

Aviation COVID-19 Safe Guide

Addressing COVID-19 Risks for International Travellers and Border Staff in the Aviation Sector

Intent

- 1. The intent of this Implementation Strategic Guide ('Guide') is to provide advice and support on suggested physical border measures that can be implemented to assist in safely re-opening international borders while minimising the health and safety risks associated with COVID-19 to border officials and industry.
- 2. This document is to be used as a guide only, and as a means to provide guidance to border agencies on physical layouts and safety recommendations on COVID-19 safe protocols at the border. It is aviation-specific and can be used by the various border agencies and industry within the Pacific as the basis for the development of individual operational plans to achieve the above intent.
- 3. This Guide focuses on the use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and suggested COVID-safe practices to protect frontline officers, staff, passengers, crew and industry from COVID-19. It provides guidance on:
 - a. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)
 - b. Training and the role of a COVID-Safe Marshalls
 - c. Signage and posters
 - d. Cleaning and sanitisation
 - e. COVID Safe Zones at an international airport
 - f. Arriving and Departing Passengers
 - g. Examples of processes, layouts, PPE distribution and ongoing support links

Please note that the information and guidance within this Guide <u>do not</u> supersede each Pacific nation's COVID-19 health plans or protocols, or their laws or international obligations, and may not adequately address the specific requirements of individual nations, but may be considered when developing other measures to support existing protocols.

By providing this Guide, the Australian Government has not assumed any responsibility for the development or implementation of plans to address COVID-19 risks in the aviation sector of Pacific nations. Each nation should develop its own plans to address COVID-19 risks taking into account up-to-date advice from its health agency.

Background

- 4. All countries in the Pacific region, and globally, have a shared interest in controlling and restricting the spread of COVID-19 and the impact it is having on lives, communities and economies. Australia is keen to work with and support our Pacific island colleagues as we manage our common challenge of keeping travellers, and those working at the border, safe while carrying out required duties and functions at the border.
- **5.** A multi-agency approach is recommended to mitigate the COVID-19 risk to the Pacific through the aviation sector.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

- **6.** All airports are to consider establishing **donning** (putting on) and **doffing** (removing) stations at each entrance and exit of separation lanes or where frontline officers are required to wear PPE. These stations should be physically separate from each other.
- **7.** Donning and doffing stations should be kept in a clean and tidy manner and cleaned/disinfected regularly.
- **8.** If there is a high touch area (like a door or high traffic area/s) donning/doffing stations are located either side of the door.

Donning station

- Donning stations are set up as a permanent fixture and are not moved (e.g. a table rather than a trolley).
- PPE should be organised in a logical order of donning at the donning station. Hand sanitiser is at the start of this order. Officers should only don PPE after first sanitising hands in a clinically safe way.
- Frontline officers should change gloves regularly, ensuring they do not touch the "dirty" gloves with "clean" hand(s) during glove removal and do not touch their face when wearing gloves.
- Frontline officers should not touch the front of their mask when applying, wearing or removing the mask.
- Care should be taken to ensure the integrity of gloves is maintained (for example, no tears, holes or breaks in the gloves). Please note hand sanitiser degrades the integrity of gloves. Gloves should be changed, and not sanitised.
- Unused PPE should not be stored on the floor near the donning station.
- It is important to ensure the donning station has the appropriate PPE that is required for the role
 of the frontline officers as outlined by the relevant health authority in each country.

Doffing station

- Doffing stations are available for the disposal of PPE when removed.
- A clearly labelled container (preferably a different colour) for PPE disposal is located directly adjacent to each doffing station.
- When disposing of PPE, the PPE must be placed in the container with nothing hanging out of it.
- Officers should not walk around with PPE (such as gloves and masks) hanging out of their pockets or masks hanging from one ear.

PPE Training

- **9.** All frontline officers, supervisors and other relevant staff should receive COVID-Safe training provided by the relevant health authority in each country before flights commence.
- 10. This could include, but may not be limited to:
 - a. how to correctly don and doff PPE
 - b. how to correctly dispose of PPE
 - c. how to maintain hand hygiene, and
 - d. how to clean workstations (including baggage benches, office desks and primary line modules).

