EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLAN

A template for Air Carriers

PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY

1. Introduction

IATA recommends that all air carriers have emergency response plans to deal with public health emergencies. While a number of air carriers already have such a plan in place, many do not. The following constitutes a sample template for an emergency response plan applicable to public health emergencies.

This document has two primary objectives:

- Identify in broad terms how to prepare for a public health emergency.
- Provide checklists of actions that should be built into a public health emergency plan.

This sample template is purposely generic in order that it could be of use in different types of public health emergencies (ex: H1N1, Fukushima accident) and in order to avoid having to produce new templates specific to each emergency that might occur. It could be used by those air carriers that do not currently have their own public health emergency response plan. Additionally, air carriers that have developed a plan may find it useful to review it against the elements set out herein.

Note

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2. Preparation

For air carriers that already have an emergency response plan, most of the same resources will be used in cases of public health emergency. For those air carriers without a plan, IATA strongly recommends one is established as soon as possible and resources identified.

2.1 National Public Health Emergency Plan

Before writing an emergency response plan, it is imperative that air carriers consult with their national health authorities in the development and implementation of their response plans for public health emergencies. Air carrier response plans should be aligned with the national plan.

2.2 Establishment of an Emergency Response Team (ERT)

An emergency response plan is of no use without a team to implement it. Air carriers are encouraged to establish an Emergency Response Team (ERT) as soon as possible. Such a team should consist of *executive*, *core* and *support* members.

The ERT executive members should have primary responsibility for advising senior management of developments relating to a public health emergency and actions to be taken in response. ERT executive members might typically be:

- Director Emergency Response
- Medical Advisor (or designated medical representative)
- Communications Director (or equivalent)

The ERT core members might typically be from those externally-focused departments that would have direct and immediate operational contact with the consequences of a public health emergency. These include:

- Flight Operations
- In-Flight Services
- Maintenance
- Airports
- Cargo
- Security & Facilitation
- Station & Passenger Handling
- Operations Control
- Government Affairs

The ERT support members should be from those internally-focused departments required to support the activities undertaken by an air carrier to address a public health emergency. These include:

- Legal
- Risk Management
- Human resources
- Finance/Purchasing

2.3 Establishment of an Emergency Response Centre (ERC)

Some air carriers already have designated office space equipped with all of the communications and planning tools required to manage a response to a public health emergency. Air carriers that do not have such a facility are encouraged to establish one.

3. Triggers of Public Health Emergency response

The information triggering an emergency response could come from any number of different areas. The most likely scenario would probably be a notification from the World Health Organization (WHO) that there has been a progression into a more critical phase of the emergency in question. However, the information could also come from National Public Health Authorities, as it did for some countries during the SARS crisis and the Fukushima accident. Lastly, a response could also be triggered at the air carrier level if, for instance, many passengers and/or crewmembers on a particular flight display symptoms compatible with communicable diseases.

Depending on the origin and the nature of the information received, the level of response will vary; it could be limited to action required by medical and communications staff or could extend to a full response including all affected parties.

4. Activation of the Emergency Response Team and Centre

The department or individual within the air carrier that receives the information that could potentially necessitate an emergency response should immediately contact the Operations Control Director (or its equivalent) who should in turn contact the executive members of the Emergency Response Team, as outlined above.

The executive members should determine whether the Emergency Response Plan and Centre should be activated. If the decision is to open the ERC, all employees involved in the Emergency Response Team should be notified. If the ERC is activated, the ERT core and support members should be represented.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

Attached below are documents specific to each member of the Emergency Response Team. They outline the roles and responsibilities of each team member and contain a checklist of actions to be taken by each team member in the event of a public health emergency.

5.1 Director Emergency Response (DER)

- Overall responsibility for emergency response and for directing the activities of the Emergency Response Team (ERT).
- Advise designated superior of the impact of the emergency on the company's operations and make relevant recommendations.
- Notify the Reservations Department of the need to lock in passenger information or for notifying the operating air carrier to do so when required (only for air carriers not using Departure Control System).

