



DANGEROUS GOODS PANEL (DGP) WORKING GROUP MEETING (DGP-WG/20)

Virtual Meeting, 19 to 23 October 2020

Agenda Item 8: Other business

INFORMATION ON IATA ACTIVITIES RELATED TO THE CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC

(Presented by D. Brennan)

SUMMARY

This paper sets out some of the activities that the IATA Cargo Department has been involved in to address specific issues that have emerged resulting from the coronavirus pandemic where dangerous goods or the provisions related to the transport of dangerous goods have been a factor.

Action by the DGP-WG: The DGP-WG is invited to note the information provided.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The emergence of the novel coronavirus (SARS-CoV-2) in late 2019 and the resulting coronavirus pandemic through 2020 has had a devastating effect on the global aviation industry and on the global economy.

1.2 Since March 2020 IATA has been engaged with international organisations to support IATA members to be able to address the safety and operational challenges posed by the coronavirus pandemic. The result of this work includes:

1.2.1 Development of guidance on the transport of specimens of SARS-CoV-2. Very early in the emergence of the coronavirus there were questions on the appropriate classification of specimens being sent for analysis. In discussion with the World Health Organization (WHO) there was agreement that in accordance with guidance on transport of specimens of SARS and MERS that UN 3373 — **Biological substance, Category B** was an appropriate classification for specimens of the coronavirus.

1.2.2 Issuance of guidance on the carriage of alcohol-based hand sanitizer and the process for the addition of alcohol-based hand sanitizer as aircraft equipment.

1.2.3 Transport of human remains where the cause of death was COVID-19. In conjunction with CDC, ICAO and WHO guidance was developed providing recommendations on the transport of human remains where the cause of death was COVID-19. This was driven by requests for guidance from member airlines who were being approached by next-of-kin looking to repatriate human remains for funerals.

1.2.4 Guidance on the loading of cargo and mail in the passenger cabin. As the pandemic progressed there was initially significant demand from health authorities for additional supplies of personal protective equipment (PPE), much of which had to be transported by air from the countries of manufacture. With almost the entire fleet of passenger aircraft grounded due to lack of demand, many operators identified the potential for passenger aircraft to be used to supplement cargo aircraft. Initially the PPE being shipped as cargo was just loaded in underfloor cargo compartments, however due to the low weight of most of the PPE, e.g. masks, the operators identified that the cargo could be loaded into the passenger cabin. A cross-functional team involving cabin operations, cargo, ground operations, safety and flight operations was established to develop guidance for operators on the safety and operational considerations, including safety risk assessment to permit the carriage of cargo and mail in the cabin of passenger aircraft.

1.2.5 Most recently IATA Cargo has been engaged with representatives from international organisations and pharmaceutical companies to develop guidance to address the transport of a vaccine for coronavirus when or if one becomes available. This guidance is in development and is in the process of being shared with external organisations, including World Customs Organization, World Health Organization, World Food Program, UNICEF, FIATA and the International Federation of Pharmaceutical Manufacturers & Associations for their input and feedback. The objective of the guidance is to identify the issues that must be considered to ensure the safe and efficient transport of vaccines. These include requirements for maintenance of cold chain, including the potential use of dry ice and the use of data loggers / cargo trackers fitted with lithium batteries.

1.2.6 On Wednesday 21 October, 1430 – 1545 CEST there will be the first of a three-part webinar series: Transport of Vaccines and Life Science Products by Air Cargo. These webinars will look at the aviation industry's challenges with the transport of vaccines when they become available. Information on the webinars, including the link to register, can be found here: <https://www.iata.org/en/events/webinars/>

1.2.7 The guidance documents referenced above can be found here: www.iata.org/cargo under the heading “Keeping air cargo flying”.

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