COVID Safe Marshall

- **11.** The establishment of a COVID Safe Marshall is supported by the Australian Border Force within each international airport in Australia. Considerations should be given to creating a similar position or positions within the Pacific.
- **12.** The COVID Safe Marshall's role is to ensure that all frontline officers are following COVID safe practices and protocols and receive training conducted by the relevant health authority.
- **13.** At the airport, the role of the COVID Safe Marshall is to:
 - a. ensure that all staff are trained in how to appropriately don, doff and dispose of PPE
 - b. ensure that all staff are donning and doffing PPE in accordance with the instructions from the local health authority
 - c. ensure physical distancing is adhered to by staff at all times
 - d. ensure correct hand hygiene practices are followed
 - e. ensure safe PPE disposal practices are followed
 - f. review the PPE stock on hand at regular intervals throughout the day to ensure there is sufficient stock on hand for expected usage during the day
 - g. ensure that the donning and doffing stations are not cluttered
 - h. create and maintain a record of accountabilities and scheduled duties, and
 - i. conduct regularly required functions including:
 - order PPE stock when necessary
 - ensure cleaning and sanitisation products are available
 - conduct regular audits of PPE equipment and products
 - training refreshers for staff as required.
- **14.** Attachment B PPE Guidance for Aviation Environment refers.

Signage and posters

Donning and doffing stations

- **15.** Donning and doffing stations serve different purposes and should therefore be clearly signposted to indicate their function (i.e. donning, or doffing).
- **16.** The colour of the donning and doffing signs should differ so they can be easily distinguished and should adhere to the following:
 - the colour of all signs and posters at the donning station should be the same
 - the colour of all signs and posters at the doffing station should be the same, and

- the colour of the signs should be written in word form on the sign for those who are colour blind.
- **17.** A poster illustrating the clinically safe donning and doffing procedures should be clearly visible at the stations and should be at least A4 size or greater and hung in a readily visible position.
- **18.** The doffing container should be clearly signed on the lid and side of the bin to indicate it is for doffing PPE only.

Other signage

19.Refer to your relevant health authority in regards to other signage within the international airport that outlines the local COVID-19 health and safety requirements. Examples of the World Health Organization's signage are located at Attachment E – List of References and Useful Links.

Cleaning/Sanitisation

Officer hand hygiene

- 20. All frontline officers are encouraged to maintain good hand hygiene practices.
- 21. Officers are recommended to undertake frequent handwashing throughout their shift using adequate soap and water. If these facilities are not available, officers should use hand sanitiser frequently and directly to their hands. Any advice and training provided by the relevant health authority on hand washing techniques should be followed.
- **22.** When hand-washing facilities are not readily available, alcohol-based hand sanitiser of at least 70% ethanol is recommended. Use according to instructions.
- **23.** If officers are unable to access hand washing stations and are sensitive to alcohol based hand rubs or hand sanitiser, officers should use nitrile disposable gloves.
- **24.** Hand sanitiser stations should be available at every station a frontline officer is located and placed at regular stations for arriving passengers, crew and other workers.
- **25.** If frontline officers are regularly handling documents, it is good practice to use hand sanitiser regularly and avoid touching their faces.

Cleaning of surfaces

26. Each table used as a donning/doffing station should be cleaned with at least the same frequency as other high touch areas.

Cleaning products

27. Disinfectant wipes or pour-and-wipe disinfectant solutions should be used instead of a spray-and-wipe disinfectant.

COVID-Safe Zones in the International Airport

- **28.** When an airport is preparing to receive an international flight, a number of steps should be taken to prepare for the safe processing of the flight, including passengers, crew and cargo. From a COVID-Safe perspective, these steps could include:
 - a. For larger airports, physically separating the traveller pathway within the airport into red and green lanes to avoid cross contamination whilst processing red and green zone travellers and aircrew (including freight crew) concurrently;
 - Where the airport is only receiving a single cohort of travellers due to its size or capacity, the separation of lanes will not be necessary. However, the airport should ensure adequate spacing of flights to facilitate cleaning between flights;

