



# EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLAN

A template for Air Carriers

PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY

## **1. Introduction**

IATA recommends that all air carriers have emergency response plans to deal with public health emergencies. While a number of air carriers already have excellent emergency response plans in place, many do not. The following constitutes a sample template for an emergency response plan applicable to public health emergencies.

This document has two primary objectives:

- Identify in broad terms how to prepare for a public health emergency.
- Provide checklists of actions that should be built into a public health emergency plan.

This sample template is purposely generic in order that it could be of use in different types of public health emergencies and in order to avoid having to produce new templates specific to each emergency that might occur. It could be used by those air carriers that do not currently have their own public health emergency response plan. Additionally, air carriers that have developed a plan may find it useful to review it against the elements set out herein.

### **Note**

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## **2. Preparation**

For air carriers that already have an emergency response plan, most of the same resources will be used in cases of public health emergency. For those air carriers without a plan, IATA strongly recommends one is established as soon as possible and resources identified.

### **2.1 National Public Health Emergency Plan**

Before writing an emergency response plan, it is imperative that air carriers consult with their national health authorities in the development and implementation of their response plans for public health emergencies. Air carrier response plans should be aligned with the national plan.

### **2.2 Establishment of an Emergency Response Team (ERT)**

An emergency response plan is of no use without a team to implement it. Air carriers are encouraged to establish an Emergency Response Team (ERT) as

soon as possible. Such a team should consist of *executive*, *core* and *support* members.

The ERT executive members should have primary responsibility for advising senior management of developments relating to a public health emergency and actions to be taken in response. ERT executive members might typically be:

- Director Emergency Response
- Medical Advisor (or designated medical representative)
- Communications Director (or equivalent)

The ERT core members might typically be from those externally-focused departments that would have direct and immediate operational contact with the consequences of a public health emergency. These include:

- Flight Operations
- In-Flight Services
- Maintenance
- Airports
- Cargo
- Security & Facilitation
- Station & Passenger Handling
- Operations Control

The ERT support members should be from those internally-focused departments required to support the activities undertaken by an air carrier to address a public health emergency. These include:

- Legal
- Risk Management
- Human resources
- Finance/Purchasing

### **2.3 Establishment of an Emergency Response Centre (ERC)**

Some air carriers already have designated office space equipped with all of the communications and planning tools required to manage a response to a public health emergency. Air carriers that do not have such a facility are encouraged to establish one.

## **3. Triggers of Public Health Emergency response**

The information triggering an emergency response could come from any number of different areas. The most likely scenario would probably be a notification from the World Health Organization (WHO) that there has been a progression into a more critical phase of the emergency in question. However, the information could also come from National Public Health Authorities, as it did for some countries during the SARS crisis. Lastly, a response could also be triggered at

the air carrier level if, for instance, many passengers and/or crewmembers on a particular flight display symptoms compatible with communicable diseases.

Depending on the origin and the nature of the information received, the level of response will vary; it could be limited to action required by medical and communications staff or could extend to a full response including all affected parties.

#### **4. Activation of the Emergency Response Team and Centre**

The department or individual within the air carrier that receives the information that could potentially necessitate an emergency response should immediately contact the Operations Control Director (or its equivalent) who should in turn contact the executive members of the Emergency Response Team, as outlined above.

The executive members should determine whether the Emergency Response Plan and Centre should be activated. If the decision is to open the ERC, all employees involved in the Emergency Response Team should be notified. If the ERC is activated, the ERT core and support members should be represented.

#### **5. Roles and Responsibilities**

Attached below are documents specific to each member of the Emergency Response Team. They outline the roles and responsibilities of each team member and contain a checklist of actions to be taken by each team member in the event of a public health emergency.

## 5.1 Director Emergency Response (DER)

- Overall responsibility for emergency response and for directing the activities of the Emergency Response Team (ERT).
- Advise designated superior of the impact of the emergency on the company's operations and make relevant recommendations.
- Notify the Reservations Department of the need to lock in passenger information or for notifying the operating air carrier to do so when required (only for air carriers not using Departure Control System).

### Emergency Response Checklist

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Task	Action	Date
<input type="checkbox"/>	Convene a conference call with the representatives responsible for responding to a public health emergency.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Verify the details of the emergency.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Determine whether it will be necessary to open the Emergency Response Centre.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Initiate a conference call with the airport(s) involved in the emergency.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	If the air carrier has no DCS, notify the reservation department to lock in passenger information if appropriate for this emergency.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	If necessary, open the Call Centre (if one is available) and notify the General Manager Call Centres (or equivalent).	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Monitor developments and advise immediate supervisor as often as required.	

