Notice on Requirement of Epidemic Prevention and Control Measures for China-bound Travelers from Switzerland

2023-02-28 16:35

In accordance with the current situation of COVID-19 pandemic and to facilitate people-to-people exchange, starting from 1st March 2023 (local time), Rapid Antigen Test (RAT, including RAT home testing kit) result will be accepted for air passengers flying directly from Switzerland to China instead of PCR test.

For the convenience of the China-bound Travelers, the Chinese Embassy in Switzerland have updated its Guide on Epidemic Prevention and Control Measures for China-bound Travelers. In order to avoid any travel delays and disruptions, please read and follow the instructions on the guidance carefully.

Guide on Epidemic Prevention and Control Measures for China-bound Travelers

1. Tests before departure
All China-bound travelers are required to take nucleic acid test (PCR) or Rapid Antigen Test (RAT) for COVID-19 within 48 hours before boarding, and can only travel to China when your test result is negative or after it turns from positive to negative.

2. Health declaration to China Customs
Travelers are required to declare negative test result to China Customs by filling the Health Declaration Form on the WeChat mini-program of China Customs (scan the QR code below), or at https://htdecl.chinaport.gov.cn, or via the China Customs APP.

3. Airline companies are not required to check the negative PCR or RAT test results.

4. Self-protection on the Aircraft
Travelers are cordially recommended to wear masks throughout the flight and take good personal protection to reduce the risk of infection.

5. Inspection upon Entry

Remarks from the International Road Transport Union

19.01.2023

China: Relaxation of border crossing health restrictions with neighbouring countries

Further to the IRU information dated 17 December 2022 kindly be informed that gradual relaxation of border crossing health restrictions have been observed at key border crossings between China and neighbouring countries, notably with Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Mongolia and Russia.

Update on the situation at border crossing points between Russia and China.

Manzhouli Foreign Affairs Office of Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region has officially announced that starting from 09:00 (local time) on 16 January 2023 the trailer swap procedure used during the pandemic shall no longer be applicable. Russian trucks can now freely cross the border crossing Zabaikalsk-Manzhouli (open for TIR) and reach out to the nearest warehouses for loading/unloading operations. Upon completion of these operations, trucks shall return to Russia. Russian exports to China resumed. Chinese trucks started transport operations to the Russian territory as well.

Update on the situation at border crossing points between Mongolia and China.

Border crossings on the Mongolian-Chinese border are also getting prepared for increased freight and vehicle flows. In the result of the customs information system update at the border crossing point Erlian on the Chinese side (Zamin Uud on the Mongolian side) foreign vehicles planning to enter China are requested to renew their registration in the system, and therefore are kindly asked to prepare for longer waiting times in a queue. As of 19 January 2023, professional drivers of goods transport are not required anymore a PCR test to enter China.

Update on the situation at border crossing points between Kazakhstan and China.

Chinese local authorities officially informed about gradual relaxation of COVID control measures and resuming of freight cross-border movements. The Khorgos International Center for Border Cooperation also announced about resuming full activities and operations. Cross-border movements through Bakhty (KAZ) – Baketu (CHN) and Dostyk (KAZ) – Alashankou (CHN) are gradually being resumed with the aim to reach the pre-COVID level. Foreign trucks can now cross the border and reach out to the nearest warehouses for loading/unloading operations.

Update on the situation at border crossing points between Kyrgyzstan and China.

At the border crossing Irkeshtam, the COVID control measures have also been lifted, making it possible for Kyrgyz transport operators to proceed directly to Kashgar.
Travelers can go through customs with the health declaration results, and China Customs will conduct random sampling inspections according to a certain proportion. If there are anomalies in your health declaration or you are showing symptoms such as fever, you are required to take a test by China Customs. Those whose results are positive will need to self-quarantine or seek medical treatment as notified by the authority. Those whose results are negative will go through routine quarantine inspection by China Customs in accordance with the Frontier Health and Quarantine Law and other laws and regulations.

6. After-entry Epidemic Prevention and Control

After entry into China, you will have to strictly abide by the epidemic prevention and control requirements of the place where you stay.

Further Information: [http://ch.china-embassy.gov.cn/fra/ls_hw_s_2/fhxqjc/202302/t20230228_11033040.htm](http://ch.china-embassy.gov.cn/fra/ls_hw_s_2/fhxqjc/202302/t20230228_11033040.htm)

31.12.2022

China: end of the quarantine control measures on international travelers and cargo from 8 January 2023

Starting from 8 January 2023, People’s republic of China will cease the quarantine control measures on international travelers and cargo, optimize the border crossing points management by supporting the freight transport back to the normal level before the Covid as soon as possible and, resume passenger transport in due course.