- c. The separation of lanes should take into account, where possible, the separate facilitation of immigration, customs, and biosecurity clearances and the movement of travellers to different baggage claim areas;
- d. Protocols developed should ensure that there is no cross contamination between travellers, staff and equipment throughout the airport (including on the tarmac): The protocols should document how they will ensure:
 - a. the physical separation of red and green lanes (if applicable), travellers, staff and equipment
 - b. frequent cleaning of airport and equipment (including computers, pens etc.);
 - c. COVID Safe training is delivered by the relevant health authority to all staff (including casual staff and contractors)
 - d. PPE use and disposal requirements are adhered to, and
 - e. that PPE donning and doffing stations are placed at entry and exit points of red and green lanes (if applicable) or at the entry and exit to passenger processing areas.
- e. Appropriate signage throughout the airport and surrounding area that provides instructions to travellers and staff moving throughout the airport to ensure all local COVID-19 safe requirements are followed.

Health Declarations by Travellers

- **29.** Border agencies are to refer to their individual Government protocols, including those based on relevant international obligations, and health requirements in regards to health declarations required at the border for both incoming and departing passengers and crew.
- **30.** Where health declarations are a requirement of the individual country, frontline officers will likely be required to validate that a health declaration has been made but will not validate the information contained in the declaration.
- **31.** As mentioned under the intent section of this Guide, the information and guidance contained within this Guide do not supersede each Pacific nation's COVID-19 health plans or protocols, and may be considered when developing other measures to support existing protocols.

Arriving Passengers

- **32.** Consideration should be given to managing time-slot allocations for international aircraft arrivals and departures to allow adequate time for cleaning and sanitisation prior to, and after, international flights.
- **33.** Dedicated COVID-19 and physical distancing communication, including terminal announcements and visual displays (posters and pull up banners), should be prominent throughout the airport terminal arrivals area from traveller disembarkation to exit as per individual country health protocols.
- **34.** On arrival, all travellers should remain on board the aircraft until:
 - a. the relevant health or quarantine/biosecurity officer completes an assessment using a Traveller with Illness Checklist (TIC) or their country's equivalent
 - b. an approved Pacific COVID-19 script is read by airline crew, and
 - c. all travellers are provided with a COVID-19 factsheet.
- **35.** Travellers can then be facilitated through a traveller pathway in accordance with physical distancing requirements and in a manner which avoids congestion from disembarkation to exit.
- **36.**Where flights arrive concurrently, it is recommended that all travellers from one flight be processed and cleared through designated areas, and all cleaning protocols completed, before any travellers from the second flight are permitted to disembark the aircraft.

- **37.** Where a traveller has an adverse health outcome at any health check point or screening area, the relevant agencies are to enact their border health measures response.
- **38.** Border agencies and industry can assist with increasing information available to travellers to introduce minimum standards for enhanced signage to encourage officer and traveller safety. This may include:
 - a. health banners displayed throughout each airport at key traveller interaction points (entry to arrivals halls, immigration processing lines, baggage carousels)
 - b. physical distancing reminder signage/banners (1-1.5m distance) displayed alongside all health signage
 - c. physical distancing floor markers in all queuing areas
 - d. physical distancing floor markers at baggage examination benches or tables
 - e. additional tensa barriers in concourses to separate travellers and meet physical distancing requirements, and
 - f. a closure of alternate processing points/gates where 1.5m separation is unable to be achieved.
- **39.** To increase hygiene standards, border agencies are recommended to work internally and with airport corporations to source additional equipment necessary. As a general rule, airports could be responsible for travellers and traveller areas, and border agencies responsible for their own staff.

For example, airports could consider setting up hand sanitiser stations at:

- a. Aerobridges, concourses or tarmacs
- b. Baggage collection areas
- c. Health desks
- d. On each passport/immigration processing desk
- e. In all exit queues
- f. At border agency examination benches or tables.
- **40.** Consideration should be given for airlines to provide additional information, including seating plans, prior to arrival of aircraft.
- **41.** It is recommended that there is increased scrutiny of Incoming Passenger Card or Passenger Declarations by border officials to ensure sufficient details are completed for potential contact tracing requirements.
- **42.** If Incoming Passenger Cards/Passenger Declaration does not contain sufficient information for potential contact tracing (e.g. accommodation details, traveller email addresses etc.) then consideration should be given to introducing a process to collect this information. For example an additional form handed out on the plane, collected and checked at a designated clearance desk.
- **43.** Consideration should be given for a health check point pre-immigration where possible, to conduct health screening on arriving passengers as outlined in each country's health protocols.
- **44.** Border officials or designated COVID Safe Marshalls could board the aircraft or be present on the tarmac to manage offload rates when required to ensure appropriate physical distancing within the terminal. All border officials and industry members are recommended to:
 - a. encourage travellers to wear appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)
 - b. encourage use of sanitiser throughout the clearance process
 - c. encourage physical distancing measures
 - d. monitor travellers for compliance throughout the clearance processes.

