

# Industry bodies welcome ICAO guidelines supporting travel restart process

Two industry organizations, the Duty Free World Council (DFWC) and the Association of Asia Pacific Airlines (AAPA), have welcomed the recently published International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) Council Aviation Recovery Taskforce (CART) report.

The ICAO Council adopted a new report and recommendations on June 1 aimed at restarting the international air transport system and aligning its global recovery.

The guidelines produced by the CART taskforce were developed through broad-based consultations with countries and regional organizations, and with important advice from the World Health Organization and key aviation industry groups including the International Air Transport Association (IATA), Airports Council International (ACI World), the Civil Air Navigation Services Organisation, and the International Coordinating Council of Aerospace Industries Associations.

“The world looked to the ICAO Council to provide the high-level guidance which governments and industry needed to begin restarting international air transport and recovering from COVID-19,” said ICAO Council President Salvatore Sciacchitano.

“We have answered this call today with the delivery of this report, and with its recommendations and Take-Off guidelines which will now align public and private sector actions and mitigations as we get the world flying again, in full accordance with the latest and most prudent medical and traveler health advice available to us.”

Among many airport and airline recommendations, the report says consideration needs to be given to the temporary need for physical distancing, while also providing passengers’ access to the retail, duty free concessions and food and beverage offerings.

## **Building confidence in air travel**

Duty Free World Council President Sarah Branquinho welcomed the guidelines: “This report is an extremely positive development for the resumption of commercial air travel and the operations of duty free retailers. Passengers and colleagues need to feel safe, and these common global safety standards will be key to building confidence in air travel.

“The Duty Free World Council is grateful to the members of the CART Taskforce for the constructive way this report has been developed.

“We were able to contribute substantially to the policy process for this report and welcomed the receptive approach CART members have taken in working with DFWC and others to develop a set of pragmatic guidelines.

“It is encouraging to see ICAO’s recognition that passengers should have access to duty free, and that retail and food and beverage operators form an essential part of airport infrastructure that should be used to ensure physical distancing.

“Our stores should open when people start to travel and these guidelines will allow that to happen. In many countries this will ensure a rethink from safety regulators who have not been allowing the reopening of ‘non-essential’ retail facilities.

“DFWC would also like to acknowledge ACI World who worked with us to make the case on behalf of travel retail operators around the world. Our retailers will provide significant cashflow to our airport partners as the sector restarts, so it is vitally important that we get up and running as soon as is practicable and viable.

“It is now up to individual countries to define their own safety rules and regulations for the restart. These ICAO Guidelines are critical to that.

“We urge retailers to bring these guidelines to the attention of their airport partners and national aviation safety regulators.”

### **Safeguarding health and safety**

The Association of Asia Pacific Airlines (AAPA) has also welcomed the CART report and guidelines.

AAPA Director General Subhas Menon said: "We applaud ICAO's leadership in developing such comprehensive guidance for states and industry stakeholders in a short period of time. We believe the timely implementation of these measures will allow for a progressive resumption of international air travel, whilst providing passengers and crew with the necessary assurances that all appropriate steps are being taken to safeguard health and safety."

He continued: "The ICAO task force recommendations provide a comprehensive framework to better align national and regional health protection measures with agreed global standards. Asian airlines remain fully committed to working closely with government agencies, airports and other stakeholders to ensure that air travel remains safe, secure and convenient."

Menon concluded: "We urge governments to move ahead with initiatives to restart international aviation in line with broader recovery plans, by adopting a range of pragmatic and sensible measures that are globally and regionally harmonized, and mutually accepted, as outlined by ICAO. A number of countries in the Asia Pacific region are already taking the lead by engaging in constructive discussions with other governments to restore air links and support the resumption of both business and leisure travel. Trade and tourism are key contributors to economic and social development and will be important elements in supporting wider economic recovery."