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This circular is promulgated for information, guidance and necessary action.

PUBLIC HEALTH RISK MITIGATION MEASURES – AIR CREW

In the implementation of these measures, care should be taken to follow all applicable laws, regulations, requirements, standards, and guidance issued by relevant sub-national, national and international authorities.

Nothing in these guidelines is intended to supersede or contradict such requirements.

Foreign commercial air operators conducting flights to Seychelles during the COVID-19 pandemic must demonstrate compliance to the 'ICAO Council Aviation Recovery Task Force (CART) Take-off: Guidance for Air Travel through the COVID-19 Public Health Crisis' or any equivalent guidance publication prior to being issued with an operating permit, licence or authorization.

Applicable risk mitigation measures specific to the air crew aspects of air transport.

The objective of this document is to provide harmonised health protection and sanitation guidance and considerations applicable to crew members that can be implemented by commercial air operators and will be acceptable globally.

A. General (applicable to all crewmembers)

Unless specified as flight crew or cabin crew, the term “crew” refers to all operational crew required on board for the air operator to support the flight. This element applies to all crew.

1. Facilitation

- Commercial Air Operators must ensure that flight operations are conducted in accordance with all health safety regulations and guidance applicable in their respective State and States where operations are being conducted in order to guarantee that their operating personnel (crew members, maintenance, cargo/load specialized personnel) who are involved in flights with a stopover, should not need to be medically quarantined and/or placed under observations while on layover or upon returning, unless they were exposed to a known symptomatic passenger or crew member on board or during the stopover.

Note: Crew members operating passenger aircraft with cargo only, should ensure that the correct notification has been sent to all agencies, to ensure that there is no confusion, or that crew members carried on board such as loadmasters, engineers, and cabin crew are correctly recognised and designated on the crew manifest.

- States of commercial air operators must ensure that measures are effectively implemented in order to facilitate the continued operation of aircraft, such that:
 - Quarantine measures are not imposed on crew requiring layover, or rest, for the purposes of complying with flight time limitation (FTL) rest requirements.
 - Crews are not subject to screening or restrictions applicable to other travelers.
 - National authorities/agencies must ensure that crew members' health screening methods are as non-invasive as possible.
 - Commercial Air Operators must ensure the following:
 - all crew members meet all relevant customs, immigration, and health requirements;
 - complete the appropriate forms upon departure and arrival; and
 - use the correct customs and immigration channels at the airport.
2. Commercial Air Operators must ensure that all their operating crew members are aware of the necessary precautions described below as part of their regulatory requirements of crew health precautions and air operator management system:
- a. Health monitoring
 - Crew members should monitor themselves for fever, cough, shortness of breath, or other symptoms of COVID-19.
 - Crew members should take their temperature at least twice per day during duty periods and at any time they feel unwell.
 - Crew members should stay at home or in their hotel room, notify their employers occupational health program, and not report for work if they develop a fever, shortness of breath, or other symptoms of COVID-19, and should not return to work until cleared to do so by the employer's occupational health program and public health officials.
 - b. Examples of crew exposure concerns include the following:
 - Crew members are within a mandated period quarantine related to previous travel and/or duty.

- Tested positive for Covid-19 regardless of symptoms evident.
- Aware that they have been exposed to a person showing symptoms of Covid-19.
- Are experiencing Covid-19 symptoms.
- Have recovered from Covid-19 symptoms but have not been assessed by the employer's occupational health program and/or public health authority.

c. During Flight:

If a crew member develops symptoms during flight, the crew member should stop working as soon as practicable, put on a surgical mask, notify the pilot-in-command (PIC), and maintain the recommended physical distance from others, when possible to do so. Upon landing, the airline medical team and public health officials should follow up.

d. Health protection

To protect the health of crew and health of others, including co-workers, crew members should:

- Maintain recommended physical distance from others where possible, when working on the aircraft e.g., while seated on the jump seat(s) during take-off or landing, during ground transportation and while in public places.
- If hands are not visibly dirty, the preferred method is using an alcohol-based hand rub for 20–30 seconds using the appropriate technique. When hands are visibly dirty, they should be washed with soap and water for 40–60 seconds using the appropriate technique.
- Along with frequent hand washing/sanitization, crew members should be reminded of the need to avoid touching their face wherever possible, including while wearing gloves;
- Wear a face covering while around other people, especially in situations where the recommended physical distance from others cannot be maintained.

Note: A face covering should not replace the use of surgical masks or other PPE provided in the Universal Precaution Kit (UPK) when interacting with a sick traveler on board an aircraft.

