INTERNATIONAL CIVIL AVIATION ORGANIZATION

Twenty Third Meeting of the Africa-Indian Ocean Planning and Implementation Regional Group (APIRG/23) & Sixth Meeting of the Regional Aviation Safety Group for the AFI Region (RASG-AFI/6)

Virtual, 23 November – 2 December 2020

Agenda Item 2: COVID-19 Impact on Aviation sector: The APIRG/RASG-AFI context

U.S. Aviation Recovery Efforts related to COVID-19

(Presented by the United States of America)

SUMMARY	
This information paper presents an overview of the United States (U.S.) Government's implementation of the ICAO Council Aviation Recovery Task Force (CART) guidance and describes what the U.S. is doing to help U.S. aviation recover from the COVID-19 public health crisis.	
Strategic Objectives	Share information on U.S. COVID-19 Response

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. The Federal Aviation Administration's (FAA) Runway to Recovery (R2R) report is a document that provides guidance and recommended public health measures to airlines and airports in addressing the threat of the COVID-19 public health crisis. Released in July 2020, R2R was jointly developed by the U.S. Department of Transportation, Department of Health and Human Services, and the Department of Homeland Security. Aligned with the recommendations of ICAO's Council Aviation Recovery Task Force (CART) Report, R2R covers all operations and phases of travel, and it expands the work that airports and airlines are already doing to combat the global effects of COVID-19. More importantly though, R2R ensures the health, safety, and well-being of the aviation system workforce, as well as the traveling public, in the U.S. national airspace.

2. DISCUSSION

2.1 The U.S. response is driven by the following guiding principles:

- Aviation safety and security cannot be compromised
- All aviation stakeholders have a shared interest and responsibility in promoting public health for everyone in the air transportation system.
- An air transportation system that can move people and goods safely and efficiently without exacerbating public health concerns is critical to supporting economic recovery nationwide.

2.2 The initial U.S. Government response since the COVID-19 crisis began in late January included the following actions associated with civil aviation:

- The U.S. Government helped repatriate nearly 125,000 Americans on nearly 1,300 flights from 139 countries through June;
- The FAA distributed about $10 billion in Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act funding through a new grant program to more than 3,000 U.S. airports in a matter of days.
- The FAA rolled out a wide variety of COVID-19-related exemptions to airmen—like regulatory relief for medicals and recurrent training—to ensure that the nation's air transportation system kept critical goods and personnel moving by air, while continuing to ensure the safety of the system;
- The FAA introduced innovative approaches in its aircraft and production certification processes. One example: The FAA developed and implemented remote technology techniques to help a business aircraft manufacturer earn the production certification for its new single-engine turboprop in July and put more than 100 furloughed employees back to work.

2.3 The FAA's R2R framework recommends the following measures to airlines and airports:

- Educating and communicating with passengers and employees.
- Wearing face coverings everywhere in the air transportation environment.
- Promoting social distancing.
- Enhancing disinfection and cleaning procedures.
- Requiring health assessments from passengers and employees.
- Collecting passenger contact information for contact tracing.
- Protecting employees and separating passengers and crew.
- Minimizing in-person interaction and shared objects, documents and surfaces.
- Reporting the daily status of public health risk mitigation efforts.
- Enhancing airport security checkpoint operations to reduce exposure.
- Using new technology to support mitigation measures.

2.4 A multi-layered approach is vital to minimizing the spread of COVID-19 in the air transportation system. No single mitigation strategy alone is adequate, but together, these recommendations offer an effective risk reduction approach.

2.5 The innovative solutions of the Runway to Recovery Report have enabled airport facilities to reopen and are restoring the confidence of both air operators and passengers to, once again, return to the skies. The FAA, as the regulator, has been able to respond to changing risk and operational environment while maintaining safety oversight and air navigation services. For example, while travel is still restricted, the FAA has implemented technological solutions to enable it to conduct some of its safety oversight work remotely (See WP/05-A, *FAA Remote Oversight Activities*).

2.6 To the extent possible, the FAA continues to maximize the consistency of measures in the domestic and international air transport systems with recommended practices outlined in the CART "Take-off" Guidance, which was also recently reviewed and updated as the risk and mitigation strategies change. The Runway to Recovery report will also capture some lessons learned and incorporate updates based on feedback and data from organizations such as the U.S. Centers for Disease Control (CDC), the U.S. Department for Homeland Security (DHS), in addition to airlines and airports.

2.7 The Runway to Recovery report can be downloaded at: https://www.transportation.gov/sites/dot.gov/files/2020-07/Runway_to_Recovery_07022020.pdf. In addition, FAA's all-encompassing COVID-19 information can be found at: https://www.faa.gov/coronavirus/

3 ACTION BY THE MEETING

3.1 The meeting is invited to note the information in this paper and review the Runway to Recovery Report and the FAA website listed above for more information.