Emergency Response Checklist

Name: _____Date: _____

Task	Action	Date
□	Convene a conference call with the representatives responsible for responding to a public health emergency.	
□	Verify the details of the emergency.	
□	Determine whether it will be necessary to open the Emergency Response Centre.	
□	Initiate a conference call with the airport(s) involved in the emergency.	
□	If the air carrier has no DCS, notify the reservation department to lock in passenger information if appropriate for this emergency.	
□	If necessary, open the Call Centre (if one is available) and notify the General Manager Call Centres (or equivalent).	
□	Monitor developments and advise immediate supervisor as often as required.	

5.2 Medical Representative (MR)

- Initiate and maintain contact with all appropriate health authorities.
- Established point of contact for the IATA Medical Advisor.
- Make appropriate recommendations applicable to specific departments of the company, based on information received from the health authorities.

Emergency Response Checklist

Name: _____Date: _____

Task	Action	Date
□	Contact the appropriate health authorities.	
□	Contact the IATA Medical Advisor if appropriate.	
□	Contact the company Medical Officer (or designated physician) closest to the airport(s) where the emergency is in effect.	
□	If appropriate for the emergency, contact the hospital(s) that are receiving passengers in order to obtain relevant information.	
□	Determine whether there is a requirement to quarantine any equipment.	
□	Determine whether there is a requirement to disinfect the aircraft.	
□	Advise the Director Emergency Response of the actions required.	
□	Advise Company Maintenance of the actions required and ensure that the aircraft is (are) properly disinfected.	
□	Assist Corporate Communications with press releases as required.	
□	If necessary, advise Flight Operations and In-Flight Services of the requirements for medical examinations for crewmembers.	

	Advise whether on compliance with WHO recommendations or any operating restrictions that should be implemented on medical grounds	

5.3 Communications

5.3.1 External Communications

- Initiate and maintain liaison with counterparts at the appropriate health authorities, as well as any other agencies that may be involved.
- Act as established point of contact for IATA Corporate Communications representatives.
- Manage all communications to the media including the distribution of press releases as required.
- Keep the DER informed of significant developments in the media.
- Ensure the establishment of a communication channel that could be used by the general public to contact the air carrier. For example, publish a toll free number or establish a Call Centre that could manage enquiries from the families of passengers caught up in a public health emergency.
- Post appropriate communications on the company web site.

5.3.2 Internal Communications

- Communicate all necessary information to internal staff.

Emergency Response Checklist

Name: _____Date: _____

Task	Action	Date
□	Establish liaison with spokesperson for appropriate health authorities, the airports and any other agencies that may be involved.	
□	Coordinate with IATA Communications representative.	
□	Determine who the corporate spokesperson(s) will be.	
□	Brief the corporate spokesperson(s).	
□	Draft necessary press releases and review them with the Director Emergency Response (DER) and the Medical Representative.	

Task	Action	Date
□	Confirm with the DER every time a press release has been released.	
□	Monitor ongoing press coverage and inform DER of any developments in the media.	
□	Assist human resources in communicating all necessary information to internal staff.	
□	Update company websites and social media accounts as appropriate	

5.4 Flight Operations

- Communicate relevant details (i.e. as they affect Flight Operations) of the emergency to pilots and any applicable unions.
- Review procedures relating to onboard medical emergencies and advise operational flight crew accordingly.
- Ensure that flight crews laying over in affected areas (if applicable) have been provided with necessary guidance and have access to any assistance required.
- Closely monitor crew scheduling to try and avoid last minute crew manning problems.

Emergency Response Checklist

Name: _____Date: _____

Task	Action	Date
□	Ensure that all relevant information concerning the emergency has been communicated to the company pilots and the pilot association if applicable. Maintain open communication with the pilot association to ensure quick resolution of arising issues.	
□	For an international public health emergency (e.g. Avian Flu), review procedures relating to onboard medical emergencies and advise pilots accordingly.	
□	Ensure that flight crew staying over in affected areas have been provided with necessary guidance and have access to any assistance required.	
□	Maintain close contact with crew scheduling to try and avoid	

Task	Action	Date
□	last minute crew manning problems.	
□	For a specific onboard medical emergency, contact the operating crew and ensure they get any necessary assistance (peer support team, employee assistance program, etc.).	
□	When required, discuss the need for medical examinations with the Medical Representative and have arrangements made as required.	
□	In situations where the crew is to be released from duty, ensure that Crew Scheduling is contacted.	