China Customs will also stop Covid testing and monitoring measures on all imported cold-chain food and non cold-chain articles at the border from 8 January 2023.

International travelers still need to have negative Covid test within 48 hours before departure, but will no longer need to submit their results to a Chinese embassy or consulate and apply for a health code.

Such measures came with the National Health Commission’s announcement on 26 December 2022 to downgrade Covid control management to less-strict “Class B disease” starting 8 January 2023.

The unofficial translation of the notice on interim measures for personnel exchanges between China and foreign countries is available for download when opening the Flash Info.

Sources: State Council, General Administration of Customs, National Health Commission of the People’s Republic of China and IRU

23.11.2022

China: new decree on cargo transit

General Administration of Customs China (GACC) issued a new decree on cargo transit that entered into force on 1 November 2022.
Arrangements for Inbound Persons

Points to Note Before Arrival at Hong Kong

- Before departing to Hong Kong, please pay attention to the relevant inbound control arrangements.
- They may also voluntarily declare the test result via the Department of Health’s electronic health declaration form (www.chp.gov.hk/hdf/) prior to their arrival at Hong Kong. For arrival via Hong Kong International Airport, the health declaration is valid for 96 hours; for arrival via land control points, the health declaration is valid for 24 hours.

Inbound Control Measures

- All inbound persons must pass temperature checks upon arrival. Those found with symptoms will be referred to the Department of Health for further handling.
- No further restrictions upon arrival.
- The Government recommends all inbound persons to conduct daily RATs using self-arranged rapid antigen test (RAT) kits during the period between the day of arrival (i.e. Day 0) and Day 5 after arrival at Hong Kong. May voluntarily report their RAT results and health status via the Electronic COVID-19 Monitoring & Surveillance System (eCMSS)
- The day of a person’s arrival at Hong Kong is counted with the day of arrival at Hong Kong as Day 0. For example, for a person who arrives at Hong Kong on 1 December 2022, the “5th day/Day 5” would be 6 December 2022.
- For other most updated information, please also refer to daily press releases.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Inbound persons arriving from the Mainland or Macao</th>
<th>Inbound persons arriving from Taiwan or places outside China</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All pre-departure testing requirements have been lifted with effect from 6 February 2023</td>
<td>1. Except those who aged three and below on the day of arrival at Hong Kong, rapid Antigen Test (RAT) conducted within 24 hours or PCR-based nucleic acid test conducted within 48 hours prior to the scheduled time of departure (for arrivals via the airport) or before arrival at Hong Kong (for arrivals via other boundary control points), and obtained negative result; and</td>
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<td>2. Retain the photo showing the RAT result or the PCR test report for 90 days</td>
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<td>May declare test result via the voluntary electronic Health Declaration Form</td>
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COVID-19 Update: two border-crossing points resuming operations

China - Russia - Mongolia

Two Chinese border-crossing points have resumed their activities in January 2022:
- **Manzhouli BCP** - between China and Russia is open since 14 January. Around 50 trucks are entering and leaving China per day at this stage,
- **Erenhot BCP** - between China and Mongolia is partially open since 11 January. Only export cargos from China to Mongolia are currently accepted. Around 30 trucks are leaving China per day at this stage.
Handling Arrangements for Persons Tested Positive After Arrival at Hong Kong

- For persons tested positive after arrival at Hong Kong, please refer to the webpage on Points to Note for Persons who Tested Positive.

Other Points to Note

The above pre-departure requirements are not applicable to a person who, while in Hong Kong after the person’s arrival, does not pass through immigration control.

If a person coming to Hong Kong fails to comply with a requirement to provide information, or knowingly or recklessly provides any information that is false or misleading in a material particular, he or she is liable on conviction to the maximum penalty of a fine at level 3 ($10,000) and imprisonment for six months.

Centre for Health Protection Hotline : 183 0111 (9 am to 8 pm)

Regarding foreign domestic helpers coming to work in Hong Kong, please refer to this webpage.


Sources: Manzhouli government, Manzhouli Customs, Erenhot government, Erenhot Customs

03.12.2021

Temporary closure of the Manzhouli-Zabaikalsk border crossing point

China - Russian Federation

Chinese government authorities informed that due to further spread of Covid infection, exports of goods to Russia will be suspended through the Manzhouli-Zabaikalsk checkpoint starting from 3 December 2021. These measures are temporary and will be adjusted depending on the situation.

