Passenger Information for Governments

Contact tracing, travel history and symptoms screening

1. Background

To address the spread of COVID-19 threat, governments have started requesting additional information from passengers:

- **Contact details**: to get their most up to date contact details (phone number, address at destination, email etc.)
- **Travel history:** to know in which country they have traveled to in the previous 14 days
- **Symptoms screening/health self-declaration**: To understand if a traveler has:
  - Symptoms that may potentially indicate a contamination by COVID-19 or
  - Already been infected
  - Been in close contact with someone infected within the last 14 days

This information needs to be linked to the **passenger's identity** and mode of transport and destination **(travel information)**.

2. One-stop-shop: a government website

A simple and straightforward way of communicating this information is to fill it through a government portal. Here is an example which displays all the information on the same page https://tokhaiyte.vn/
Any country can set it up quickly and IATA is keeping track of those links.

The process can be compared to electronic visa requirements and for those that already require online visa the two processes can be combined on the same portal. Countries require additional data to grant access to their territory: they collect it, make their assessment and provide or not an authorization to passengers. Airlines just need to know if a passenger has been granted this authorization. This information can usually be provided up to 3 days before the flight.

As it may not always be simple for states to communicate on these platforms IATA proposes to encourage its members to inform passengers at booking and again few days before check-in. This information could also be found on IATA travel center.

Finally, as IATA develops a passenger wallet (derived from IATA One ID concept), an option is also to provide the opportunity for passengers to find the link to the government portal through the IATA app.
It is critical this information remains under the control of the state requiring the information as they can protect the information and they have the responsibility to run they risk assessment and provide or not an authorization.

3. Alternative sources of information

When there is no government portal in place, states need to rely on other sources of information.

Information provided at booking and check-in

- PNR – Passenger Name record (created at booking – i.e. up to one year before traveling): provide itinerary flown under the same booking reference. It contributes to providing information on the **Travel history** but if a passenger is flying other segments under another PNR this information will not be known by the airline. At this stage a passenger's identity is not confirmed (only declarative data) but it can contain a phone number and an email if provided **(contact details).**

  When the reservation is made through a travel agent, it usually does not contain the passenger contact information but instead it provides the agent contact details. This practice prevents the airline from reaching out to the passenger directly (this is lead by marketing and commercial reasons). In can become problematic in case of disruption as passengers cannot be informed directly. So far IATA has not been successful in obliging OTA to provide accurate information.

  Typically, governments ask airlines to send PNR information few days to few hours before departures and they usually complain about this lack of data quality.

- API – Advance Passenger information (created at check-in – i.e. usually up to 24h before departure): Passenger's passport information is extracted from the paper passport. In this way it becomes "verified information" except for online and mobile check-in that rely on self-declaration. API is very often sent to governments any time after check-in has closed. Beside some basic flight information, it contains the following elements:
  - Surname/ Given Names
  - Nationality
  - Date of Birth
  - Gender
  - Official Travel Document Number
  - Issuing State or Organization of the Official Travel Document
  - Travel Document Type
  - Expiration Date of Travel Document

Requesting airlines to modify their systems to include additional and mandatory address, email, phone number etc. in the API or PNR would require 12 to 14 months developments. It is a very costly solutions that our members ask us to fight against.
Further governments usually already have this information (Visa, electronic travel authorizations, citizen database etc.) and requesting them at booking or check-in will not guarantee the accuracy of the information provided by passengers. **API and PNR cannot accommodate health data.**

At time of booking airlines can also perform a **symptom questionnaire** (similar to the questionnaire they run on prohibited items). This information is not sent nor shared with governments (so no major system adaptation). It implies that airlines are responsible to take a decision on whether a person can be admissible or not and deal with the situation at the airport at a critically time sensitive moment.

Declaration on arrival

- Paper embarkation/debarkation cards.
  - Flexible there but it is a cumbersome process.
  - Airlines do not want to be involved in collecting the information and any exchange of paper form and
  - **IATA does not encourage paper forms** as it introduces a risk of contamination.

- Automated kiosks: all the information may be collected through the kiosks. Appropriate cleaning measure should be taken. This can only bee implemented where kiosks are already installed – which is limited in scope.

  To limit contacts, states could adapt or develop their App to fill the arrival declaration. This can be done offline and upon completion of the process a QR code is generated which can be then scanned on arrival. This provides a contactless option which can be complementary to the kiosks. On the downside it requires passengers to download an additional app.

The process on arrival may be as efficient than the government portal where kiosks are already in place. As this is very limited in terms of geographical scope government portals are still the preferred option.

Mobile App to trace passengers

Based on Apple and Google announcement. It is certainly a useful tool that governments are considering to use as part of a layered approach.
The mobile app works on using Bluetooth and allow devices to exchange information at close range. This requires the Bluetooth to be on at all time and people to self-declare their contamination. If someone has been in proximity of another person infected, they will receive a notification while not disclosing any of the persons' identity.
There is no intervention from the airline required beside encouraging passengers to download the app and turn the Bluetooth on.
In Singapore where the government has developed such an app it is estimated that about 20% of the population has downloaded the app and it does guarantee that all users have the Bluetooth on and that they have declared whether or not they have been contaminated.

4. Conclusions

IATA recommends states to set up a government portal to collect all the additional information they require. While a standardization of the data elements requested is advised for further integration and automation, states may easily customize these platforms. IATA is engaging with ICAO and WHO to standardize the data requested.

Information	Government portal	PNR	API	Symptom questionnaire at check-in	Kiosks on Arrival
Passenger ID	+++	+	++	-	+++
Travel information	+++	++	+++	-	+++
Travel history	+++	+	-	-	+++
Contact details	+++	++	-	-	+++
Symptom screening	+++	-	-	++	+++
Global implementation	+++	+++	+++	+++	-
Allow governments to perform risk assessment	+++	+	-	-	++