



International
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Международная
организация
гражданской
авиации

منظمة الطيران
المدني الدولي

国际民用
航空组织

Tel.: +1 514-954-8219 ext. 6088

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Subject: State support to prevent the spread of
Novel Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19)

Action Required: Urge States to: a) implement relevant provisions of Annex 9; b) become a member of the Collaborative Arrangement for the Prevention and Management of Public Health Events in Civil Aviation (CAPSCA); c) enhance effectively National FAL Committees by clarifying roles and responsibilities of public health and civil aviation authorities during outbreaks; d) implement effective collaboration and coordination strategies with all stakeholders; and e) provide financial and in-kind assistance or support to the CAPSCA programme

Sir/Madam,

1. The International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) has the honour to inform you that an electronic bulletin (EB 2020/6) on 24 January 2020 was issued regarding the COVID-19 outbreak in China advising States to refer to the World Health Organization (WHO) for advice; to become members of the ICAO Collaborative Arrangement for the Prevention and Management of Public Health Events in Civil Aviation (CAPSCA) programme; to implement multi-sector communication and to collaborate with all relevant stakeholders; and to remind States that the implementation of the Standards and Recommended Practices (SARPs) that relate to the preparedness and management of public health emergencies is essential.

2. The WHO Director-General, Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus convened a second Emergency Committee meeting on 30 January 2020, in accordance with the International Health Regulations (IHR). He declared that the COVID-19 outbreak constitutes a Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC) and issued Temporary Recommendations under the IHR (2005).

3. In a press release issued on 30 January 2020, ICAO underscored the importance of cooperation, coordination and reliable information to help control the international spread of contagious

outbreaks; and the value of the CAPSCA network to make information rapidly available to Member States.

4. ICAO issued a second electronic bulletin (EB 2020/9) on 30 January 2020 strongly urging Member States to adhere to the recommendations and guidance provided by the WHO and to become CAPSCA members as per ICAO Assembly Resolution A40-14: Mitigation of the spread of disease through, inter alia, aircraft disinsection and vector control methods, and the importance of CAPSCA (Collaborative Arrangement for the Prevention and Management of Public Health Events in Civil Aviation) for implementation. States were informed that key information compiled by WHO, ICAO and other relevant entities are published on the CAPSCA website (<https://www.capsca.org>); as well as disseminated by electronic mail through the CAPSCA network.

5. In a second press release issued on 4 February 2020, ICAO reminded national governments of their obligation under the IHR to inform the WHO when implementing additional health measures which may significantly interfere with international traffic; supported WHO's calls to all countries not to impose restrictions inconsistent with the IHR; and reminded national governments of the importance of States' implementation of SARPs which relate to the preparedness and management of public health emergencies.

6. States are reminded of ICAO's international regulatory framework established through Annexes to the *Convention on International Civil Aviation* (Chicago Convention), and their obligations pursuant to the Convention. In particular, States are reminded of their obligation to establish a national aviation plan for a communicable disease outbreak as well as National Air Transport Facilitation Programmes (NATFP) as required by Annex 9 — *Facilitation*, Standards 8.16 and 8.17, respectively. Disease such as COVID-19 poses a risk to the travelling public because it can be transmitted between humans. Therefore, it is important to develop aviation plans and air transport facilitation programmes in order to, inter alia, clarify roles and responsibilities of public health and civil aviation authorities during outbreaks and hence to assist in limiting its spread by air transport. Furthermore, the economy of the aviation sector, and industries that rely on it, will undoubtedly be detrimentally affected. For both reasons it is therefore necessary to plan for such an event, in order to mitigate the effects of a human outbreak.

7. The purpose of the NATFP is to implement the Chicago Convention mandate that Member States provide for and facilitate the border-crossing formalities with respect to aircraft engaged in international operations, passengers and their baggage, crews and cargo. The success of the NATFP requires the active participation of relevant Government ministries or agencies, such as, customs, immigration, foreign affairs, agriculture/environment, quarantine and public health. States should consider the guidance in ICAO Doc 10042, *Model National Air Transport Facilitation Programme* when developing their NATFP.

8. The COVID-19 outbreak and its impact on airports' operations globally, underpin the important role of public health authorities at air borders, and the need for an effective national policy framework on air transport facilitation to establish clear roles and responsibilities of the various ministries, agencies and organizations involved with or responsible for air transport facilitation.

9. Furthermore, Member States are urged to complete the Annex 9 Compliance Checklist in the Electronic Filing of Differences (EFOD) System, accordingly.

10. In order to collect States' information on the implementation of ICAO SARPs regarding, inter alia, compliance with international health regulations of the WHO (2005) and development of national aviation plans in preparation for an outbreak of a communicable disease posing a public health

risk or public health emergency of international concern, ICAO will be establishing an online survey on its public website, for completion by States. Member States are urged to complete the survey.

11. In July 2021, the Twelfth Meeting of the ICAO Facilitation Panel will consider a review of Annex 9 SARPs on public health matters with the objective to consolidate existing and possible new SARPs into a single chapter for ease of reference.

12. WHO developed an on-line training course on an open-learning platform regarding general introduction to coronavirus (and emerging respiratory viruses intended for public health professionals, incident managers and personnel working for the United Nations, international organizations and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), which is available at <https://openwho.org/courses/introduction-to-ncov>.

13. ICAO also has an on-line CAPSCA training course to provide participants with the necessary knowledge and skills required to participate in an on-the-job training mission to conduct a technical assistance visit to CAPSCA member States and airports available at: <https://www.icao.int/training/Pages/training-catalogue-details.aspx?catid=615&language=0®ion=&ITP=0>.

14. Funding of the CAPSCA programme is essential for sustainability. To date, funding for CAPSCA activities has been provided by United Nations grants (which ended 2016) and voluntary as well as in-kind contributions from States and organizations. Apart from becoming members of CAPSCA, States and organizations are encouraged to support the programme in-kind by making available resources and personnel to assist. ICAO is also appealing for financial contributions through ICAO's voluntary Safety Fund (SAFE) earmarked for CAPSCA. More information about SAFE is available on the ICAO website www.icao.int/SAFE.

15. ICAO strongly supports WHO's call for international solidarity and urges Member States to strengthen their preparedness plans for managing risks relating to communicable disease outbreaks by implementing effective collaboration and coordination strategies with all stakeholders.

16. For additional information on Annex 9 SARPs and assistance for its implementation, please contact Chief, Facilitation Section, Narjess Abdennebi at fal@icao.int. Additional information about CAPSCA can be obtained from the Chief, Aviation Medicine Section and CAPSCA programme manager, Dr. Johanna Jordaan (jjordaan@icao.int).

Accept, Sir/Madam, the assurances of my highest consideration.

Fang Liu
Secretary General