Sources: Manzhouli Foreign Affairs Office of Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region, ASMAP

02.09.2020

On 26 August 2020, China’s Ministry of Transport issued a circular urging the relevant authorities to guide cold chain logistics companies in strengthening employee protection, the disinfection of transportation equipment and information registration to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

Employees of logistics firms working with refrigerated containers or goods directly should wear protective gear such as masks and gloves at all times and have their temperatures taken at least once before starting and before finishing work.

Cold chain logistics companies should disinfect ships, vehicles and other transportation equipment. Both the interior and exterior of cold chain vans should be disinfected before reloading goods.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10.07.2020</td>
<td>China’s Ministry of Transport</td>
<td>As from 3 July, a Green Lane system is being implemented on designated border crossing points between China and Mongolia. Green Lanes can be used by:</td>
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<tr>
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<td>- Goods drivers carrying out operations between the two countries.</td>
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<td>- Key personnel that need to cross the border for business, logistical or production purposes.</td>
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<td>- Staff urgently needed to engage in major cooperation projects between the two countries.</td>
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<tr>
<td>25.05.2020</td>
<td>Embassy of the People’s Republic of China in Mongolia</td>
<td>At a press conference held on 19 May, the Minister of Transport informed that the Ministry will ensure the smooth flow of international road transport by increasing transport capacity and conducting transshipment at borders.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.04.2020</td>
<td>Irkeshtam Customs</td>
<td>On 14 April, the border crossing point of Irkeshtam, on the China-Kyrgyzstan border, has been reopened to freight transport. Goods entering both countries in foreign trucks have to be unloaded and loaded onto domestic vehicles driven by domestic drivers. Passenger transport remains banned.</td>
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<tr>
<td>13.04.2020</td>
<td>Ministry of Transport of the People’s Republic of China</td>
<td>The Ministry of Transport of the People’s Republic of China published new rules on 11 April 2020 - notification on further prevention and control of overseas epidemic importation and strengthening the closed management of international road freight drivers. Specific requirements for foreign drivers are as follows:</td>
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<td>- In principle, foreign freight vehicles entering the border should unload at the port. Foreign drivers shall leave China on the same day, and shall not contact the management personnel of the freight terminal and the cargo handling personnel during the loading and unloading period.</td>
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</table>
(1) Passengers can conduct their tests in testing institutions recognized by the Swiss government.

For the passengers' convenience, the Chinese Embassy in Switzerland and the Chinese Consulate General in Zurich provide the following list only for references:

http://ch.china-embassy.gov.cn/ger/ls_fw_s_1/fhxqjc/202207/120220704_10715223.htm

(2) Requirements of sampling and test reports

The nucleic acid detection method must be RT-PCR. Specimen type need to be Nasopharyngeal (in German: Nasopharyngealabstrich or Nasen-Rachenabstrich), Oropharyngeal swab (OPS) or Saliva test (in German: Rachenabstrich, Gurgeltest or Speicheltentest) will not be accepted.

The test report must indicate the nucleic acid (NAAT), RT-PCR, date and time of sampling, as well as the name of tested people, passport number, date of birth, signature of doctor or stamp of the testing institution, contact details and the NEGATIVE or POSITIVE result. Passengers shall choose the legal testing institution and make sure the reports meet our requirements, in case of being unable to get the health code because of unqualified institute or test reports.

The Chinese Embassy in Switzerland and the Chinese Consulate General in Zurich will verify the authenticity of the testing institutions. Passengers shall inform the testing institution that you agree to provide personal information such as test results to the Chinese Embassy and the Chinese Consulate General during or after the test.

IV. Application of non-Chinese Passengers for health codes

Non-Chinese passengers shall log on the website https://hrhk.cs.mfa.gov.cn/H5/ via computers or smart phones, fill in the real and correct personal information, test result etc. and upload the documents as follows:

1. Qualified test reports: please upload the original report issued by the testing institution as well as the COVID Certificate issued by the Federal Office of Public Health (FOPH);
2. Vaccination certificate (optional);
3. Passport information page;
4. Travel itinerary (or air ticket);
5. Valid Chinese Visa or Chinese residence permit;

In the event of any discrepancy between this notice and our prior ones, this notice shall prevail.

