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Internationale Transportarbeiter-Föderation
Международная федерация транспортников
الاتحاد الدولي لعمال النقل

To all Civil Aviation affiliates

ITF E-circular no. 084/CA/2021

Our ref: CA/GMR/at

19 March 2021

Dear sisters, brothers, comrades,

ICAO CART 'Take-off' guidance prioritises aviation workers for access to vaccinations.

The ICAO has now updated its 'Take-off' guidelines, which includes the **Testing and Cross-Border Risk Management Measures Manual**. This specifically includes guidance on issues that could be specifically useful to our affiliates in their national context. These are primarily around:

1. Vaccine and testing protocols for aviation workers and passengers.
2. Access to training and medical facilities to maintain certification, experience and proficiency
3. Facilitation of access to vaccines and other goods for countries that need them particularly those covered by the WHO COVAX programme.
4. Priority access to vaccinations for aviation workers.

Please read below for details and specific references on each of these issues

Background and context

The updated version of the 'Take-off' Guidelines issues by the [ICAO Aviation Recovery Task Force \(CART\)](#) with new and amended recommendations were approved by the ICAO Council on 12 March 2021 and include the TESTING AND CROSS-BORDER RISK MANAGEMENT MEASURES MANUAL published as the "Second Edition (Advance unedited) – 2021". The main articles of our interest are listed in Annex I and an article was published on our website.

The 'Take-off Guidelines aim to provide a framework for addressing the impact of the current COVID-19 pandemic on the global aviation transportation system. The phased approach of ICAO's recommendations introduce a core set of measures to form a baseline for aviation health and safety protocols to protect air passengers and aviation workers from Covid-19.

As explained in our previous circulars, the CART was established shortly after the pandemic was identified by the World Health Organization (WHO). The ITF has been able to influence these outcomes as a result of our partnership in ICAO CAPSCA (www.capsa.org), where the WHO and other UN agencies and international organisations are partners as well.

1. Vaccine and testing protocols for aviation workers and passengers

The ITF welcomes the updated version of the Manual, especially the provisions that target vaccination and testing protocols for aviation workers and passengers. We believe that the new version of the Guidelines

will provide immeasurable assistance in promoting the harmonisation of measures being introduced around the world to facilitate the restart of air travel, always ensuring that all testing or vaccination certificates are “*secure, trustworthy, verifiable, convenient to use, compliant with data protection legislation and internationally/globally interoperable.*” (Recom. 17)

2. Access to training and medical facilities to maintain certification, experience and proficiency

We also welcome CART’s recommendation to “*facilitate cross-border access to medical and training facilities, including flight simulation training devices used for flight crew (national or foreign) and Air Traffic Controllers (ATCOs) to maintain their certifications, experience and proficiency.*” (Recom. 14)

3. Facilitation of access to vaccines and other goods for countries that need them particularly those covered by the WHO COVAX programme

Moreover, the ITF supports ICAO in tackling interdependent land and air transport obstacles so that critical supplies of vaccines and other goods can get to the countries that need them, particularly those covered by [WHO’s COVAX programme](#).

4. Priority access to vaccinations for aviation workers

While working on the updated version over the last two months, we insisted that the updated guidance should include a recommendation to governments that all aviation workers in critical safety and security positions are recognised as key workers and prioritised for vaccinations following WHO guidelines. The final document (art 3.6.3.1) states: “*aircrew, front-line aviation workers and aviation workers in critical safety and security positions....States should facilitate the vaccination of these essential air transport workers in accordance with the WHO SAGE Stage III recommendations.*”

Despite this not being reflected accurately in the “Recommendations” announced, the manual provides us with a powerful tool. However, achieving concrete and positive outcomes based on the ‘Take-off’ guidelines mainly relies on the member states’ commitments and capabilities. In the regard, as ITF aviation affiliates, you can play a critical role to ensure effective implementation of it.

We have already published our position on our website:

<https://www.itfglobal.org/en/news/itf-calls-governments-swift-adoption-new-icao-guidance>

Therefore, we encourage you to lobby and call on your governments to swiftly adopt and implement the guidance and extend vaccination prioritisation for all aviation workers in line with the ICAO Manual (see Annex I) and the [recommendations from the World Health Organization](#).

If you identify any obstacles in the implementation process, please let us know.

Please send your questions, comments and feedback to us at civilaviation@itf.org.uk

In solidarity,



Gabriel Mocho Rodriguez
Civil Aviation Section Secretary