-sector collaboration and the principles of multilateralism, strong international cooperation and coordination among all entities involved in the joint action against this public health emergency of international concern (PHEIC); and
- c) providing reliable and timely information to aviation authorities, airlines and other aircraft operators, airports and the public to help control the further spread of the virus.

Expressed strong support for the calls by the World Health Organization (WHO) for States to perform their own risk assessments and adapt their response measures accordingly, taking into account the International Health Regulations (IHR 2005);

Expressed concern at the economic impact of the COVID-19 outbreak on air transport and civil aviation;

Expressed appreciation for the cooperation of airlines, airports and other industry participants in working with governments and international organizations to help implement these response measures;

Urged ICAO Member States and stakeholders to:

- d) apply existing regulations and guidance, particularly the Standards and Recommended Practices (SARPs) of Annex 9 (Facilitation) and other relevant international standards contained in the other Annexes to the Convention on International Civil Aviation, when addressing outbreaks of communicable diseases that pose a public health emergency of international concern;
- e) apply existing recommendations and guidance provided by the WHO, in accordance with each country's risk assessment and unique circumstances;

- f) foster and implement a culture of collaboration and information sharing among public health and civil aviation authorities through the establishment of National Facilitation Committees comprising all relevant entities, in line with ICAO provisions;
- g) proactively join, contribute to and assist the Collaborative Arrangement for the Prevention and Management of Public Health Events in Civil Aviation (CAPSCA);
- h) take the necessary actions to maintain the sustainability of air transport and the highest level of safety;

Reaffirmed that ICAO would continue to support the aviation sector by working with Member States, and cooperating with the WHO and other relevant agencies of the United Nations system, and industry partners such as the International Air Transport Association (IATA) and Airports Council International (ACI); and

Further reaffirmed that the Council will continue to closely monitor the situation, support Member States in their response measures as appropriate, and stand ready to take further action as circumstances develop.

ICAO Council President Mr. Salvatore Sciacchitano together with the Secretary General, Dr. Fang Liu, highlighted the strong commitment of ICAO to supporting its Member States in implementing response measures and expressed their deep appreciation for WHO's cooperation with ICAO on COVID-19 throughout this Public Health Event of International Concern (PHEIC).



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Resources for Editors

[The ICAO Council](#)
[ICAO's COVID-19 website](#)

About ICAO

A specialized agency of the United Nations, ICAO was created in 1944 to promote the safe and orderly development of international civil aviation throughout the world. It sets standards and regulations necessary for aviation safety, security, efficiency, capacity and environmental protection, amongst many other priorities. The Organization serves as the forum for cooperation in all fields of civil aviation among its 193 Member States, and helps them to share their skies to their mutual benefit.

About the ICAO Council

The ICAO Council is a permanent body of the Organization responsible to the Assembly. It is composed of 36 Member States elected by the Assembly for a three-year term. The Council has numerous functions, notable among which are to submit annual reports to the Assembly, carry out the directions of the Assembly, and discharge the duties and obligations which are laid on it by the Convention on International Civil Aviation (Chicago, 1944). As one of the two governing bodies of ICAO, the Council gives continuing direction to the work of ICAO. In this regard, one of its major duties is to adopt international Standards and Recommended Practices (SARPs) and to incorporate these as Annexes to the Chicago Convention. The Council may also amend existing Annexes as necessary. On occasion, the Council may act as an arbiter between Member States on matters concerning aviation and the implementation of the provisions of the Convention. It may investigate any situation which presents avoidable obstacles to the development of international air navigation and, in general, it may take necessary steps to maintain the safety and regularity of international air transport.

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