Departing Passengers

- **45.** Border agencies and industry could assist with increasing information available to travellers and introducing minimum standards for enhanced signage to encourage officer and traveller safety. This may include:
 - a. health banners displayed throughout each airport at key traveller interaction points (check-in areas, airline counters, duty-free shops, immigration counters and security check points)
 - b. physical distancing reminder signage/banners (1-1.5m distance) displayed alongside all health signage
 - c. physical distancing floor markers in all queuing areas
 - d. additional tensa barriers in concourses to separate travellers and meet physical distancing requirements
 - e. closure of alternate processing points/gates where 1-1.5m separation is unable to be achieved.
- **46.** To increase hygiene standards, border agencies are recommended to work internally and with airport corporations to source additional equipment necessary. As a general rule, airports could be responsible for travellers and traveller areas, and border agencies responsible for their own staff.

For example, airports could consider setting up hand sanitiser stations at:

- airline check-in counters
- · duty free stores and waiting areas
- on each passport/immigration processing desk
- at each security screening area
- · at all queues
- at border agency examination benches.

Post-arrival

47. Please refer to the relevant health authorities responsible for contact tracing when a traveller is identified as being symptomatic. Travellers who were on the same flight or who were in close contact to a person who later tests positive to COVID-19 should be contacted by the relevant agency for testing, treatment, and isolation options, in accordance with Government direction of the Pacific nation.

Ongoing Support

- **48.** This Guide and the below instructional video has been produced toprovide guidance to border agencies within the Pacific on physical layouts and safety recommendations on COVID safe protocols at the border.
- 49. Please note that recommendations and guidance in this Guide <u>do not</u> supersede each Pacific nation's COVID-19 health plan or protocols, or their laws and international obligations, but may be considered when developing other measures to support existing protocols.
- **50.** The Australian Border Force is committed to provide operational guidance and support to our Pacific border counterparts in an effort to minimise the health and safety risks associated with COVID-19 to border officials and industry.
- **51.** If you require any additional information or support, please contact pacific@abf.gov.au or representatives of the Australian Government posted in your Pacific country.

List of Attachments:

Attachment A - A Guide to Various Roles and Responsibilities at the Border

Attachment B - PPE Guidance for Aviation Environment

Attachment C - Suggested Process Overview

Attachment D – Examples of the distribution and stocking of PPE

Attachment E – List of Suggested References and Useful Links

Please note that the information and guidance within this Guide <u>do not</u> supersede each Pacific nation's COVID-19 health plans or protocols, or their laws or international obligations, and may not adequately address the specific requirements of individual nations, but may be considered when developing other measures to support existing protocols.

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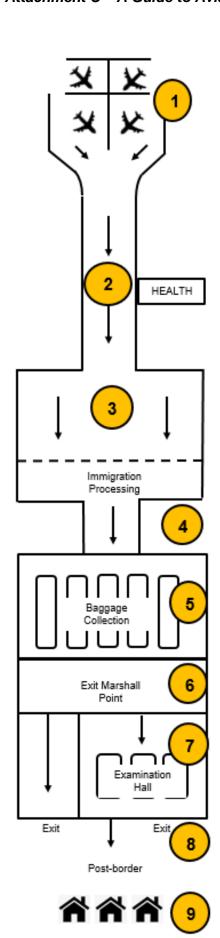
If you have any questions about the information contained within this Implementation Strategy Guide for Border Agencies in the Pacific, please contact <u>pacific @abf.gov.au</u> or your relevant regional organisations.

