

PHONE : 592-261-2269  
 FAX : 592-261-2279  
 AFS : SYCJYOYX  
 E-mail : [aisguyana@gcaa-gy.org](mailto:aisguyana@gcaa-gy.org)



**AERONAUTICAL INFORMATION SERVICE**  
 Control Tower Complex, Timehri  
 EAST BANK DEMERARA  
 GUYANA

**AIC**

A15/16

WHITE

23 JUNE 2016

*This AIC Replaces AIC A01/10*

**GUIDELINES FOR NOTIFICATION OF SUSPECTED COMMUNICABLE DISEASE**

**Purpose**

The purpose of this circular is to remind stakeholders of the requirements regarding public health risks as contained in the ICAO Annexes 6, 9, 11 and 14 and PANS-ATM ICAO Doc 4444 and to provide guidelines to flight crews and air traffic controllers for notification of suspected communicable disease.

**Background**

The air transportation sector has seen tremendous expansion over the past years leading to long haul flights and millions of passengers transiting various countries within 24HR. This has opened avenues for rapid spread of communicable disease within 24HR, the possible threat of human pandemic and a challenge to aviation.

The advent of Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) in 2003 and the risk of an avian flu related pandemic in 2005 resulted in amendments to a number of ICAO Annexes and Procedures for Air Navigation Services.

In 2009 the H1N1 pandemic challenged the sector again and underscored the need for coordinated action by the global community to help prevent and manage the risk of spread of communicable disease of serious public health concern through air travel.

In keeping with the provisions of Article 14 to the Chicago Convention and ICAO Strategic Objective E Continuity - Maintaining the continuity of aviation operations, Contracting States are required to respond quickly and positively to mitigate the effect of natural or human events that may disrupt air navigation and cooperate with other international organisations to prevent the spread of disease by air travelers.

Since 2007 several relevant Standards and Recommended Practices (SARPs) have been introduced to a number of ICAO Annexes and in collaboration with World Health Organisation (WHO) and other stakeholders, guidelines have been posted to ICAO and WHO websites.

**Amendments to ICAO Annexes and Procedures for Air Navigation Services (PANS)**

Annex 9 Ch 8.15 and 16 specifies: The pilot-in-command of an aircraft shall ensure that a suspected communicable disease is reported promptly to air traffic control, in order to facilitate

provision for the presence of any special medical personnel and equipment necessary for the management of public health risks on arrival.

That Contracting State shall establish a national aviation plan in preparation for an outbreak of a communicable disease posing a public health risk or public health emergency of international concern.

A note is provided to assist cabin crew in identifying a suspected case of communicable disease in the Declaration of Health part of the aircraft General Declaration form. This guidance provides a simple, harmonised method to identify a case of communicable disease. A public health passenger locator card has been added to be used for contact tracing of a potentially exposed traveler.

PANS-ATM Doc 4444 has been amended to provide a detailed procedure to be followed by the Pilot in Command (PIC) and the air traffic control receiving the information from the PIC.

Annex 11- Air Traffic Services and Annex 14 - Aerodromes have also been amended so that the effect of public health emergencies on air traffic services is included in the contingency plans and in aerodrome emergency plans. Annex 6 requires the carriage of on board medical supplies so that they now specifically refer to the management of cases of communicable diseases.

Procedures for notification of suspected communicable disease Flight Crew Notification Procedures

In accordance with ICAO PANS-ATM Doc 4444 16.6, upon identifying a suspected case of communicable disease or other public health risk, on board an aircraft, the flight crew shall notify the air traffic services unit with which the pilot is communicating of the following information:

- a) Aircraft identification
- b) Departure aerodrome
- c) Destination aerodrome
- d) Estimated time of arrival
- e) Number of persons on board
- f) Number of suspected case (s) on board
- g) Nature of the public health risk, if known.

#### **Procedures for the ATS unit receiving the message**

The ATS unit receiving information from a PIC of suspected case of communicable or public health risk on board an aircraft shall forward a message as soon as possible to the ATS unit serving the destination and departure aerodrome.

The ATS unit serving the destination and or departure aerodrome shall on receipt of the message, forward such message to the public health authority as well as the aircraft operator or its designated representative and the aerodrome authority.

Note: The Public Health Authority is expected to contact the airline representative or operating agency and aerodrome authority, if applicable, for subsequent coordination with the aircraft concerning clinical details and aerodrome preparation. Depending on the communications facilities available to the airline representative or operating agency, it may not

be possible to communicate with the aircraft until it is closer to its destination. Apart from the initial notification to the ATS unit whilst en-route, ATC communications channels are to be avoided.

The information to be provided to the departure aerodrome will prevent the potential spread of communicable disease, or other public health risk, through other aircraft departing from the same aerodrome.

AFTN (urgency message), telephone, facsimile or other means of transmission may be used.

### **Conclusion**

The aviation sector's response to the threat of a possible pandemic has to be timely, robust, coordinated and harmonised. A collaborative effort from all stakeholders to develop a national pandemic preparedness plan for aviation using guidelines from ICAO, WHO and inclusion of the effects of public health risks on aviation services in emergency and contingency plans is required for compliance with international requirements.

Flight crews, air traffic services personnel and airport staff shall be briefed on the procedures contained in the various plans and ICAO documents.