- Avoid contact with people with a cough, fever, or shortness of breath or otherwise suspected of showing COVID-19 symptoms;
- Before each flight, inspect and verify contents of the UPKs. Follow existing air carrier policy and procedures regarding the use of PPE in the UPKs, if required to provide care to a sick traveler on board;

- Follow the guidance and precautions of the State and relevant health authorities related to COVID-19.

3. Additionally, airlines must ensure the following:

- Provision of sufficient quantities of cleaning and disinfectant products (e.g. disinfectant wipes) that have been certified as effective against COVID-19 for use during flight.
- Provision of face covering to crew members for routine use when on duty, if these do not interfere with required PPE, job tasks and when it is difficult to maintain the recommended physical distance from co-workers or passengers at all times.

4. Use of lavatories

Ideally, one or more lavatories should be reserved for crew use, in order to limit the potential for infection from passengers.

5. Crew rest compartments

- To minimize any possibility of cross infection, where pillows, cushions, sheets, blankets or duvets are provided, these should not be used by multiple persons unless coverings are laundered or changed.
- Certain commercial air operators may issue each crew member with their own provisions and the cabin crew members are responsible for ensuring that they are removed and bagged after use.
- Other commercial air operators provide bulk loading for crew rest area bedding items. Where this is the case, crew members should install their own bedding items before their rest period and remove them hygienically afterwards.

6. Training devices

Increase the frequency of routine cleaning of flight simulators and training devices and other training aids, or equipment used during training. Cleaning products used should be compatible with COVID-19 disinfectants.

7. Means for uniform implementation

Commercial air operators must ensure:

- that these guidance and considerations are fully supported by:
 - The applicable non-governmental agencies.
 - Public health, Immigration and Customs agencies.

- Civil Aviation Authorities.
- A high degree of collaboration between airport operators and their associated stakeholder community.
- **Associated policy, procedures and training are developed and effectively implemented to reinforce the importance of these guidance and considerations.**
- Use the 'ICAO Council Aviation Recovery Task Force (CART) Take-off: Guidance for Air Travel through the COVID-19 Public Health Crisis' – Crew COVID-19 Status Card (PHC Form 1) or a similar one where appropriate.

B. Flight Crew

The objective of this element is to provide harmonized health protection and sanitation guidance and considerations applicable to Flight Crew which can be implemented by commercial air operators and will be acceptable globally.

1. Commercial Air Operators must ensure that all their operating flight crew members are aware of the necessary precautions described below as part of their regulatory requirements of crew health precautions and air operator management system:
 - Access to the flight deck is limited to the greatest extent possible.
 - The flight deck will only be left for short physiological breaks.
 - Consideration of whether removal from the flight deck is an appropriate mitigation within their risk assessment in the case of flight crew at controls displaying symptoms.
 - Use of face masks by flight crew or other crew members etc., should not impair the donning of oxygen masks (rapidly placed on the face, properly secured, sealed, supplying oxygen on demand). Flight crew members must be provided with the correct guidance/instructions and if deemed necessary any associated training.
 - All stowable items are stowed, personal items removed, and flight-deck is ready for cleaning and disinfection prior to leaving the flight deck upon completion of each flight.
 - Appropriate sanitization of the flight deck prior to each cockpit crew change.
 - Reduction of person interactions with the cabin crew members to a minimum required for conduct of flight operations.
 - Designation of a single person allowed access to the flight deck where possible depending on aircraft type, configuration and type of operations.

- Designation of a single person (flight crew or technical crew) to be allowed to disembark the aircraft to complete the external inspection, refueling, etc., in such case direct contact with the ground crew should be avoided to the extent possible.

2. Means for uniform implementation

Commercial air operators must ensure:

- that these guidance and considerations are fully supported by:
 - The applicable non-governmental agencies.
 - Public health, Immigration and Customs agencies.
 - Civil Aviation Authorities.
- A high degree of collaboration between airport operators and their associated stakeholder community;
- **Associated policy, procedures and training are developed and effectively implemented to reinforce the importance of these guidance and considerations.**
- Use the 'ICAO Council Aviation Recovery Task Force (CART) Take-off: Guidance for Air Travel through the COVID-19 Public Health Crisis' – Crew COVID-19 Status Card (PHC Form 1) or a similar one where appropriate.

C. Cabin Crew

The objective of this element is to provide harmonised health protection and sanitation considerations applicable to cabin crew which can be implemented by commercial air operators and will be acceptable globally.

1. Commercial air operators must ensure that all their operating cabin crew members are aware of the necessary precautions described below **in addition to those of other crew members (due to increased risk associated with the direct and frequent contact with passengers)** as part of their regulatory requirements of crew health precautions and air operator management system:
 - Cabin crew members in contact with a passenger suspected to be infected should not visit the flight deck unless operationally necessary.
 - While limiting the number and frequency of physical flight crew checks, an alternative method of checking on flight crew welfare such as regular interphone calls should be implemented.
 - The use of PPE should not impact the ability to carry out normal, abnormal and emergency safety procedures, such as the donning of oxygen masks, carrying out firefighting procedures etc.