Attachment A – A Guide to Various Roles and Responsibilities at the Border:

No	Traveller Workflow	Suggested Roles and responsibilities				
		Biosecurity or Health Agencies	Customs	Immigration	Airports	Airlines
1.	Pre-border Pre-arrival information of incoming or outgoing passengers for screening (where applicable)	*	√	✓	*	✓
2.	Flight arrives, while travellers are on board; 2A. Officers undertake a Traveller with Illness Checklist (TIC) or something similar	√	*	*	*	×
	2B. COVID-19 script provided by an officer to crew to read out If so, script to be developed as per individual country requirements	✓	*	*	*	√
	2C. A COVID-19 factsheet provided by officers to travellers as per individual country requirements	✓	✓	√	√	✓
	2D. Other government documentation such as incoming passenger cards must be completed on board aircraft prior to disembarkation to assist with social distancing in the arrivals terminal	*	*	*	√	√
	2E. Travellers disembark from aircraft in accordance with social distancing requirements.	✓	✓	✓	√	√
3.	Facilitation of travellers Airport management to assist with the facilitation of travellers throughout the airport arrivals area to health screening or immigration to ensure social distancing requirements are met.	*	*	*	√	✓
4.	Health screening check point Health screening may be undertaken by designated officers	✓	×	*	*	×
5.	Traveller Border Processing	✓	✓	✓	×	×
6.	Traveller facilitation to baggage claim area Border agencies and airport management to monitor and remind travellers of social distancing requirements.	√	√	√	√	*
7.	Traveller facilitation throughout examinations areas. Border agencies and airport management to monitor and remind travellers of social distancing requirements.	√	√	√	√	×
8.	Traveller queue to exit to waiting transport for transfer to accommodation Airport management to monitor and remind travellers of social distancing requirements.	*	×	*	√	×

Attachment B – PPE Guidance for Aviation Environment

Scope/Activity type	Should PPE be Mandatory?	PPE Type
All roles unless otherwise specified	Yes	Surgical masks should be worn if unable to maintain physical distancing of 1.5 metres or more. If crossing between green and red lanes is operationally required, PPE should be changed when moving between lanes. Change mask as required/necessary or if wet, soiled or damaged.
Office based activities with no public interaction/contact (i.e. Control Room, Operational Support & Capability Group)	No	Surgical mask should be worn if unable to maintain physical distancing of 1.5 meters.
Boarding and Entering Aircraft (red and green flights)	Yes	Full PPE comprising disposable gown/coveralls, face shield or protective spectacles, nitrile gloves and a surgical mask.
Health Screening Secondary (Following Primary Referral) – For swabbing and screening / monitoring. Only applies if frontline officers are required to conduct border clearance processes in the same location as the health screening processes.	Yes	Full PPE comprising disposable gown/coveralls, face shield or protective spectacles, nitrile gloves and a surgical mask.
Light Aircraft Processing	Yes	If entering the aircraft: Full PPE comprising of disposable gown/coveralls, face shield or protective spectacles, nitrile gloves and a surgical mask. If not entering the aircraft: Surgical mask and nitrile gloves can be worn.
Formal Interviews (Highly recommended that all interviews are conducted remotely wherever possible)	Yes	Interview remotely where possible, i.e. from another room, via phone. If unable to interview remotely: Full PPE comprising disposable gown/coveralls, face shield or protective spectacles, nitrile gloves and a surgical mask. PPE must be changed between each face to face interview.



1. At Plane & Aerobridge

- · Aircraft is boarded by relevant officials
- Health script read to travellers prior to disembarkation
- Health officials assess any ill travellers as advised by the airlines as per standard practice for International Arrivals
- Disembarkation may be delayed due to physical distancing and segregation requirements if other aircraft on the ground
- Relevant officers will be located on aerobridge and in concourse areas to answer questions and assist airport staff to encourage physical distancing requirements

2. Concourse, Tarmac or entry into arrivals hall but prior to Primary Line

- Relevant personnel hand out information pamphlets as required by each countries' requirements
- Airport Corporations can ensure travellers follow agreed physical distancing requirements
- Disembarkation rates can be managed through staged methods

3. Immigration Processing Point

 Immigration or Customs officers ensure all travellers have completed all required documentation

4. Post Immigration Process

- Relevant Officers can check arrival documents to ensure details completed for potential contact tracing requirements
- Physical distancing requirements when checking entry status.