- Foreign drivers who are unable to leave China on the same day due to genuine difficulties will be subject to temperature check, and will be directly transferred from the port to a designated place under the supervision of the local authority responsible for the prevention and control of the epidemic. It will not be permitted to go out of the designated place before leaving China.

- During their stay in China, foreign drivers shall comply with the relevant provisions on the prevention and control of the epidemic situation at the place where the port is located, strengthen their own protection, take the initiative in health declaration, and promptly report any suspected symptoms such as fever, dry cough and fatigue.

- Foreign drivers who make multiple trips to and from cross-border transport shall be subject to regular testing (nucleic acid testing).

- Drivers who refuse to comply with the epidemic prevention and control regulations will be placed on a blacklist.

Source: CRTA

08.04.2020

With effect from 6 April, the passing of road freight through the Russian-Chinese border crossings points of Poltavka-Dongning and Turirog-Mishan is no longer permitted. The Pogranichny-Sulfenf border crossing point is closed for passenger transport, however currently remains open for freight transport. These measures have been put in place in order to ensure centralised inspections and/or quarantine in relation to the flow of goods and passengers through these ports.

With effect from 8 April, due to the rapidly increasing flow of passengers, the Manzhouli-Zabaikal border crossing point has been closed for passenger transport until further notice, as it has exceeded its capacities for inspection, quarantine and virus testing.

Freight transport will remain open for operations.

Sources: Foreign Affairs Office of the People’s Government of Heilongjiang Province; People’s Daily

31.03.2020

On 30 March 2020, the Ministry of Transport of the People’s Republic of China issued a notice on the prevention and control of imported coronavirus from overseas.

The following items are related to border crossing point (BCP) closures and operations of foreign trucks:

1. For road BCPs. Those closed passenger and cargo transport BCPs and passenger transport BCPs will continue to be closed for transport operations until further notice; the opening of international passenger transport at seasonal BCPs will be postponed.

2. For truck drivers. Foreign trucks will unload cargo at BCPs, and foreign truck drivers will return on the same day of arrival in China. Those foreign truck drivers who have difficulty returning will stay in accommodation designated by local disease prevention and control agencies.

Source: China Transportation News

27.03.2020

1. China has decided to temporarily suspend the entry into China by foreign nationals holding valid visas or residence permits due to the rapid global spread of COVID-19, according to an announcement by the Foreign Ministry and the National Immigration Administration on Thursday.
Telephone consultation number of Chinese Embassy in Switzerland: 0041-791309739 (Monday to Friday, 10:00-12:00 & 15:00 - 17:00, except holidays);

E-mail of Chinese Embassy in Switzerland: bern@csm.mfa.gov.cn ;

Telephone consultation number of Chinese Consulate General in Zurich: 0041-442091500 (Moday to Friday, 14:30-17:30, except holidays);

E-mail of Chinese Consulate General in Zurich: zurich@csm.mfa.gov.cn

Chinese Embassy in Switzerland
Chinese Consulate General in Zurich

29.09.2020

Ministry of Foreign Affairs of The People’s Republic of China National Immigration Administration Announcement on Entry by Foreign Nationals Holding Valid Chinese Residence Permits of Three Categories

September 23, 2020

In view of the current COVID-19 situation and the need of epidemic prevention and control, adjustments are now made to the Announcement by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the National Immigration Administration on the Temporary Suspension of Entry by Foreign Nationals Holding Valid Chinese Visas or Residence Permits issued on 26 March 2020.

Effective from 0 a.m., 28 September 2020, foreign nationals holding valid Chinese residence permits for work, personal matters and reunion are allowed to enter China with no need for applying for new visas. If the above three categories of residence permits held by foreign nationals expired after 0 a.m., 28 March 2020, the holders may apply for relevant visas by presenting the expired residence permits and relevant materials to the Chinese embassies or consulates on the condition that the purpose of the holders’ visit to China remains unchanged. The above-mentioned personnel shall strictly abide by the Chinese regulations on epidemic prevention and control.

Other measures in the Announcement issued on March 26 will continue to be implemented. While ensuring effective epidemic control, the Chinese government will continue resuming people-to-person exchanges in a step-by-step and orderly manner.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People’s Republic of China National Immigration Administration of the People’s Republic of China

Further information: http://ch.china-embassy.org/fra/ls_fw_s_2/tz/11820007.htm

Source: World Tourism Organization UNWTO
18.11.2022

The suspension - starting on Saturday 28 March - is a temporary measure that China is compelled to take in light of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic and the practices of other countries.