- Safety demonstration equipment (Demo kit) should not be shared to reduce the likelihood of virus transmission. If they must be shared, the equipment should be thoroughly sanitized between use or alternate means of demonstration without the equipment should be considered.

2. Means for uniform implementation

Commercial air operators must ensure:

- that this guidance and considerations are fully supported by:
 - The applicable non-governmental agencies.
 - Public health, Immigration and Customs agencies.
 - Civil Aviation Authorities.
- A high degree of collaboration between airport operators and their associated stakeholder community;
- **Associated policy, procedures and training are developed and effectively implemented to reinforce the importance of these guidance and considerations.**
- Use the 'ICAO Council Aviation Recovery Task Force (CART) Take-off: Guidance for Air Travel through the COVID-19 Public Health Crisis' – Crew COVID-19 Status Card (PHC Form 1) or a similar one where appropriate.

D. Crew Layover

The objective of this element is to ensure that all crew members requiring layover or transit at an outstation are aware of the necessary measures to reduce the risk of transmission of COVID-19. Refer to ICAO Electronic Bulletin EB 2020/30, as amended, for the most up to date guidance (**refer to element E. below for a list of reference materials providing further guidance**).

1. Layover/Transits

If crew members require layover or transit at an outstation, the commercial air operator is to coordinate with the State public health authorities at airports and implement the following:

- a. Commute arrangements (between airport and hotel, as required):

The commercial air operator must ensure that prior arrangement has been made to commute between the aircraft and the crew's individual hotel rooms ensuring hygiene measures are applied and the recommended physical distancing, including while onboard the vehicle, to the extent possible.

b. At accommodation:

The commercial air operator must ensure the following:

- a) crew members are instructed of the requirement of strict adherence and compliance with relevant public health regulations and policies.
- b) Single person occupancy of rooms must be maintained, which must be sanitized prior to occupancy.
- c) Crew, taking account of the above, and insofar as is practicable, should:
 - i) Avoid contact with the public and fellow crew members, and remain in the hotel room except to seek medical attention, or for essential activities including exercise, while respecting physical distancing requirements.
 - ii) Avoid using common facilities in the hotel.
 - iii) Dine in-room, get take-outs or maintain single seating while in restaurants within the hotel, only if room service is not available.
 - iv) Regularly monitor for symptoms including fever; and
 - v) Observe good hand hygiene, respiratory hygiene and physical distancing measures when required to leave the hotel room only for the reasons specified above or in an emergency situation.
- c. Crew members experiencing symptoms suggestive of COVID-19 during layover or transit should:
 - a) Report it to the aircraft operator and seek assistance from a medical doctor for assessment of possible COVID-19.
 - b) Cooperate with the assessment and further monitoring for COVID-19 in accordance with the evaluation procedure implemented by the State (e.g. assessment in the hotel room, or an isolation room within the hotel, or alternative location).
- d. If a crew member has been evaluated and COVID-19 is not suspected in accordance with the above procedures implemented by the State, the air operator may arrange for the crew member to be repatriated back to base; and
- e. If a crew member is suspected or confirmed as a COVID-19 case by the State and isolation is not required by the State, such crew member could be medically repatriated by appropriate modes; if there is agreement to repatriate the crew member to his/her home base.

2. Means for uniform implementation

Commercial air operators must ensure:

- that this guidance and considerations are fully supported by:
 - The applicable non-governmental agencies.
 - Public health, Immigration and Customs agencies.
 - Civil Aviation Authorities.
- A high degree of collaboration between airport operators and their associated stakeholder community;
- **Associated policy, procedures and training are developed and effectively implemented to reinforce the importance of these guidance and considerations.**
- Use the 'ICAO Council Aviation Recovery Task Force (CART) Take-off: Guidance for Air Travel through the COVID-19 Public Health Crisis' – Crew COVID-19 Status Card (PHC Form 1) or a similar one where appropriate.

E. Reference and Guidance Material

1. ICAO Council Aviation Recovery Task Force (CART) Take-off: Guidance for Air Travel through the COVID-19 Public Health Crisis.
2. EASA Safety Information Bulletin Coronavirus COVID-19 Pandemic — Operational recommendations.
3. IATA Guidance for Cabin Operations During and Post Pandemic.
4. COVID-19 Aviation Health Safety Protocol Operational guidelines for the management of air passengers and aviation personnel in relation to the COVID-19 pandemic.
5. EASA Guidance on aircraft cleaning and disinfection in relation to the COVID-19 pandemic

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