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港口衛生科
Port Health Division

30 April 2021

Mr Walter LI
Chairman, Airline Operators Committee
Room 6S007, Level 6, Passenger Terminal Building
Hong Kong International Airport
Lantau, Hong Kong

Dear Walter,

Tightened flight suspension mechanism

Further to our last letter to AOC dated 13 April 2021, we would like to update you that in view of the continually unstable global epidemic situation, the Hong Kong SAR Government has further tightened the criteria of the place-specific suspension mechanism (introduced since 14 April 2021). For details, please refer to the press release:

<https://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/202104/29/P2021042900946.htm>

The prevailing tightened flight suspension mechanism under the Prevention and Control of Disease (Regulation of Cross-boundary Conveyances and Travellers) Regulation (Cap. 599H) is summarised below:

(I) Flight-Specific Suspension Mechanism:-

- (a) A passenger flight has 3 or more passengers confirmed to have COVID-19 by arrival test on the same flight; or
- (b) A passenger flight has 2 or more passengers confirmed to have COVID-19 by arrival test on any two flights within a 7-day period from the relevant original port of the same airline; or
- (c) A passenger flight has 1 or more passenger(s) confirmed to have COVID-19 by arrival test AND 1 or more non-compliant case(s) [*i.e. failed to comply with requirement(s) specified under Cap.599H*] on the same flight.

If any of the above criteria is met, the passenger flights from the relevant original port(s) of the airline concerned will be prohibited from landing in Hong Kong for 14 days.



(II) Place-Specific Flight Suspension Mechanism (runs in parallel with I):-

(a) A total of 5 or more passengers among all flights from the same place, regardless of airline, were confirmed by arrival tests for COVID-19 with the N501Y mutant strain or relevant virus mutation within a seven-day period; or

(b) A total of 10 or more passengers were confirmed by any tests (including tests conducted during quarantine) for COVID-19 with the N501Y mutant strain or relevant virus mutation within a seven-day period (new criterion introduced since 29 April 2021),

the Government would invoke Cap. 599H to prohibit all passenger flights from that place from landing in Hong Kong, and that place would at the same time be specified as a Group A (extremely high-risk) place under Cap. 599H to restrict persons who have stayed in that place for more than two hours from boarding passenger flights for Hong Kong, so as to prevent persons from the relevant place from arriving at Hong Kong via transit. The Government will conduct risk assessments every two weeks for comprehensive review before determining whether it is appropriate to remove the flight suspension, i.e. the place-specific suspension mechanism will not be lifted automatically.

If any flight suspension mechanism has been triggered, the Department of Health (DH) will liaise with the Civil Aviation Department for follow-up actions.

*****Remarks*****

1. An arrival test generally refers to the test conducted on a specimen collected from an inbound passenger at DH's Temporary Specimen Collection Centre (TSCC); However, in some cases, the arrival tests refer to tests conducted by other means (eg. at the hospital, if the passenger is transferred to a hospital upon arrival).
2. In addition to the N501Y mutant strain, other relevant virus mutation which may potentially pose similar risks to Hong Kong's public health will also be considered.
3. Flights for cargo-only will not be affected.

Please note that the above serves as general criteria and the Government reserves the right to take enforcement actions based on risk assessment of the actual situation.

Thank you very much for your ongoing support in combating infectious diseases.

Yours sincerely,



(Dr Cynthia LAM)
for Director of Health