

APAC COVID-19 Landscape Updated 3 September 2020

1. Overview

- The overall situation in Asia continues to remain uncertain. Countries such as Australia, Hong Kong and Vietnam are seeing a plateau of cases. India and South Korea are continuing to see a rapid rise in Covid-19 cases. Hence, overall the appetite for reopening mass international travel remains low.
- Governments are evaluating the recovery process for the aviation sector. Beyond the usual travel corridors already in place, most recently with Singapore allowing for the resumption of general travel to Brunei and New Zealand, albeit with control measures in place.
- On regulatory, we are continuing to see the extension of various relief measures for airports and the wider aviation sector across markets such as Hong Kong, Singapore and South Korea, the various fiscal relief measures extended till Q4 2020 or to the first half of 2021.
- The Airports Council International (ACI Asia Pacific) has issued a statement seeking governments' assistance in replacing quarantine requirements with testing and contact tracing protocols, between low-risk countries.

2. Political Developments

- [India](#) has extended the suspension of scheduled international flights till end of September 2020, though schedule flights under the 'travel corridor' (*currently in place with the U.S, France & Germany*) will continue to be in place. While domestic flights have been allowed to resume since May, the country aviation ministry suggests scheduled international flights can only be considered once domestic flights reach the 50% mark of the initially approved summer schedule.
- [China](#) Civil Aviation Administration announced that it would scrap the current 75 per cent cap on load factors, for some international flights if no incoming passengers test positive for coronavirus for three weeks. Flights coming from high-risk areas, as deemed by China, will have to continue to adhere to the 75 per cent load factor regulation.
- [Brunei and Singapore](#) jointly announced the establishment of a Reciprocal Green Lane (RGL) to facilitate essential business and official travel for residents from both countries. Upon receiving approval from the respective government(s), travellers need to obtain a negative COVID-19 test certificate from the health authorities designated by the respective governments, at least 72 hours before departure, and undergo another round of testing upon arrival. Travellers must also adhere to a controlled itinerary which must be submitted beforehand. Applications commence from 1 September.

- [Indonesia](#) announced the establishment of travel corridors with China, South Korea, and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) via specific points of entry, as part of a bilateral measure to facilitate the resumption of official business and government travel. Individuals would have to provide a negative COVID-19 test result upon arrival to be exempt from the 14-day quarantine. Separately, [Indonesia is in discussions with Singapore](#) to establish a similar arrangement.
- [Singapore](#) has announced for the resumption of general travel to Brunei and New Zealand from 1 September, as part of a broader and cautious approach to resume air travel to the country. Individuals arriving from Brunei and New Zealand are subjected to a COVID-19 test and may only continue with their activities in Singapore upon receiving a negative test result. In addition, they will also have to fulfil other criteria prior to arrival. These include:
 - Applying for an air travel pass, between seven and 30 days before their intended date of arrival into Singapore
 - Remaining in Brunei or New Zealand in the last consecutive 14 days before arrival into Singapore

This is a unilateral agreement with individual countries on the part of Singapore, and does not constitute a bilateral agreement between Singapore and the two countries, respectively, with [New Zealand](#) announcing that they will continue to maintain its current travel advisory. Likewise for Brunei where despite the announcement of a Reciprocal Green Lane (RGL) arrangement with Singapore (*see above*), the suspension of entry for non-citizens and non-permanent residents and the restriction of departure for its residents will continue to be in place.

Separately, the [Civil Aviation Authority of Singapore \(CAAS\)](#) has announced that it will allow for the passage of more regional transit flights at Changi Airport via Singapore Airlines group flights.

3. Regulatory Developments

- [South Korea](#) announced a range of additional relief measures for the airport retail sector, in light of the ongoing pandemic that has grounded a large part of air travel. Some of the new measures announced include:
 - Deferment of rent payment from the current September 2020 - February 2021 to January to June 2021.
 - Extension of “concession rent suspension” due at airports with domestic flights suspended has now been extended to large and medium-sized companies
 - Duty free concessionaires contract terms at Incheon International Terminal being changed from a minimum annual guarantee basis to a variable percentage of sales formula

Relief measures will now be available to all airport retailers, regardless of size.

- [Singapore](#) will extend its current support measures for the aviation sector under the Enhanced Aviation Support Package till March 2021. The government will set aside S\$187 million to provide fiscal relief to airlines, ground handlers, cargo agents and airport tenants through landing, parking, and rental

rebates. Separately, the aviation sector, together with the tourism and aerospace sectors, will also continue to receive the extended wage support of 50 percent, for a further seven months till March 2021.

- [Hong Kong](#) Airport Authority announced a two-month extension of its assistance measures package for beleaguered companies operating at Hong Kong International Airport (HKIA). The assistance measures includes rent waivers for retail and catering tenants who have suspended trading, plus those having to trade under essential services. It will also cover rent reductions for terminal tenants covering lounges and officers, and fee waivers for terminal licensees such as those providing ancillary passenger services, commercial counters, and cross-border transport operations.

4. Industry Developments

- [Airports Council International \(Asia Pacific\)](#) released a statement urging governments to replace quarantine requirements with testing and contact tracing protocols, at least between low-risk countries where the virus situation is well under control and where the risk of importation is low. The recent announcement by Singapore to replace the 14-day quarantine with COVID-19 testing for all inbound passengers from some low risk countries was cited by the Council as a “first step in the right direction to support the economic recovery of the aviation ecosystem.” The Council estimates that airport revenues, a direct reflection of traffic, are forecasted to decline by approximately US\$27 billion in the Asia-Pacific region.

Annex A: Summary of active travel corridors in Asia

| Countries | | Remarks |
|-----------|---|--|
| China | South Korea | Individuals require an invitation from companies/ governments to travel. They require a Covid-19 test 72 hours before departure. Upon arrival, they will have to be quarantined for up to two days and subjected to another test, before being allowed to proceed with their trip. No available information on changes to the current DF allowances for this corridor |
| Singapore | China | Individuals required to be sponsored by a corporation or a government entity. They must be tested 48 hours before departure, with an approved itinerary submitted prior to travel 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. DF allowance is only limited to transits at Changi Airport, on a concierge service basis (i.e. pre-order items) |
| Taiwan | Bhutan, Brunei, Cambodia, Fiji, Japan, Myanmar, Malaysia, Macau, Mongolia, Laos, New Zealand, Palau, South Korea, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Vietnam | Only for business travellers with proof of an invitation from a company. Travellers must be able to provide details of their stay/ itinerary and They require a negative Covid-19 test 3 days prior to their arrival. 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. No available information on changes to the current DF allowances for this corridor. The list of approved countries is dependent on the COVID-19 situation and would be updated regularly. |
| Singapore | Malaysia | Only for business and government officials, & long-term immigration work pass holders. Travellers will be subjected to a mandatory swab test and a controlled itinerary. No available information on changes to the current DF allowances for this corridor. |
| Indonesia | China, South Korea, United Arab Emirates (UAE) | Only for business, employment, and government purposes with sponsorship. Individuals be tested and have negative COVID-19 test at least 48- 72 hours prior to arrival and undergo further medical checks upon arrival. No available information on changes to the current DF allowances for this corridor. |
| Singapore | Brunei | Only for business and government officials who are sponsored. Travellers will be subject Covid-19 testing prior to departure and upon arrival at the respective countries. They would also have to adhere to the stipulated quarantine timeline upon arrival at the respective country, before being allowed to commence their trip and have to adhere to a controlled itinerary. No available information on changes to the current DF allowances for this corridor. |