



Briefing by Minister of Transport, Fikile Mbalula, on the occasion of the announcement of transport sector-specific Coronavirus interventions

16 March 2020

AVIATION

- Aviation is one of the high-risk sector which enables high levels of mobility and by extension the spread of the coronavirus. As a sector, we have are putting in place measures to mitigate the risks.
- Desktop exercises have been carried out across all our airports, in accordance with the World Health Organisation (WHO) advisory to ensure that screening measures to limit the risk of exportation or importation of the disease are implemented, without unnecessary restrictions to international traffic. ACSA has since procured and distributed masks for all frontline staff at all ACSA airports.
- As an integral part in the airport operations value chain, the following are mandatory measures for the airlines and all handling agents:
 - All airline and/or ground handling staff carrying out assisted passenger services (specifically passengers with reduced mobility) are required to use Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) (surgical mask and gloves) when facilitating arriving international passengers.
 - Passenger-facing personnel, particularly for all international arrivals, transfers terminal and the domestic recheck, are required to use PPE (surgical masks and gloves).
 - All handling agent staff that are at a high risk of contact (including, but not limited to passenger escorting, VIP services facilitation, ticket sales, baggage handling and loading, aircraft grooming, catering services, cargo handling agents, bus drivers and crew transport drivers) are required to wear PPE (surgical masks and gloves).
 - All passenger busses will require additional cleaning/sanitization measures to be implemented and ACSA will increase oversight in this aspect.
- The President announced that we are imposing a travel ban on foreign nationals from high-risk countries such as Italy, Iran, South Korea, Spain, Germany, the United States, the United Kingdom and China as from 18 March 2020. From a Transport point of view, this means:
 - No foreign nationals will be allowed from these countries through our ports of entry, which include airports, sea ports and railways.
 - Charter Operators will be re-routed to international airports that have the Ports Health capability to manage a suspected case. The following international airports have the necessary capacity and will be ready to handle charter flights:
 - OR Tambo
 - Lanseria
 - King Shaka
 - Upington
 - Polokwane
 - Bram Fisher
 - Kruger Mpumalanga International
 - Pilanesburg
 - Port Elizabeth
 - Cape Town

- The Civil Aviation Authority has issued guidelines for infection control for all airlines in respect of passenger, cargo and baggage handling. These are guided by the general guidelines issued by the World Health Organisation (WHO).
- In order to mitigate the risk, the Civil Aviation Authority will conduct ramp inspections on all identified high-risk airlines.

PUBLIC TRANSPORT

- The Taxi industry transports more than 16 million people and represents a critical sector which must be at the forefront of robust interventions and awareness to manage the risks. We will implement an aggressive information drive to create awareness and promote preventative measures. Taxi and bus operators must become ambassadors whose task is to disseminate information.
- The Department of Transport will engage the leadership of the taxi and bus industries to mount an aggressive information drive working closely with the Department of Health on preventative measures in the public transport environment.
- Random testing measures be implemented in the public transport environment, with particular emphasis on commuter rail.

MARITIME

- SAMSA will immediately operationalize an operational plan for all ships calling at port, guided by the IMO (International Maritime Organisation) and WHO (World Health Organisation) HANDBOOK FOR MANAGEMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH EVENTS ON BOARD SHIPS and will at all times be guided by directives issued by the Department of Health.

CROSS-BORDER TRANSPORT

- The Cross Border Road Transport Agency (CBRTA) will work with Border and Health authorities to ensure screening of truck drivers at all inland borders that continue to allow cross-border traffic as announced by the President.
- C-BRTA is currently working together with Department of Home Affairs to assist Cross-Border operators (Commercial operators which are freight, buses, tour and taxi operators), with information required and to inform them about measures that are in place at the land border posts regarding their travel.
- Furthermore, C-BRTA is participating in daily co-ordination meetings for the COVID-19 pandemic at Lebombo and Beitbridge border posts and co-ordinating with stakeholders in other borders.
- C-BRTA is reviewing permit issuance with a view to discourage all non-essential cross border movement and will be in discussion with the Department of Transport, Provinces and SADC member states.
- The necessary regulations to enable these measures have been developed and will be implemented on time for the measures to kick in on 18 March 2020.