



Republic of the Philippines  
**CIVIL AVIATION AUTHORITY OF THE PHILIPPINES**

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MEMORANDUM CIRCULAR NO. 21-2020

**TO : ALL AIR OPERATORS CONDUCTING LOCAL AND INTERNATIONAL AIR OPERATIONS**

**FROM : THE DIRECTOR GENERAL**

**SUBJECT : IMPLEMENTING A PUBLIC HEALTH CORRIDOR TO PROTECT FLIGHT CREW DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC**

**DATE : 20 JULY 2020**

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**WHEREAS**, on April 30, 2020 the Office of the Executive Secretary issued Executive Order (E.O.) No. 112 Imposing an Enhanced Community Quarantine in High-Risk Geographic Areas of the Philippines and a General Community Quarantine in the Rest of the Country from 01 to 15 May 2020, Adopting the Omnibus Guidelines on the Implementation Thereof, and for Other Purposes;

**WHEREAS**, on June 25, 2020, pursuant to the authority granted to the Inter Agency Task Force (IATF) for the Management of Emerging Infectious Diseases under E.O. 112, the IATF issued and published the amended Omnibus Guidelines on the Implementation of the Community Quarantine in the Philippines;

**WHEREAS**, the Omnibus Guidelines on the Implementation of Community Quarantine in the Philippines, as amended, sets the parameters for Interzonal and Intrazonal Movement, and provides that all types of cargoes by land, air, or sea, and across areas placed under any form of community quarantine shall be unhampered, as well as allowing the movement of persons by air travel subject to certain restrictions;

**WHEREAS**, the IATF earlier issued Resolution No. 08, dated February 26, 2020, series of 2020, adopting the Interim Guidelines for Home Quarantine with Delegated Supervision for Local Airline, Crew, based on the recommendation of the Bureau of Quarantine (BOQ) in cooperation with Civil Aeronautics Board (CAB), and Civil Aviation Authority of the Philippines (CAAP) Memorandum Circular No. 06-2020 on Mandatory Submission of General Declaration and Health Forms;

**WHEREAS**, flight crew for Cargo, Maintenance, Ferry, and Delivery Flight Operations, regardless of nationality, are key workers providing essential services in

the implementation of unhampered movement of cargoes and persons through air travel, and should be accorded the right to safe passage, including the right to embark and disembark in third countries when in transit, and the right to be repatriated and to return home;

**WHEREAS**, there is a need to facilitate continued flight operations while preventing the spread of COVID-19 and protecting the health and safety of the flight crew;

**WHEREAS**, the Philippines, as a member state of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) is enjoined to implement the protocols of the organization, including the implementation of a Public Health Corridor to Protect Flight Crew During Covid-19 Pandemic (Cargo, Maintenance, Ferry, and Delivery Flight Operations) as contained in ICAO Electronic Bulletin 2020/36 dated 17 June 2020;

**WHEREAS**, the ICAO Electronic Bulletin 2020/36 further provides that while the guidance has been developed for flight crew conducting cargo, maintenance, ferry, and delivery flight operations, it is applicable to flight crew for all types of flight operations, including airline operations;

**WHEREAS**, the Asian Business Aviation Association Limited (AsBAA Philippines), through a letter dated 22 May 2020, likewise submitted a "Proposed Flight Crew Transit Procedures" to serve as guidelines for aircraft deliveries (maintenance, hangarage, and parking facilities) and handling of crew;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, as it is hereby resolved that the Civil Aviation Authority of the Philippines (CAAP) shall implement and execute the following Protocols applicable to all local and international air operations supporting the carrying of cargo, maintenance activities and positioning of an aircraft without passengers.

## **I. COVERAGE**

This protocol shall apply to all local and international air operations as follows:

- i. Operations supporting the carrying of cargo<sup>1</sup>, maintenance activities and positioning of an aircraft without passengers, including the following:
  - a. Operations involving freighter/cargo aircraft transporting cargo;

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<sup>1</sup> *Dangerous goods are prohibited from transport in the passenger cabin unless as authorized or permitted in the Philippine Civil Aviation Regulations and in the ICAO Doc 9284 - Technical Instructions for the Safe Transport of Dangerous Goods by Air.*

- b. Operations involving passenger aircraft transporting cargo in the passenger cabin (crew other than flight crew may need to be on board such flight for safety reasons);
  - c. Operations involving any type of aircraft in support of continuing airworthiness and maintenance requirements;
  - d. Operations involving any type of aircraft to position the aircraft for reasons of operational necessity, without carrying any person other than the crewmembers; and
  - e. The delivery of newly acquired aircraft that serve public function, including air ambulance, aerial firefighting and humanitarian aid.
- ii. Passenger flight operations.