5.5 In-Flight Services

- Communicate relevant details (i.e. as they affect In-Flight Services) of the emergency to cabin crew and any applicable cabin crew union.
- Review procedures relating to onboard medical emergencies and advise cabin crewmembers accordingly.
- Ensure that enough Passenger Locator Form (PLF) are available
- Ensure that cabin crews laying over in affected areas (if applicable) have been provided with necessary guidance and any assistance required.
- Ensure that the catering function is not interrupted.
- Closely monitor crew scheduling to try and avoid last minute crew manning problems (if the appropriate department to do so).

Emergency Response Checklist

Name: _____Date: _____

Task	Action	Date
□	Ensure that all relevant information concerning the emergency has been communicated to the company cabin crew and the cabin crew union if applicable. Maintain open communication with the cabin crew union to ensure quick resolution of arising issues.	
□	For an international public health emergency (e.g. Avian Flu), review procedure relating to onboard medical emergencies and advise cabin crew accordingly.	
□	Ensure that cabin crew laying over in affected areas have	

Task	Action	Date
	been provided with necessary guidance and have access to any assistance required.	
□	Maintain close contact with Crew Scheduling to try and avoid last minute crew manning problem.	
□	For a specific onboard medical emergency, meet the aircraft or, if impossible, contact the operating crew and ensure they any necessary assistance (peer support team, employee assistance program, etc.).	
□	When required, discuss the need for medical examinations with the medical representative and have arrangements made as required.	
□	In situations where the crew is to be released from duty, ensure that Crew Scheduling is contacted.	
□	If it is necessary to quarantine any equipment involved in the incident (O2 bottles, medical kits, galley equipment), ensure that the appropriate parties have been notified and arrangements have been made.	
□	Ensure that enough Passenger Locator Form (PLF) are available	

5.6 Airports

- Ensure the clear flow of relevant information to and from all stations.
- Advise the stations according to their location and according to the information received from the Medical Representative.
- Keep the Director Emergency Response informed of the situation in the different stations.
- Instruct the stations directly involved in the emergency to lock passenger information in the reservations systems of both the operating and marketing carriers and, in the case of code sharing, to secure copies of appropriate passenger manifests (only air carriers using a Departure Control System).

Emergency Response Checklist

Name: _____Date: _____

Task	Action	Date
□	For an international public health emergency (e.g. Avian	

	Flu), ensure that all relevant information goes to and is received from all stations.	
□	Transmit information received from the Medical Representative to stations as appropriate to their location.	
□	Maintain close contact with stations in affected areas.	
□	Keep the Director Emergency Response informed of the situation at the different stations.	
□	For the arrival station of an aircraft with a specific onboard emergency, verify the details of the medical emergency.	
□	With the assistance of the Medical Representative, determine whether it will be necessary to quarantine any equipment and advise the station accordingly.	
□	Ensure that personnel have been properly briefed and are available to meet the aircraft.	
□	Ensure that the station has arranged for the passengers, crewmembers, cargo and baggage to remain on the aircraft until permission has been received from medical personnel to disembark passengers and offload cargo and baggage.	
□	Determine if it is necessary to open the Passenger Centre and/or Friends and Family centre.	
□	If air carrier uses a DCS, instruct the station to lock passenger information in the reservations system and secure copies of appropriate passenger manifests.	

5.7 Maintenance

- Continue regular activities and adapt any special procedures that are recommended by the Medical Representative as a result of information received from the public health authorities.
- If responsible for cleaning aircraft, ensure that aircraft have been properly disinfected when required and should employ the methods and disinfectants recommended by the Medical Representative and the aircraft manufacturers.
- Ensure that personnel are properly protected and briefed.
- If another department is responsible for aircraft cleaning, that department should assume the latter responsibilities.

