



## Digital vaccine proofs, air travellers with disabilities and assistance to aircraft accident victims and their families among range of latest priorities addressed in new ICAO standards

For immediate release

**Montréal, 14 March 2022** – The ICAO Council has adopted a new set of international Standards and Recommended Practices (SARPs) addressing national civil aviation responses to public health emergencies, and the security and inspection of travel and related health documents.

The new Amendment 29 to Annex 9 – Facilitation to the Chicago Convention also addresses a wider range of facilitation provisions relating to the conduct of relief and repatriation flights, air travellers with disabilities, assistance to aircraft accident victims and their families, and the use of civil aviation for the trafficking in persons. The new SARPs will become applicable in November 2022.

“The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the importance of passenger and cargo facilitation in assuring safe, and efficient international aviation, especially in challenging times,” explained ICAO Council President Salvatore Sciacchitano.

“Through their adoption of these new Amendments, ICAO Council States have now addressed some important gaps which had been identified by an ad hoc task force it established, significantly reinforced Annex 9 in the process and making its framework much more fit for purpose to drive global harmonization across the full range of issues this Amendment has addressed.”

The new public health standards adopted includes a requirement for countries to employ a multi-layered risk management approach when pursuing public health measures in the aviation sector to prevent or mitigate the spread of a communicable disease.

Further recommended is that States should issue digital vaccination certificates in line with WHO recommendations, and that the certificates should be interoperable with the specifications in the ICAO Technical Report Visible Digital Seal for non-constrained environments (VDS-NC).

The new public health Standards also update requirements relating to aircraft and facility disinsection and disinfection, emergency medical relief, and the establishment of airport public health plans for preparing for, responding to and managing communicable disease outbreaks.

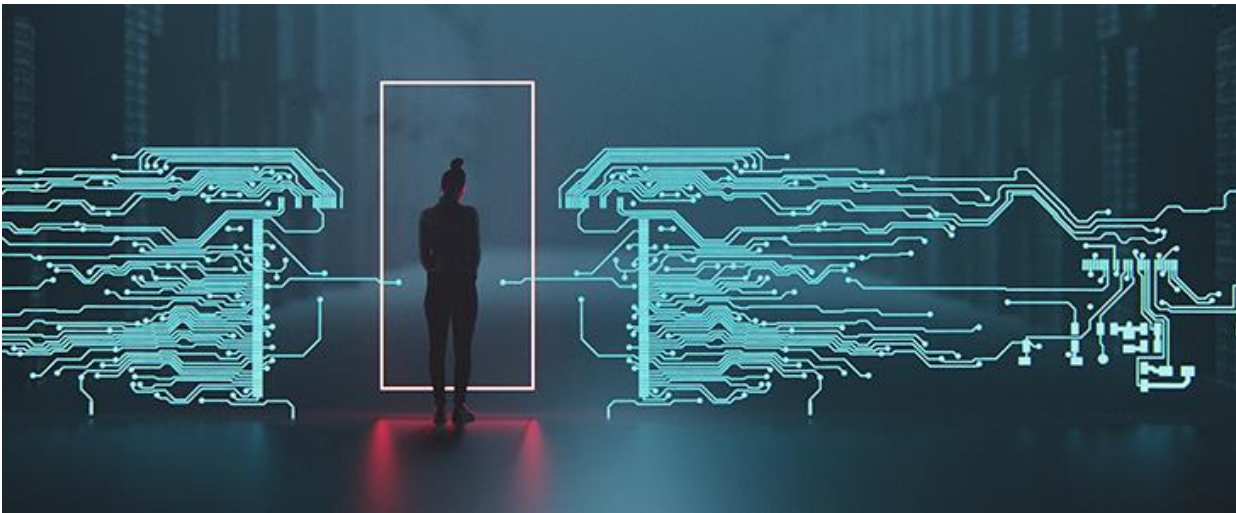
Regarding the inspection of digital health documents, Amendment 29 now requires countries to assist airlines in health proof evaluation to help deter fraud and abuse. Countries are also recommended to encourage airlines to have procedures in place to check and evaluate standardized health documentation related to air travel. It further recommends that governments consider automating the inspection of health-related documentation, or using contactless procedures.

With respect to the obligations placed on States to assure sufficient care and information for aircraft accident victims and their families, the Amendment now elevates former ICAO *Recommended Practice* 8.46, which requires countries to set out appropriate legislation and policies in this area, to an international Standard.

The international regulatory framework on facilitation of transport of persons with disabilities was amended such that five previous recommended practices have now been elevated to Standards,

including provisions relating to the accessibility of flight service-related information for the hearing- and vision-impaired, the basic right to assistance for disabled travellers, and the establishment of designated vehicle parking and drop off areas for disabled persons at passenger terminal buildings.

Lastly, the Annex 9 Recommended Practice concerning the establishment of measures to ensure that government procedures are in place to combat the trafficking in persons, now encourages States to realize this capacity based on a comprehensive strategy including clear reporting systems and relevant points of contact for airport and aircraft operators.



## Resources for Editors

### About ICAO

A specialized agency of the United Nations, ICAO was created by governments in 1944 to support their diplomacy on international air transport matters. Since that time, countries have adopted over 12,000 standards and practices through ICAO which help to align their national regulations relevant to aviation safety, security, efficiency, capacity and environmental protection, enabling a truly global network to be realized. ICAO forums also provide opportunities for advice and advocacy to be shared with government decision-makers by industry groups, civil society NGOs, and other officially-recognized air transport stakeholders.

[Security and Facilitation, a strategic objective for ICAO](#)

## General Contact

[communications@icao.int](mailto:communications@icao.int)

Twitter: [@ICAO](#)

## Media Contact

### William Raillant-Clark

Communications Officer

[wraillantclark@icao.int](mailto:wraillantclark@icao.int)

+1 514-954-6705

+1 514-409-0705 (mobile)

Twitter: [@wraillantclark](#)

LinkedIn: [linkedin.com/in/raillantclark/](https://www.linkedin.com/in/raillantclark/)