5. Baggage Collection

- Customs, Quarantine or Immigration officers may be located in the baggage collection area to answer questions and ensure physical distancing requirements
- Airport representatives may be located in the collection area to encourage safe distancing measures and hygiene practices
- Travellers will need to follow agreed physical distancing

6. Exit Marshall

- Travellers present with their documentation and luggage
- Travellers will need to adhere to agreed physical distancing

7. Examination Hall

- Border officials may inspect baggage and question travellers.
 This will include declarants and some non-declarants on a non-health risk assessed basis
- Physical distancing requirements for officer safety

8. COVID-19 checkpoint for contact tracing purposes

- Inspect and record accommodation and transport details for arriving passengers
- Possibly provide COVID-19 information and contact number lists in case of symptoms post arrival

9. Post Border

Relevant agencies ensure collected arrival data (including arrival cards and declarations) is appropriately stored for easy and timely retrieval to assist with contact tracing if required

Attachment D – Examples of the distribution and stocking of PPE

Item	Item	Estimated Usage Rates
Surgical Masks	Surgical Masks	5 per person / day
P2/N95 Masks	P2/N95 Masks	1 every 8 hours unless wet
Face Shields	Face Shields	Reusable once or twice after appropriate sanitisation
Protective Glasses	Protective Glasses	1 pair per person per day
Protective Goggles	Protective Goggles	1 pair per person per day
Nitrile Gloves	Nitrile Gloves	5 times a day
Hand Sanitisers	Hand Sanitiser	3ml usage per person 10 times a day
Antibacterial Wipes	Anti-bacterial wipes	5 wipes used per person per day
Gowns	Gowns	1 every 4-5 hours of consistent use
	Coveralls	1 every 4-5 hours of consistent use
Coveralls Tissues	Tissues	10 tissues used per person per day

Attachment E - List of References and Useful Links

World Health Organization

Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic information

https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019

https://www.who.int/westernpacific/emergencies/covid-19/covid-19-in-the-pacific

Instructional videos regarding social distancing, reducing risk, PPE and hygiene measures – Pacific:

https://www.who.int/westernpacific/emergencies/covid-19/covid-19-in-the-pacific

https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/advice-for-public/when-and-how-to-use-masks

https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/advice-for-public

Downloadable posters tailored for the Pacific

https://www.who.int/westernpacific/emergencies/covid-19/covid-19-in-the-pacific/information/protect-yourself-and-others

<u>Links to COVID-19 specific online training for PPE application and removal, hand hygiene and management of ill travelers at points of entry</u>

https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/training/online-training

Pacific Community

<u>Downloadable posters on PPE application and removal, hand hygiene, preventing the spread of COVID-19 and hand washing protocols.</u>

https://www.spc.int/updates/blog/20/09/covid-19-pacific-community-updates

Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat

Pacific COVID-19 information and updates

https://www.forumsec.org/covid-19-updates-from-the-secretariat/

Oceania Customs Organisation (OCO)

OCO Operational and Policy Guidance Document COVID-19

https://www.ocosec.org/oco-covid-19-information/

Pacific Immigration Development Community (PIDC)

https://www.pidcsec.org/about-us/

Australian Government information

Coronavirus (COVID-19) - Official Australian Government information

Australian Border Force

Home (abf.gov.au)

Instructional video - tour through Canberra Airport (Australia) outlining the consideration in this document;

https://bordertv.au.vbrickrev.com/downloads/videos/eb476497-a45b-4e0d-9467-3003d31811a6/instances-file/275dd568-f70b-45f3-96f0-

4ac0f0a73987?revUrl=https%3a%2f%2fbordertv.au.vbrickrev.com%2fdownloads%2fvideos%2feb476497-a45b-4e0d-9467-3003d31811a6%2finstances%2f275dd568-f70b-45f3-96f0-4ac0f0a73987

Informational video - Guidance on PPE and clinically safe practices

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Department of Home Affairs

COVID-19 and the border https://covid19.homeaffairs.gov.au/

Airports Council International – Online Learning Centre

COVID-19 information, webinars, online training, publications and policies associated with international airports and the safe reopening of operations.

https://aci.aero/

https://store.aci.aero/form/aviation-operations-during-covid-19-business-restart-and-recovery/

 $\underline{\text{https://www.olc.aero/product/aviation-service-excellence-while-physical-distancing/}}$