## 5.2 Medical Representative (MR)

- Initiate and maintain contact with all appropriate health authorities.
- Established point of contact for the IATA Medical Advisor.
- Make appropriate recommendations applicable to specific departments of the company, based on information received from the health authorities.

### Emergency Response Checklist

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Task	Action	Date
<input type="checkbox"/>	Contact the appropriate health authorities.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Contact the IATA Medical Advisor if appropriate.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Contact the company Medical Officer closest to the airport(s) where the emergency is in effect.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	If appropriate for the emergency, contact the hospital(s) that are receiving passengers in order to obtain relevant information.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Determine whether there is a requirement to quarantine any equipment.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Determine whether there is a requirement to disinfect the aircraft.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Advise the Director Emergency Response of the actions required.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Advise Company Maintenance of the actions required and ensure that the aircraft is properly disinfected.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Assist Corporate Communications with press releases as required.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	If necessary, advise Flight Operations and In-Flight Services of the requirements for medical examinations for crewmembers.	

## 5.3 Communications

### 5.3.1 External Communications

- Initiate and maintain liaison with counterparts at the appropriate health authorities, as well as any other agencies that may be involved.
- Act as established point of contact for IATA Corporate Communications representatives.
- Manage all communications to the media including the distribution of press releases as required.
- Keep the DER informed of significant developments in the media.
- Ensure the establishment of a communication channel that could be used by the general public to contact the air carrier. For example, publish a toll free number or establish a Call Centre that could manage enquiries from the families of passengers caught up in a public health emergency.
- Post appropriate communications on the company web site.

### 5.3.2 Internal Communications

- Communicate all necessary information to internal staff.

### Emergency Response Checklist

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Task	Action	Date
<input type="checkbox"/>	Establish liaison with spokesperson for appropriate health authorities, the airports and any other agencies that may be involved.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Coordinate with IATA Communications representative.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Determine who the corporate spokesperson(s) will be.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Brief the corporate spokesperson(s).	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Draft necessary press releases and review them with the Director Emergency Response (DER) and the Medical Representative.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Confirm with the DER every time a press release has been released.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Monitor ongoing press coverage and inform DER of any developments in the media.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Assist human resources in communicating all necessary information to internal staff.	

## 5.4 Flight Operations

- Communicate relevant details (i.e. as they affect Flight Operations) of the emergency to pilots and any applicable unions.
- Review procedures relating to onboard medical emergencies and advise operational flight crew accordingly.
- Ensure that flight crews laying over in affected areas (if applicable) have been provided with necessary guidance and have access to any assistance required.
- Closely monitor crew scheduling to try and avoid last minute crew manning problems.

### Emergency Response Checklist

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Task	Action	Date
<input type="checkbox"/>	Ensure that all relevant information concerning the emergency has been communicated to the company pilots and the pilot association if applicable.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	For an international public health emergency (e.g. Avian Flu), review procedures relating to onboard medical emergencies and advise pilots accordingly.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Ensure that flight crew staying over in affected areas have been provided with necessary guidance and have access to any assistance required.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Maintain close contact with crew scheduling to try and avoid last minute crew manning problems.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	For a specific onboard medical emergency, contact the operating crew and ensure they get any necessary assistance (peer support team, employee assistance program, etc.).	
<input type="checkbox"/>	When required, discuss the need for medical examinations with the Medical Representative and have arrangements made as required.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	In situations where the crew is to be released from duty, ensure that Crew Scheduling is contacted.	

## 5.5 In-Flight Services

- Communicate relevant details (i.e. as they affects In-Flight Services) of the emergency to cabin crew and any applicable cabin crew union.
- Review procedures relating to onboard medical emergencies and advise cabin crewmembers accordingly.
- Ensure that cabin crews laying over in affected areas (if applicable) have been provided with necessary guidance and any assistance required.
- Ensure that the catering function is not interrupted.
- Closely monitor crew scheduling to try and avoid last minute crew manning problems (if the appropriate department to do so).

### Emergency Response Checklist

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Task	Action	Date
<input type="checkbox"/>	Ensure that all relevant information concerning the emergency has been communicated to the company cabin crew and the cabin crew union if applicable.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	For an international public health emergency (e.g. Avian Flu), review procedure relating to onboard medical emergencies and advise cabin crew accordingly.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Ensure that cabin crew laying over in affected areas have been provided with necessary guidance and have access to any assistance required.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Maintain close contact with Crew Scheduling to try and avoid last minute crew manning problem.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	For a specific onboard medical emergency, meet the aircraft or, if impossible, contact the operating crew and ensure they any necessary assistance (peer support team, employee assistance program, etc.).	
<input type="checkbox"/>	When required, discuss the need for medical examinations with the medical representative and have arrangements made as required.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	In situations where the crew is to be released from duty, ensure that Crew Scheduling is contacted.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	If it is necessary to quarantine any equipment involved in the incident (O2 bottles, medical kits, galley equipment), ensure that the appropriate parties have been notified and arrangements have been made.	