For purposes of this Memorandum Circular, unless specified as flight crew or cabin crew, the term "crew" refers to all operational crew required on board for the aircraft operator to support the flight. This may include ground engineers, technicians, firefighters or other crew who may be required on board to provide engineering or safety support for the flight.

## **II. PHILIPPINE PUBLIC HEALTH CORRIDOR**

The Authority hereby creates a "*Public Health Corridor*" for air operations to ensure the unhampered transport of passengers, goods, and delivery of essential services, as well as the continued flight operations with minimal restrictions on aircraft operation while preventing the spread of COVID-19 through air travel and protecting the health and safety of crew.

## **III. RESPONSIBILITIES OF AIR OPERATOR AND THE FLIGHT AND CABIN CREW**

1. The aircraft operator and crew members shall ensure strict compliance with all the guidelines stated in this Memorandum Circular and other related issuance by the Philippine Government.
2. The aircraft operator shall be responsible for the following:
  - a. ensuring disinfection of the aircraft at a frequency based on the usage of the aircraft and recommended by the aviation regulators in coordination with the Department of Health;

- b. materials known to be effective against COVID-19 and safe for use in the aircraft shall be used, in accordance with the World Health Organization;
- c. using the Aircraft COVID-19 Disinfection Control Sheet (Form 1 in Appendix A) and keeping them available for documentation purposes;
- d. determining whether increased disinfection activities compromise residual insecticide treatment to an extent necessary to implement additional or alternative disinfection treatments to meet national requirements;
- e. in instances where additional disinfection is required, e.g. cockpit disinfection during crew changes, providing crew with the necessary disinfection materials and Personal Protective Equipment;
- f. equipping the aircraft with Universal Precaution Kits to be used by the cabin crew when a suspected case is identified on board;
- g. ensuring that crew identified as having had close contact with a positive COVID-19 case must be relieved from the flight duty roster for 14 days from the date of exposure and follow the Department of Health instructions;
- h. ensuring crew members not to return to work until cleared to do so by the applicable public health authority and the employers' occupational health program;
- i. access on board the aircraft and to the flight deck by authorized personnel such as ground/technical personnel should be minimized and use of electronic documentation is encouraged;
- j. access on board must only be allowed if physical distancing measures are adopted. If it is not practically possible to achieve this, such personnel should use non-medical face masks to reduce the risk of potential exposure to the crew; and
- k. operating turnaround flights and avoid long layovers and transits for their crew as far as reasonably practical. For turnarounds, crew are advised to stay in the aircraft (except for aircraft walk-around checks). Consideration should be given for unforeseen delays (e.g. due to unplanned testing procedures) and a process identified for managing such unforeseen delays.

1. Ensuring that crew members do not loiter and mingle among crowds during their stay at hotels or airports during layovers, as the case may be.
3. The crew members of shall be responsible for the following:
  - a. observing physical distancing practices, including both when on and off duty, in accordance with health requirements when off-duty.
  - b. disinfecting oxygen masks after each use. In-flight rest shall have bedding for each crew member for their individual use. The bedding must be packaged and stored individually.
  - c. crew identified as having had close contact with a positive COVID-19 case must be relieved from the flight duty roster for 14 days from the date of exposure and follow the local Public Health Authorities' instructions.
  - d. crew identified as having had close contact with a person with symptoms or signs suggestive of COVID-19 shall self-isolate pending the result of testing of the contact person, or for 14 days after the last potential exposure, should the testing result of the contact person not be available. During this period, such crew must be relieved from the flight duty roster.
  - e. monitor themselves while available for duty and if displaying any symptoms suggestive of respiratory tract infection or if they develop a fever, a new persistent cough or difficulty in breathing, must notify their employer and be relieved from flight duties and self-isolate and seek medical advice as soon as practicable.
  - f. crew members operating passenger aircraft with cargo only shall ensure that the correct notification has been sent to all agencies, so that there will be no confusion, or that crew members carried on board such as loadmasters, engineers, and cabin crew will be correctly recognized and designated on the crew manifest.
  - g. aircraft crew staying overnight at the airport or hotels, as the case may be, for layovers and such other purposes, must not loiter and mingle with other people during their stay.