In addition, entry with diplomatic, service, courtesy or C visas will not be affected, and foreign nationals coming to China for necessary economic, trade, scientific or technological activities, or out of emergency humanitarian need, may apply for visas at Chinese Embassies or Consulates.

(Note: C visas are issued to air crew members, railway and maritime staff, and international road transport drivers. Therefore, international drivers will be exempted from the above policy).

Source: the Foreign Ministry, the National Immigration Administration, China Daily

2. Chinese authorities have urged strict measures to prevent the return of a domestic outbreak while controlling the import of new cases of coronavirus (COVID-19). The central government have urged local governments to perform their duties in preventing cases, imported or exported through land and waterway transport, and implement measures to suspend cross-border international road transport and enhance management on international waterway transport.

Provincial governments should enforce quarantine measures for those entering the border through land ports in their administration, except for residents living at the border, diplomats, and people engaged in important trade, economic, scientific and technological cooperation.

To guarantee unimpeded freight transport, measures to control and prevent COVID-19 must be carried out for drivers of freight vehicles. Foreign freight vehicles entering the border should unload at the port, unless the goods cannot be moved midway.

Source: The State Council of the People’s Republic of China

20.03.2020

Overview of the situation at land borders for passenger transport operations:

According to a notice published on 20 March by The State Council of The People’s Republic of China, China will suspend cross-border road transportation for passengers and hold back inbound and outbound tourist services as part of a broader effort to curb the importation of novel coronavirus (COVID-19) cases from 20 March until further notice.

https://www.chinadaily.com.cn/a/202003/20/WSEe7400aa9a311012821728095b.html

The epidemics control on domestic cases is stabilising in China, but the Government is maintaining stringent measures to avoid cases imported from foreign countries.

Overview of the situation at land borders:

- All borders from China side remain open for now, but Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan borders remain closed on their sides,

- At borders with Kazakhstan, from China side, no compulsory quarantine requirements on non-Chinese truck drivers entering into China, but regular business operations have been severely affected:

1. Alashankou BCP has resumed TIR transport since February, the operations are normal,

2. The auxiliary services in Khorgos have shown signs of re-opening for business. However, due to the control measures applied in Kazakhstan, very few operations are taking place,
1. Entry by foreign nationals holding a visa is suspended.
- This does not apply to:
  - foreign nationals with a visa issued after 28 March 2020;
  - foreign nationals with a diplomatic, service, courtesy or C visa.

2. Port visas, 24/72/144-hour visa-free transit policy, Hainan 30-day visa-free policy, 15-day visa-free policy specified for foreign cruise-group-tour through Shanghai Port, Guangdong 144-hour visa-free policy specified for foreign tour groups from Hong Kong or Macao SAR, and Guangxi 15-day visa-free policy specified for foreign tour groups of ASEAN countries are suspended.

3. Visa exemption for nationals of Brunei Darussalam, Japan and Singapore with a normal passport is suspended.

4. Passengers must complete an Exit/Entry Health Declaration Form and present a QR code before departure. The form can be obtained at https://htdecl.chinaport.gov.cn/ or from the WeChat app ‘Customs Passenger Fingertip Service’.

5. Nationals of China (People's Rep.) must have a green QR code with an ‘HS’ mark. The code can be obtained from the WeChat App ‘Fang Yi Jian Kang Ma Guo Ji Ban’ by uploading a negative COVID-19 PCR test taken at most 48 hours before departure of the last direct flight to China. For more information, please refer to the website of the Chinese embassy in the departure country.
- This does not apply to nationals of China (People's Rep.) arriving on a direct flight originating from Chinese Taipei, Hong Kong SAR, China, Macao SAR, China.

6. Passengers must have a green QR code with an ‘HDC’ mark. The code can be obtained at https://hrhk.cs.mfa.gov.cn /H5/ by uploading a negative COVID-19 PCR test taken at most 48 hours before departure of the last direct flight to China. For more information, please refer to the website of the Chinese embassy in the departure country.
- This does not apply to:
  - nationals of China (People's Rep.);
  - passengers arriving on a direct flight originating from Chinese Taipei, Hong Kong SAR, China, Macao SAR, China.

7. Passengers arriving from Chinese Taipei must have a negative COVID-19 PCR test result issued at most 3 days before departure.