## 5.6 Airports

- Ensure the clear flow of relevant information to and from all stations.
- Advise the stations according to their location and according to the information received from the Medical Representative.
- Keep the Director Emergency Response informed of the situation in the different stations.
- Instruct the stations directly involved in the emergency to lock passenger information in the reservations systems of both the operating and marketing carriers and, in the case of code sharing, to secure copies of appropriate passenger manifests (only air carriers using a Departure Control System).

### Emergency Response Checklist

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Task	Action	Date
<input type="checkbox"/>	For an international public health emergency (e.g. Avian Flu), ensure that all relevant information goes to and is received from all stations.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Transmit information received from the Medical Representative to stations as appropriate to their location.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Maintain close contact with stations in affected areas.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Keep the Director Emergency Response informed of the situation at the different stations.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	For the arrival station of an aircraft with a specific onboard emergency, verify the details of the medical emergency.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	With the assistance of the Medical Representative, determine whether it will be necessary to quarantine any equipment and advise the station accordingly.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Ensure that personnel have been properly briefed and are available to meet the aircraft.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Ensure that the station has arranged for the passengers, crewmembers, cargo and baggage to remain on the aircraft until permission has been received from medical personnel to disembark passengers and offload cargo and baggage.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Determine if it is necessary to open the Passenger Centre and/or Friends and Family centre.	

□	If air carrier uses a DCS, instruct the station to lock passenger information in the reservations system and secure copies of appropriate passenger manifests.	

## 5.7 Maintenance

- Continue regular activities and adapt any special procedures that are recommended by the Medical Representative as a result of information received from the public health authorities.
- If responsible for cleaning aircraft, ensure that aircraft have been properly disinfected when required and should employ the methods and disinfectants recommended by the Medical Representative and the aircraft manufacturers.
- Ensure that personnel are properly protected and briefed.
- If another department is responsible for aircraft cleaning, that department should assume the latter responsibilities.

### Emergency Response Checklist

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Task	Action	Date
<input type="checkbox"/>	For an international public health emergency (e.g. Avian Flu), Maintenance continues its regular activities and adapts any special procedures that are recommended by the Medical Representative as a result of information received from the public health authorities.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	If disinfection of an aircraft is required, ensure that personnel are using methods and disinfectants recommended by the Medical Representative and the aircraft manufacturers.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Ensure that personnel involved in disinfecting the aircraft are provided with appropriate protective clothing and are properly briefed.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Notify the Director Emergency Response when the aircraft has been disinfected.	

## 5.8 Cargo

- Implement any recommendations made by the Medical Representative and the Public Health Authorities.
- When required, ensure safe and rapid transport of diagnostic specimens.
- Keep in mind that refusal to carry diagnostic specimens, may result in strong possibility that such specimens will be carried anyway but not declared. This may represent a much more serious hazard than a properly packaged and labeled specimen.

### Emergency Response Checklist

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Task	Action	Date
<input type="checkbox"/>	For an international public health emergency (e.g. Avian Flu), Cargo continues its regular activities and adapts any special procedures that are recommended by the Medical Representative as a result of information received from the public health authorities.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	When required, Cargo should ensure safe and rapid transport of diagnostic specimens.	

## 5.9 Security & Facilitation

- Support changes to the electronic transmission of Advance Passenger Information or manual data collection required by governments in the event of a public health emergency.
- Liaise with governments' border control agencies to facilitate a two-way flow of information between the air carrier and governments on emerging entry requirements.
- Ensure any changes to passenger data collection requirements are communicated to the relevant internal department in order to facilitate the timely collection and transmission of such data.

### Emergency Response Checklist

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Task	Action	Time
<input type="checkbox"/>	Establish liaison with relevant immigration/customs authorities to ascertain additional advance passenger information requirements	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Establish liaison with relevant immigration/customs authorities to determine additional entry requirements for passengers and crew (such as certificates of vaccination)	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Communicate additional requirements to Passenger Department	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Ensure travel restrictions/additional data requirements communicated to internal travel department	

## 5.10 Station Management

- Implement directives provided by the Emergency Response Centre.
- Liaise with local airport authorities and ensure that the company's head office airport representative is briefed on how the emergency is developing and on any relevant rules at the local airport.
- Ensure that copies of all passenger manifests are kept for the minimum period recommended by the public health authorities for that particular emergency (if using a Departure Control System).
- Follow the below checklist when advised of a flight with a suspected communicable disease onboard.

