

## APAC COVID-19 Landscape

Updated 17 August 2020

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### 1. Overview

- The overall situation continues to remain varied and fluid across markets. Australia, Hong Kong, New Zealand, Philippines, and Vietnam are battling a resurgence of cases, Singapore, Malaysia, and Thailand have a stabilisation of cases, hence gradually easing restrictions domestically.
- International borders continue to remain closed and international air travel continues to be muted, with air passenger traffic [plummeting by 97.1% compared to the year-ago](#). Countries such as Singapore are exploring options that would allow a wider range of business and leisure visitors to the country.
- Hong Kong has allowed for the resumption of transit passengers from mainland China.
- On the regulatory front, airport concessionaires in Thailand have managed to secure an extension to rental reliefs and concession.

### 2. Political Developments

- [New Zealand](#) Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern has expressed caution on the prospect of a Trans-Tasman bubble materialising anytime soon. This can be attributed to the high number of communities COVID-19 cases in Australia. New Zealand suggests to consider “quarantine-free travel” to any other place, would be for the country in question to be free of community transmission for 28 days. NZ has recorded a small re-emergence of COVID-19 community cases after 102 days of zero cases.
- [Thailand](#) has halted plans for a “travel bubble” with selected countries, as daily COVID-19 cases in certain parts of Asia continue to rise. Countries that were under consideration by Thailand for this “travel bubble” include Japan, Hong Kong, and South Korea. The revival of talks will depend on the situation in each country, in which the country’s task force is assessing daily
- [Singapore](#) is seeking to allow a wider range of business and leisure visitors to visit the country as it aims to find new ways to boost its hard-hit tourism sector. Singapore tourism agency is in talks with the Singapore government to further explore the existing green lane arrangements that are now in place with Malaysia and China. The country recently embarked on a S\$45 million domestic tourism initiative.

- [Singapore](#) and Japan have agreed to work on "green lane" arrangements to resume essential travel to ready by next month. Both countries are working towards a special quota for cross-border travel by work pass holders. There will also be a reciprocal green lane for short-term business travellers, and officials. This will take a few months.
- [Hong Kong](#) has allowed for the resumption of transit passengers from airports in Mainland China. This will resume from 15 August till 15 October. Transfer and transit services to destinations in Mainland China will remain suspended. with the resumption of transit services in Hong Kong, there are public health measures implemented by the airport authority, these measures include separate dining areas, stickers for transit/transfer passengers for identification and the request for transit and transfer passengers to head directly to the boarding gates for their connecting flights.

### 3. Regulatory Developments

- [Airports of Thailand \(AOT\)](#) has extended the country's duty free retailer King Power International Group new commercial contracts by one year until 31 March 2022, in light of the impact from the COVID-19 pandemic. The one-year extension of the concession will be valid from 1 April 2022 and 31 March 2022. Separately, AOT has [extended the rent relief \(credit payment terms\)](#) to concessionaires from six to 12 months at six of its airports, citing that "concessionaires are still being affected by the severe and continuing COVID-19 outbreak in many countries as well as governmental travel restrictions." The extension will only be available to concessionaires who had already submitted a letter of request for payment terms extension to AOT.

### 4. Industry Developments

- [Air Asia will resume daily flights between Singapore and Kuala Lumpur](#), starting from the week of 17 August, in light of the Reciprocal Green Lane (RGL) agreement between Singapore and Malaysia. Passengers can expect enhanced safety measures throughout the journey. This comes after cross-border travel between Singapore and Malaysia was allowed to resume for essential travellers ( business and government officials), as well as for long-term immigration pass business and work pass holders from both countries to commute across the border for work purposes.

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## Annex A: Summary of active travel corridors in Asia

Countries		With effect	Remarks
China	South Korea	1 May	<p>Travellers need an invitation from companies or governments to travel. A Covid-19 test is required 72 hours before departure. Upon arrival, they would have to be quarantined for up to two days &amp; subjected to another test, before being allowed to proceed with their trip.</p> <p><b>No available information on current DF allowances for this corridor.</b></p>
Singapore	China	8 June	<p>Travellers need to be sponsored by a corporation or a government entity. They must be tested 48 hours before departure, with an itinerary to be submitted prior the start of the trip and be subjected to another test upon arrival. They will be quarantined for up to two days before the commencement of their trip. Individuals are not allowed to deviate from their submitted itinerary.</p> <p><b>DF allowance is only limited to transits at Changi Airport, on a concierge service basis (i.e. pre-order items).</b></p>
Taiwan	Bhutan, Brunei, Cambodia, Fiji, Japan, Myanmar, Malaysia, Macau, Mongolia, Laos, New Zealand, Palau, South Korea, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Vietnam	22 June	<p>Currently business travellers are only allowed. Travellers must be able to provide details of their stay and be tested negative for the virus within 3 days prior to their arrival. Must present proof of invitation from a company.</p> <p>Travellers will be subjected to a quarantine, with the duration dependent on the length of stay of the traveller in Taiwan. Those who are residing in Taiwan for more than 3 months are mandated to complete the entire 14 day quarantine.</p> <p><b>No available information on current DF allowances for this corridor. The list of approved countries is dependent on the COVID-19 situation and would be updated regularly.</b></p>
Singapore	Malaysia	10 August	<p>Currently travel is only granted for business and government officials, and for those who are holding long-term immigration work passes. Similarly, travellers would be subjected to a mandatory swab test and a controlled itinerary.</p> <p><b>No available information on current DF allowances for this corridor.</b></p>