

Air Navigation Services (ANS) and the COVID-19 pandemic

**African ANSPs Meeting
Lome, Togo, 28 March–1st April 2022**

**Agenda Item 4:ANSP perspectives Challenges and recovery
Strategies**

Presented by: GHANA

Outline

- INTRODUCTION
- HOW COVID-19 AFFECTED GHANA
- RECOVERY STRATEGIES
- LESSONS LEARNT
- ACTION BY THE MEETING

INTRODUCTION

- Approximately two years since the World Health Organization (WHO) declared the Covid-19 pandemic a Public Health Emergency.
- The human and economy development of every country in the world experienced unprecedented decline due to the pandemic.
- Ghana, as a country was not spared the impact of covid 19 especially as it relates to the Air Navigation business.

Actions taken by Ghana

- On 22nd March 2020, air, land sea borders were closed to passengers.
- This implied significant reduction in aircraft movement
- Most of the aircraft movement were limited to evacuation, humanitarian, cargo, and emergency flights.

How Covid-19 affected Ghana

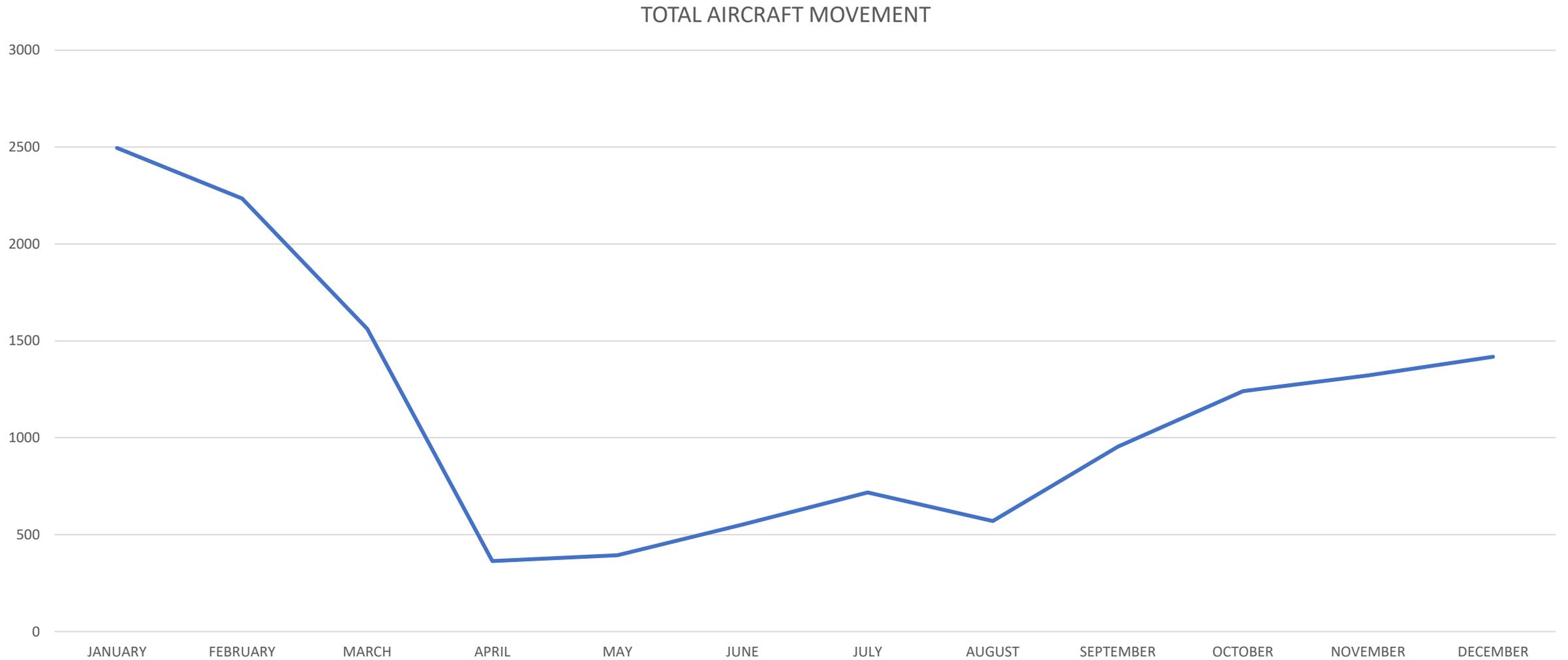
For the purposes of this discussion, we would share how covid-19 and its associated challenges affected the following areas of our business:

- Aircraft Movement
- Management of Personnel
- Contingency plans
- Impact on Finance
- Recovery strategies
- Lessons learnt

Aircraft Movement

- Air Travel numbers drastically declined from March 2020 when compared with pre-COVID level for same periods in 2019. Due to restrictions on both international & domestic air travels.
- There was a 54.68% reduction in flight movement in 2020 as compared to its equivalent period in 2019. Enroute traffic was down by 46.6% in 2020 as compared to its equivalent period in 2019.
- By September 2020 however, some level of recovery was noticed as restrictions on air travels eased gradually. This was made possible due to the strict protocols put in place at the Kotoka International Airport (KIA).

Aircraft Movement for 2020



Management of Personnel and working environment for core ANS operations

- A ‘work-from-home’ policy was instituted for majority of the staff. Only essential service staff were allowed to work in-person and on a rotation basis.
- Due to the reduction in traffic volumes, Air Traffic Control sectors were combined leading to reduction in staff strength and numbers on watch duty to answer the social distancing protocols.
- A standby (Contingency) Watch was in place to step-in if a member of a watch tests positive for COVID -19, to allow the whole watch to be withdrawn for testing and treatment.

Contingency plans

- Emergency ACC and Tower were established as a fall back if the need arose for the complete evacuation of the main ACC and Tower.
- Our team run constant trials to establish the readiness of the emergency facilities to take over operations when the need arose.
- These procedures were simulated and rehearsed from time to time to ensure that, the turn-around times were within safe limits.

Impact on Finance

- As was the case with almost every industry, our finances were severely affected by the pandemic. Our revenue for 2020 saw a downward decline of about 51.9% as compared to 2019.

Recovery strategies

- The Ghana Civil Aviation Authority (GCAA) in collaboration with the Ghana Airports Company Limited worked with Airlines to provide flexibility within their operational framework to help manage and mitigate the impacts of COVID-19 where appropriate.
- Air Traffic Controllers and other operational and technical staff were taken through refresher courses and training to bring them up to required levels of recency to handle the increase in traffic levels.
- The Government of Ghana also provided the aviation sector with some level of financial support in the form of reliefs to help sustain the operations of the industry.
- Restructure financial obligations

Recovery strategies

- A COVID-19 testing regime was put in place at the Kotoka International Airport to avoid the spread of the virus as well as build passenger confidence.
- All arriving passengers were tested on arrival. Departing passengers were also required to undergo a COVID 19 PCR test within 72hours of their planned departure..
- Enhanced COVID-19 protocols such as the wearing of face mask, washing of hands regularly, social distance and the use of alcohol sanitizers were put in place at every part of our operation.

Recovery strategies

- Mandatory COVID-19 vaccination of all employees was instituted. Steps were also taken to ensure adherence to this mandatory Covid -19 protocols.
- Decongesting of offices, working from home policy and down-sizing of personnel.
- Contingency facilities were also created with associated procedures to implement when such major pandemic occurred as discussed in 2.4
- Regular disinfection of all offices and operational facilities.

Lessons Learnt and the way forward

The Covid-19 has helped us to:

- Be more deliberate about our financial contingency strategies
- Take advantage Virtual meetings, training, Factory Acceptance Test (FAT).
- Learn to work from home. We therefore need to put in place effective methods of working from home as well as control mechanisms.
- Strengthen our cyber robustness.
- Technical contingency related to facilities and

ACTION BY THE MEETING

The meeting is invited to:

- take note of the actions taken by Ghana to manage the impact of the COVID -19 pandemic
- encouraged other ANSPs to share their experiences with the view to making the ANSPs better equipped for future situations.
- Encourage other ANSPS to employ some of the mitigation factors if not in place.

THANK YOU

Q & A