### Emergency Response Checklist

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Task	Action	Date
<input type="checkbox"/>	Whenever notified of an incoming aircraft with a medical emergency onboard, obtain as much information as possible from the source of the information (Pilot-in-Command, Flight Dispatch, System Operations Control).	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Notify the Airport Authority of the in-bound medical emergency.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Determine if necessary to set up schedule of conference calls with System Operations Control.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Ensure personnel are properly briefed and are available to meet aircraft with the necessary equipment.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Instruct staff members to ensure that passengers remain seated so that medical personnel can reach the passenger(s).	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Ensure the passengers, crewmembers, cargo and baggage remain on the aircraft until permission has been received from medical personnel to disembark passengers and offload cargo and baggage.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Quarantine equipment as required.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	If a lengthy delay is anticipated in disembarking passengers, consider opening a Friends and Family Centre.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	If required, set up Passenger Centre to receive disembarking passengers and register them.	

<input type="checkbox"/>	If station is in an affected area of an international public health emergency (e.g. Avian Flu), cooperate with the local airport and public health authorities.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	If station is in an affected area of an international public health emergency (e.g. Avian Flu), keep the air carrier Airport Representative fully informed of the local situation.	

## 5.11 Operations Control

- Liaise with Flight Dispatch to identify nature of any on-board medical emergency.
- Maintain open channel of communication to the Director of Emergency Response and advise if Emergency Response Centre needs to be activated.
- Maintain open channel of communication to arrival station involved in on-board medical emergency. Advise and be advised of developments.

### Emergency Response Checklist

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Task	Action	Date
<input type="checkbox"/>	Upon being notified of a medical emergency onboard an aircraft, obtain as much information as possible from the source of the information (usually flight dispatch).	
<input type="checkbox"/>	If the medical emergency could potentially necessitate activation of the Emergency Response Plan, contact the Director Emergency Response, the Medical Representative (or designated Medical Officer) and the Corporate Communications Representative.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	If it is decided to activate the emergency Response Plan, notify the members of the Emergency Response Team.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Notify the station of the incoming aircraft and nature of the situation onboard.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Request that Departure Control print out the Passenger Name List and Passenger Name Record for the flight.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Monitor the situation through regular reports from the Flight Dispatcher responsible for the flight.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Provide the Director Emergency Response with regular updates.	

## 5.12 Legal

- Provide input on any legal aspects of contact with the media and regulatory agencies.
- Support internal departments relating to liability issues resulting from a public health emergency.
- Provide general support to all company departments as required.

### Emergency Response Checklist

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Task	Action	Date
<input type="checkbox"/>	Assist Corporate Communications with Press Releases and contacts with regulatory agencies	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Support General Claims (or equivalent) in addressing passenger/shipper claims for delays arising from emergency response procedure and compliance with quarantine and or sanitary regulations.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Work with Risk Management to assess potential liabilities.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Support all company departments as required.	

### 5.13 Risk Management

- Analyse how employees, agents and customers might be affected by a public health emergency.
- Ensure that insurance coverage is available.
- Ensure that Senior Management is aware of potential liabilities.

#### Emergency Response Checklist: **Risk Management**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Task	Action	Date
<input type="checkbox"/>	Analyse air carrier exposure to its employees, agents and customers created by the emergency and/or the emergency response.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Identify that insurance coverage is available.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Make required notification to insurers.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Identify and implement mitigation measures.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Document all expenses incurred for purposes of insurance recovery.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Advise Senior Management as and when necessary.	

#### 5.14 Human Resources

- Provide support to all company departments as required, particularly with regards to Policies and Personnel Services.
- Put a system in place to ensure that all employees may be located in the event of an emergency.

#### Emergency Response Checklist

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Task	Action	Date
<input type="checkbox"/>	Locate and account for all affected employees.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	If appropriate, keep contact with families of employees on business travel.	

### 5.15 Finance/Purchasing

- Make special provisions for budget, accounting and purchasing purposes if required.
- Ensure rapid procurement of all necessary equipment (for example biohazard Kits, gloves, masks etc.) as required by the different company departments.

#### Emergency Response Checklist

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Task	Action	Date
<input type="checkbox"/>	Identify costs associated with emergency: supplies/equipment, communication, transportation, quarantine, treatment, business interruption, etc.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Is emergency funding necessary and how much?	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Is actual cash necessary?	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Procurement of all necessary equipment (for example biohazard Kits, gloves, masks etc.) specific to a public health emergency	