Emergency Response Checklist

Name: _____Date: _____

Task	Action	Date
□	For an international public health emergency (e.g. Avian Flu), Maintenance continues its regular activities and adapts any special procedures that are recommended by the Medical Representative as a result of information received from the public health authorities.	
□	If disinfection of an aircraft is required, ensure that personnel are using methods and disinfectants recommended by the Medical Representative and the aircraft manufacturers.	
□	Ensure that personnel involved in disinfecting the aircraft are provided with appropriate protective clothing and are properly briefed.	
□	Notify the Director Emergency Response when the aircraft has been disinfected.	

5.8 Cargo

- Implement any recommendations made by the Medical Representative and the Public Health Authorities.
- When required, ensure safe and rapid transport of diagnostic specimens.
- Keep in mind that refusal to carry diagnostic specimens, may result in strong possibility that such specimens will be carried anyway but not declared. This may represent a much more serious hazard than a properly packaged and labeled specimen.

Emergency Response Checklist

Name: _____Date: _____

Task	Action	Date
□	For an international public health emergency (e.g. Avian	

	Flu), Cargo continues its regular activities and adapts any special procedures that are recommended by the Medical Representative as a result of information received from the public health authorities.	
□	When required, Cargo should ensure safe and rapid transport of diagnostic specimens.	

5.9 Security & Facilitation

- Support changes to the electronic transmission of Advance Passenger Information or manual data collection required by governments in the event of a public health emergency.
- Liaise with governments' border control agencies to facilitate a two-way flow of information between the air carrier and governments on emerging entry requirements.
- Ensure any changes to passenger data collection requirements are communicated to the relevant internal department in order to facilitate the timely collection and transmission of such data.

Emergency Response Checklist

Name: _____Date: _____

Task	Action	Time
□	Establish liaison with relevant immigration/customs authorities to ascertain additional advance passenger information requirements	
□	Establish liaison with relevant immigration/customs authorities to determine additional entry requirements for passengers and crew (such as certificates of vaccination)	
□	Communicate additional requirements to Passenger Department	
□	Ensure travel restrictions/additional data requirements is communicated to internal travel department	

5.10 Station Management

- Implement directives provided by the Emergency Response Centre.
- Liaise with local airport authorities and ensure that the company's head office airport representative is briefed on how the emergency is developing and on any relevant rules at the local airport.
- Ensure that copies of all passenger manifests are kept for the minimum period recommended by the public health authorities for that particular emergency (if using a Departure Control System).
- Ensure that enough Passenger Locator Form (PLF) are available
- Follow the below checklist when advised of a flight with a suspected communicable disease onboard.

Emergency Response Checklist

Name: _____ Date: _____

Task	Action	Date
□	Whenever notified of an incoming aircraft with a medical emergency onboard, obtain as much information as possible from the source of the information (Pilot-in-Command, Flight Dispatch, System Operations Control).	
□	Notify the Airport Authority of the in-bound medical emergency.	
□	Determine if necessary to set up schedule of conference calls with System Operations Control.	
□	Ensure personnel are properly briefed and are available to meet aircraft with the necessary equipment.	
□	Instruct staff members to ensure that passengers remain seated so that medical personnel can reach the passenger(s).	
□	Ensure the passengers, crewmembers, cargo and baggage remain on the aircraft until permission has been received from medical personnel to disembark passengers and offload cargo and baggage.	
□	Quarantine equipment as required.	
□	If a lengthy delay is anticipated in disembarking passengers, consider opening a Friends and Family Centre.	

Task	Action	Date
□	If required, set up Passenger Centre to receive disembarking passengers and register them.	
□	If station is in an affected area of an international public health emergency (e.g. Avian Flu), cooperate with the local airport and public health authorities.	
□	If station is in an affected area of an international public health emergency (e.g. Avian Flu), keep the air carrier Airport Representative fully informed of the local situation.	
□	Ensure that enough Passenger Locator Form (PLF) are available	

5.11 Operations Control

- Liaise with Flight Dispatch to identify nature of any on-board medical emergency.
- Maintain open channel of communication to the Director of Emergency Response and advise if Emergency Response Centre needs to be activated.
- Maintain open channel of communication to arrival station involved in on-board medical emergency. Advise and be advised of developments.