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4. Nothing in this Memorandum Circular shall prevent any air operator and all other entities from sharing information to the Philippine Government which may be deemed necessary for the efficient implementation of this Memorandum Circular, or to ensure public health and safety.

#### **IV. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE CIVIL AVIATION AUTHORITY OF THE PHILIPPINES**

1. The Civil Aviation Authority of the Philippines shall ensure crew members, maintenance and cargo/load specialized personnel who are involved in flights with a layover, shall not be medically quarantined and detained for observations while on a layover or after returning, unless they exhibit symptoms or were exposed to persons with symptoms or signs suggestive of COVID-19 on board or during the layover.
2. The CAAP shall implement measures that facilitate the continued operation of aircraft, such that:
  - a. Quarantine measures are not imposed on crew who need to layover, or rest, for the purposes of complying with Flight Time Limitation requirements;
  - b. Crew members are not subject to screening or restrictions applicable to other travelers; and
  - c. Health screening methods for crew members are as non-invasive as possible.
3. Encourage other relevant government agencies to develop appropriate guidelines to supplement this Memorandum Circular with the aim of improving air operations and ensuring public health and safety.

#### **V. GUIDELINES AT THE AIRPORTS**

1. Crew members shall coordinate with airport authorities and adhere to measures implemented by airport operators in view of general hygiene and distancing measures.
2. Airport authorities shall provide dedicated channels at airports to facilitate crew, including any positioning crew, in clearing customs and immigration in order to minimize contact with other travelers.
3. Aircraft operators and crew members shall comply with the Mandatory Submission of General Declaration and Health Form pursuant to Memorandum Circular No. 06-2020.

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4. Screening performed by airport authorities shall be conducted in accordance with the protocols of the relevant aviation and public health authorities. Screening includes pre-flight and post-flight self-declarations, temperature measurement and visual observation of crew.

5. Crew showing signs or symptoms suggestive of COVID-19 or indicating exposure to COVID-19 shall be required for additional examination, including a focused health assessment or COVID-19 test performed by healthcare personnel either in a dedicated interview space at an airport, or in an off-site pre-identified health care facility.
6. If crew members are suspected or confirmed positive for COVID-19 based on the medical evaluation, isolation is required. Alternatively, the aircraft operator may medically repatriate such crew member by appropriate modes.

## **VI. GUIDELINES ON CONDUCT OF PRE-FLIGHT ACTIVITIES**

1. Aircraft operators shall remind crew that symptoms of COVID-19, including fever, renders them unfit for duty. On reporting for duty, crew members are required to complete the General Declaration and Health Forms.
2. Aircraft operators shall implement disinfection procedures, in accordance with OEM guidance, of the cockpit controls and surfaces before the flight if there are crew changes, using material that is effective against COVID-19 and safe for aviation use.
3. Crew must avoid contact with the public and ground/technical personnel as well as observe good hand hygiene and physical distancing measures when conducting pre-flight checks and briefings.
4. Any positioning crew shall be the last to embark the aircraft.
5. Aircraft operators shall provide suitable face masks for flight crew, when travelling to and from the aircraft and during layovers. In the interest of flight safety, flight crew may remove their face mask when they are in the cockpit and the cockpit door is closed.
6. Aircraft operators shall inform flight crew of the caveats of face mask management, based on the WHO advice on the use of masks in the context of COVID-19. Should medical masks not be available, crew could make use of non-medical face masks in accordance with WHO recommendations.

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## **VII. GUIDELINES ON THE CONDUCT OF IN-FLIGHT ACTIVITIES**

1. Crew members, including any positioning crew, shall observe good hand hygiene, physical distancing measures and minimize all non-essential

interaction and contact with fellow crew, as far as practicable, during duty.

2. Any positioning, engineering, technical or other crew members are to be assigned seats in designated sections of the aircraft, segregated from the flight crew, for the duration of the flight to achieve the recommended physical distancing, if seats are available, and provided that operational and/or maintenance requirements do not require positioning in the cockpit.
3. In the event that a crew member experiences fever or any symptoms suggestive of COVID-19 while inflight, the crew member should follow the procedures outlined in the WHO guidance, donning a medical face mask and isolating him/herself from fellow crew members, provided that it does not affect aviation safety.

