IATA Outlines Layered Approach for Industry Re-Start

19 May 2020 (Geneva) The International Air Transport Association (IATA) revealed details of its proposed temporary layered approach to biosecurity for re-starting passenger flights amid the COVID-19 crisis.

IATA has published *Biosecurity for Air Transport: A Roadmap for Restarting Aviation* which outlines IATA's proposal for a layering of temporary biosecurity measures. The Roadmap aims to provide the confidence that governments will need to enable the re-opening of borders to passenger travel; and the confidence that travelers will need to return to flying.

"There is no single measure that will reduce risk and enable a safe re-start of flying. But a layering measures that are globally implemented and mutually recognized by governments can achieve the needed outcome. This is the greatest crisis that aviation has ever faced. A layered approach has worked with safety and with security. It's the way forward for biosecurity as well," said Alexandre de Juniac, IATA's Director General and CEO.

Highlights of the Roadmap include:

Pre-flight, IATA foresees the need for governments to collect passenger data in advance of travel, including health information, which should be accomplished using well-tested channels such as those used for eVisa or electronic travel authorization programs.

At the departure airport, IATA foresees several layers of protective measures:
- *Access* to the terminal building should be restricted to airport / airline workers and travelers (with exceptions being made for those accompanying passengers with disabilities or unaccompanied minors)
- *Temperature screening* by trained government staff at entry points to the terminal building
- *Physical distancing* through all passenger processes, including queue management
- Use of *face coverings* for passengers and masks for staff in line with local regulations.
- *Self-service options for check-in* used by passengers as much as possible to reduce contact points and queues. This includes remote check-in (electronic / home printed boarding passes), automated bag drops (with home printed bag tags) and self-boarding.
- *Boarding* should be made as efficient as possible with re-designed gate areas, congestion-reducing boarding priorities, and hand luggage limitations.

- ***Cleaning and sanitization*** of high touch areas in line with local regulations. This includes wide availability of hand sanitizers.

In-flight, IATA foresees several layers of protective measures:
- ***Face coverings*** required for all passengers and non-surgical masks for crew
- ***Simplified cabin service and pre-packaged catering*** to reduce interaction between passengers and crew
- ***Reduced congregation*** of passengers in the cabin, for example by prohibiting queues for washrooms.
- ***Enhanced and more frequent deep cleaning*** of the cabin

At the **arrival airport**, IATA foresees several layers of protective measures:
- ***Temperature screening*** by trained government staff if required by authorities
- ***Automated procedures for customs and border control*** including use of mobile applications and biometric technologies (which have already proven tack record by some governments)
- **Accelerated *processing and baggage reclaim*** to enable social distancing by reducing congestion and queuing
- ***Health declarations and robust contact tracing*** are expected to be undertaken by governments to reduce the risk of imported chains of transmission

IATA stressed that these measures should be temporary, regularly reviewed, replaced when more efficient options are identified or removed should they become unnecessary. Specifically, IATA expressed hope in two areas which could be 'game-changers' in facilitating efficient travel until a vaccine is found:

COVID-19 testing: IATA supports testing when scalable, accurate and fast results are available. Testing at the start of the travel process would create a 'sterile' travel environment that would reassure travelers and governments.

Immunity passports: IATA would support the development of immunity passports to segregate no-risk travelers, at a time when these are backed by medical science and recognized by governments.

IATA reiterated its opposition to social distancing on board aircraft and quarantine measures on arrival:

- **Quarantine measures** are obviated by the [combination](#) of temperature checks and contract tracing. Temperature screening reduces the risk of symptomatic passengers from traveling, while health declarations and contact tracing after arrival reduce the risk of imported cases developing into local chains of transmission.
- **Social distancing on board** (leaving the middle seat open) is obviated by the wearing of face coverings by all on board on top of [transmission reducing characteristics of the cabin](#) (everybody is front facing, air flow is from ceiling to floor, seats provide a barrier to forward/aft transmission, and air filtration systems that operate to hospital operating theatre standards).

The mutual recognition of globally agreed measures is critical for the resumption of international travel. IATA is reaching out to governments with the Roadmap. This engagement is in support of the COVID-19 Aviation Recovery Task Force (CART) of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) which is tasked with developing the global standards needed for the safe re-start of aviation.

"The Roadmap is the industry's high-level thinking on safely re-starting aviation. Timing is critical. Governments understand the importance of aviation to the social and economic recovery of their countries and many are planning a phased re-opening of borders in the coming months. We have a short time to reach agreement on the initial standards to support safely reconnecting the world and to firmly establish that global standards are essential to success. This will change as technology and medical science advances. The vital element is coordination. If we don't take these first steps in a harmonized way, we will spend many painful years recovering ground that should not have been lost," said de Juniac.

Read remarks of Alexandre de Juniac
View the Biosecurity for Air Transport presentation

-IATA-

For more information, please contact:
Corporate Communications
Tel: +41 22 770 2967
Email: corpcomms@iata.org

Notes for editors:
- IATA (International Air Transport Association) represents some 290 airlines comprising 82% of global air traffic.
- You can follow us at https://twitter.com/iata for announcements, policy positions, and other useful industry information.