Emergency Response Checklist

Name: _____Date: _____

Task	Action	Date
□	Upon being notified of a medical emergency onboard an aircraft, obtain as much information as possible from the source of the information (usually flight dispatch).	
□	If the medical emergency could potentially necessitate activation of the Emergency Response Plan, contact the Director Emergency Response, the Medical Representative (or designated Medical Officer) and the Corporate Communications Representative.	
□	If it is decided to activate the emergency Response Plan, notify the members of the Emergency Response Team.	
□	Notify the station of the incoming aircraft and nature of the	

Task	Action	Date
□	situation onboard.	
□	Request that Departure Control print out the Passenger Name List and Passenger Name Record for the flight.	
□	Monitor the situation through regular reports from the Flight Dispatcher responsible for the flight.	
□	Provide the Director Emergency Response with regular updates.	

5.12 Legal

- Provide input on any legal aspects of contact with the media and regulatory agencies.
- Support internal departments relating to liability issues resulting from a public health emergency.
- Provide general support to all company departments as required.

Emergency Response Checklist

Name: _____Date: _____

Task	Action	Date
□	Assist Corporate Communications with Press Releases and contacts with regulatory agencies	
□	Support General Claims (or equivalent) in addressing passenger/shipper claims for delays arising from emergency response procedure and compliance with quarantine and or sanitary regulations.	
□	Work with Risk Management to assess potential liabilities.	
□	Support all company departments as required.	

5.13 Risk Management

- Analyse how employees, agents and customers might be affected by a public health emergency.
- Ensure that insurance coverage is available.

- Ensure that Senior Management is aware of potential liabilities.

Emergency Response Checklist: **Risk Management**

Name: _____Date: _____

Task	Action	Date
□	Analyse air carrier exposure to its employees, agents and customers created by the emergency and/or the emergency response.	
□	Identify that insurance coverage is available.	
□	Make required notification to insurers.	
□	Identify and implement mitigation measures.	
□	Document all expenses incurred for purposes of insurance recovery.	
□	Advise Senior Management as and when necessary.	

5.14 Human Resources

- Provide support to all company departments as required, particularly with regards to Policies and Personnel Services.
- Put a system in place to ensure that all employees may be located in the event of an emergency.

Emergency Response Checklist

Name: _____Date: _____

Task	Action	Date
□	Locate and account for all affected employees.	
□	If appropriate, keep contact with families of employees on	

	business travel.	

5.15 Finance/Purchasing

- Make special provisions for budget, accounting and purchasing purposes if required.
- Ensure rapid procurement of all necessary equipment (for example biohazard Kits, gloves, masks etc.) as required by the different company departments.

Emergency Response Checklist

Name: _____Date: _____

Task	Action	Date
□	Identify costs associated with emergency: supplies/equipment, communication, transportation, quarantine, treatment, business interruption, etc.	
□	Is emergency funding necessary and how much?	
□	Is actual cash necessary?	
□	Procurement of all necessary equipment (for example biohazard Kits, gloves, masks etc.) specific to a public health emergency	

5.16 Government Affairs

- Liaise with regulatory agencies to understand directives and identify compliance actions required
- Advocate with regulatory agencies on the need to follow WHO recommendations, and avoid instituting bespoke measures contrary to WHO policy
- Liaise with IATA External Affairs as appropriate

Emergency Response Checklist

Name: _____Date: _____

Task	Action	Date
□	Make contact with relevant regulatory agencies to	

	understand current requirements/ brief them on steps the airline is taking to instill confidence in response	
□	Share WHO recommendations with regulatory agencies where appropriate	
□	Liaise with IATA external affairs in using industry advocacy materials if necessary	

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