Should there be space limitations, the aircraft operator should consider risks and safety management principles when considering alternative measures to prevent the transmission of COVID-19.

The sick crew member should report to the State Public Health Authorities upon arrival for further assessment.

## **VIII. GUIDELINES ON THE CONDUCT OF POST FLIGHT FORMALITIES**

While completing all post-flight formalities, crew members including any positioning crew, shall observe physical distancing measures, good hand hygiene, and minimized all non-essential interaction and contact with fellow crew members and any ground or technical personnel and their belongings, if present, as far as practicable.

Any positioning crew shall be the first to disembark the aircraft.

## **IX. GUIDELINES DURING LAYOVER/TRANSIT**

If the crew are required to layover at an outstation, the aircraft operator shall make prior coordination with the appropriate State Public Health Authorities of the airport and, where quarantine measures are identified as required, the following shall be implemented:

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1. Transportation/commute arrangements

The aircraft operator shall arrange for the transportation of the crew members from the aircraft to the crew's individual accommodation rooms, ensuring hygiene measures are applied and the recommended



physical distancing adopted, including while the vehicle, to the extent possible.


2. Accommodation arrangements
  - a. The aircraft operator shall arrange for a one room (single occupancy) per crew member, which is sanitized prior to occupancy.
  - b. The crew members, in so far as practicable, shall:
    - i. at all times, comply with the local public health regulations and policies;
    - ii. avoid contact with the public and maintain physical distancing measures with crew members;
    - iii. remain in the room except to seek medical attention or for essential activities, while respecting physical distancing requirements;
    - iv. avoid the use the common facilities of the accommodation unless physical distancing measures are in place;
    - v. consider dining in-room, get take-outs or dine-in a preferably within the accommodation facility, maintaining physical distancing;
    - vi. regularly monitor for symptoms including fever; and
    - vii. observe good hand hygiene, respiratory hygiene and physical distancing measures.
3. For crew member experiencing symptoms suggestive of COVID-19 during layover:
  - a. Crew member shall report to the aircraft operator and seek assistance from a medical doctor for assessment of possible COVID-19;
  - b. Undergo assessment and possible further monitoring for COVID-19 in accordance with the evaluation procedure implemented by the State concerned (e.g. assessment in the room, or an isolation room within the accommodation, or alternate location);

- c. If the crew member has been evaluated and COVID-19 is not suspected in accordance with the procedures implemented by the State, the aircraft operator may arrange for the crew member to repatriate to base; and
- d. If a crew member is suspected or confirmed as a COVID-19 case by the State and isolation is not required by the State, such crew member shall be medically repatriated by appropriate modes.

#### X. EFFECTIVITY

This Memorandum shall take effect on 21 July 2020 until repealed.

For information and strict implementation.

  
CAPTAIN JIM C. SYDIONGCO  
*Director General*  
Civil Aviation Authority of the Philippines

**APPENDIX A**

**AIRCRAFT COVID-19 DISINFECTION CONTROL SHEET**

**Aircraft Registration:** \_\_\_\_\_

*Aircraft disinfection was made in accordance with the recommendation of the World Health Organization, at a frequency determined by the National Public Health Authority and in accordance with approved products and application instructions of the aircraft manufacturer.*

Date (dd/mm/yy)	Time (24hr - UTC)	Airport (ICAO code)	Remarks	Disinfector name
Aircraft areas treated		Disinfectant material	Comments	Disinfector signature
Flight deck <input type="checkbox"/> Passenger cabin <input type="checkbox"/> Cargo compartment(s) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____				

Date (dd/mm/yy)	Time (24hr - UTC)	Airport (ICAO code)	Remarks	Disinfector name
Aircraft areas treated		Disinfectant material	Comments	Disinfector signature
Flight deck <input type="checkbox"/> Passenger cabin <input type="checkbox"/> Cargo compartment(s) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____				

Date (dd/mm/yy)	Time (24hr - UTC)	Airport (ICAO code)	Remarks	Disinfector name
Aircraft areas treated		Disinfectant material	Comments	Disinfector signature
Flight deck <input type="checkbox"/> Passenger cabin <input type="checkbox"/> Cargo compartment(s) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____				