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Reference : EUR/NAT 21-0011.TEC (NAE/SUL)

18 January 2021

Subject : **Implementation of the AFTM-X procedure for critical flight which are carrying COVID-19 vaccine with effect from 28 January 2021 - EASPG Conclusion 2/1**

Dear Madam/Sir,

1. I wish to refer to the outcome of the second meeting the Second meeting of the European Aviation System Planning Group (EASPG) held via WebEx from 1 to 4 December 2020 and especially to the EASPG Conclusion below:

EASPG Conclusion 2/1 – Preparation Steps for COVID-19 Vaccine Delivery

That the ICAO Regional Director, Europe and North Atlantic, urge States to:

- a) prepare and execute an awareness campaign among relevant stakeholders on the importance and possible risk associated with the COVID-19 vaccines delivery taking into account ICAO and IATA recommendations as well as other stakeholder recommendations that could be considered of relevance and importance in the future;
- b) ensure appropriate coordination at the national level through their National Air Transport Facilitation Committee, and Airport Facilitation Committees as required, or similar coordinating bodies, for the purpose of facilitating safe and secured delivery of vaccines;
- c) develop an action plan aimed to ensure proper preparation and risk management of the involved stakeholders for planned deliveries;
- d) coordinate with other States necessary planned activities through existing regional mechanism and through the ICAO EUR/NAT Regional office; and
- e) provide necessary feedback to IATA with requests to enhance developed guidance material based on regional and national best practices on the topic to ensure further sharing with other States and industry stakeholders utilizing IATA as a communication channel in the overall global collaboration approach.

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2. Taking into account the guidance material which had been developed by the International Air Transport Association (IATA) (www.iata.org/cargo), the EUROCONTROL Network Manager has started to coordinate the use Air Traffic Flow Management exemptions (ATFM-X) for critical flights which are carrying COVID-19 vaccines with aviation stakeholders.

3. The use of the AFTM-X procedure for critical COVID-19 vaccine transportation flights (see attachment A) was presented and agreed at the European Aviation Crisis Coordination Cell meeting on 12 January 2021 and EUROCONTROL Member States are now invited to implement and publish the procedure by NOTAM until 25 January 2021.

4. The implementation of the AFTM-X procedure for critical COVID-19 vaccine transportation flights will start for the United States (FAA), Canada (NAV Canada) and EUROCONTROL Member States from 28 January 2021.

5. In the case that your State Authorities and vaccine supply chain key players are also considering to allow certain alleviations, we would like to invite you to follow the procedure as described in Annex A and to publish the NOTAM accordingly so that a harmonised implementation can be assured within the EUR Region.

Yours sincerely,

Elkhan Nahmadov
ICAO Deputy Regional Director
Europe and North Atlantic