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ITF and IFALPA: Key Considerations on Workplace Safety for the Resumption of Global Air Services

Gentili Colleghi,
Con la graduale riapertura dei confini internazionali, ITF (International Transport Workers' Federation) ed IFALPA (International Federation of Air Line Pilots' Association) hanno sollecitato i legislatori aeronautici e le compagnie aeree al fine di stabilire precise linee guida riguardanti prevenzione, salute e sicurezza del personale aeronautico.
Di seguito il documento.

Buona lettura

English version

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Dear Colleagues,
As countries around the world start flying again, the International Federation of Air Line Pilots' Associations (IFALPA) and the International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF) have demanded that aviation regulators and employers fully address health, safety and security concerns before they re-open their borders to air services and take to the skies.
Here below you can find the document.
Enjoy the reading.

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ITF and IFALPA: Key Considerations on Workplace Safety for the Resumption of Global Air Services

As countries around the world begin to re-open their borders to air services following COVID-19 lockdowns, there are several health, safety, and security concerns that have not been fully addressed by aviation regulators or employers. It is the position of the International Federation of Air Line Pilots' Associations (IFALPA) and the International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF) that an aircraft is a unique workplace and that additional precautions need to be taken into consideration for the resumption of service.

These measures should be implemented for as long as necessary and subject to regular review based on operational feedback. When more effective and less disruptive measures become available, they should be given priority.

A phased return to full operations must be guided by current scientific data and robust risk assessments that are focused on operational and human factors. For this to be successful, any study, procedure, or discussion must include worker representatives and their unique knowledge and experience from the frontlines.

The safety of crew and passengers should be ensured through mitigation measures including, but not limited to, public health recommendations and procedures. We believe that the identification and implementation of best practice in these matters will play a key role to ensure both crew and public confidence in the resumption of operations.

Our view is that the most appropriate body with the authority to independently address this challenge of ensuring a consistent approach to COVID-19 measures across the industry is the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO). It is also our view that a minimum standard must be set and applied equally in all airports and onboard all aircraft, globally.

We are calling on all aviation stakeholders to address the following concerns:

PROVISION AND USE OF PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE)
- Provision should be a shared responsibility of both airports and airlines.
- Appropriate PPE (i.e. facemasks, gloves, etc.) should be provided at appropriate times and locations as per ICAO/WHO guidelines.
- In all instances, best practice should be followed on when and how to wear, remove, replace, and dispose of facemasks and other PPE, and for hand hygiene after removal.

SOCIAL DISTANCING

- o Airports and operators should maximize social distancing in the airport at all times; including ticketing, check-in, security, transportation, food and sanitation facilities, boarding areas, and baggage claim as recommended by ICAO and appropriate local public health authorities.
- o Passengers should be educated and instructed on all measures implemented by airlines and airports before travel, during their airport experience, and on board the aircraft.
- o Deadheading or positioning crew must be afforded some social distancing while travelling as passengers based on the risk assessments and in consideration of their increased exposure to passengers.

SAFETY RISK ASSESSMENT

- o Any required social distancing must be backed by joint risk assessments with all stakeholders proving that there is minimal risk to crew and passengers.
- o As part of any risk assessment there should be the presence of independent expert observers, and different passenger loads assessed (including full loads) representative of commercial flights to evaluate potential issues related to the implementation of these new measures.
- o Crew member representatives should be included in the assessment process in line with the ILO Policy Brief: A Safe and healthy return to work during the COVID-19 pandemic.

PROVISION OF TESTING

- o Due to the large number of people that crew members and airport workers come into contact with in their workplace, they should have access to early, reliable, and efficient COVID-19 testing when it becomes available and as endorsed by recognized health agencies such as the WHO.

CONTACT TRACING

- o Worker representatives should have access to information on the number of workplace cases of COVID-19 and the rates of exposure.
- o Crew members should be immediately notified by employers of their exposure to infected passengers and/or colleagues and tested where appropriate.