8. Passengers entering Beijing (PEK) from Hong Kong SAR, China must have a negative COVID-19 PCR test result issued at most 7 days before departure.

9. Passengers arriving from Macao SAR, China must have a negative COVID-19 PCR test result issued at most 7 days before departure.

10. Passengers are subject to medical screening and quarantine for up to 8 days at the first point of entry.

Source: https://www.unwto.org/tourism-data/unwto-iata-destination-tracker-easy-travel
07.05.2022

Restrictions

This page shows the latest available restrictions at destinations in one map. Sorted by country and in order to see the global overview of any sight.

Latest changes

N/A

Current regulations

1. Entry by foreign visitors holding a visa is suspended.
2. Foreign nationals with a visa issued after 28 March 2020, holders of residence permit (Italy) and holders of residence permit in Italy
3. Italy by foreign visitors holding an MME Business Travel Card is suspended.
4. A notice from the Ministry of Health is required. A 14-day self-quarantine policy for travelers from high-risk countries has been extended.

Restriction level

Partially restrictive

COVID-19 test

YES

Baby outlook

YES

Rights suspended

NO

Quarantine

YES

Restrictions lifted

Resolutions in place

Source: https://www.unwto.org/tourism-data/unwto-iata-destination-tracker-easy-travel
Fast clearance of anti-epidemic supplies. For imported supplies, all local Customs are required to open exclusive counters and green lanes 24/7 to ensure fast clearance; imported pharmaceuticals, disinfection supplies, protective suits, treatment equipment and other supplies will be released without delay. For exported supplies, green lanes are provided 24/7 to minimize the clearance time. Source: China Customs (as reported in WCO website); http://english.customs.gov.cn/newsroom/news

China Customs has put in place a Command Center and a Working Group to coordinate border efforts and provide solutions to COVID-related issues. GACC has rolled out policies and measures on faster clearance, minimum-interference customs control, certification services, acceleration of market access process for imported agricultural products, among others. Source: China Customs (as reported in WCO website); http://english.customs.gov.cn/newsroom/news

To guarantee unimpeded freight transport, measures to control and prevent COVID-19 must be carried out for drivers of freight vehicles. Foreign freight vehicles entering the border should unload at the port, unless the goods cannot be moved midway. Source: The State Council of the People’s Republic of China http://english.www.gov.cn/premier/news/202003/26/content_WS5e7ca541c5d60c201c2bb9a2.html

For road BCPs. Those closed passenger and cargo transport BCPs and passenger transport BCPs will continue to be closed for transport operations until further notice; the opening of international passenger transport at seasonal BCPs will be postponed. Source: Ministry of Transport of the People’s Republic of China - China Transportation News

Foreign trucks will unload cargo at BCPs, and foreign truck drivers will return on the same day of arrival in China. Those foreign truck drivers who have difficulty returning will stay in accommodation designated by local disease prevention and control agencies. Source: Ministry of Transport of the People’s Republic of China - China Transportation News

Source: WCO/ China Customs

26.03.2020

In response to the outbreak of COVID-19, the General Administration of Customs of China (GACC) has set up ad hoc working structure and mechanisms, taken science-based border health and quarantine measures to safeguard public health security, and adjusted clearance formalities to promote trade security and facilitation.

I. Ad hoc working structure and mechanisms of GACC against COVID-19

Following the outbreak of the disease, China Customs has put in place a Command Center, with GACC Minister as Commander-in-Chief and all Vice Ministers as Deputy Commanders-in-Chief, and a Working Group.
Led by the Vice Minister in charge of border health and quarantine, the Working Group guides Customs offices across the country to fight the epidemic in line with policies made by the Joint Prevention and Control Mechanism led by the State Council. The specific functions of the Working Group include launching anti-epidemic plans and measures, coordinating border efforts made by all relevant government agencies, supervising the implementation of anti-epidemic measures, and providing solutions to emergency issues.

Under the Working Group are 9 Sub-groups led by one department and participated by other relevant departments of GACC.

II. Measures to contain COVID-19

1. Around-the-clock tracking and analysis of the epidemic situations. China Customs has been following closely the spread of the disease both at home and abroad, and collecting information through multiple sources. As the disease evolves, experts in a wide range of fields and from various departments are gathered to assess risks and provide guidance for targeted measures at border crossings across the country.

2. Compulsory health declaration. All cross-border passengers are required to declare to the Customs their health conditions, especially pneumonia-like symptoms and travel and exposure history in the past 14 days. The health declaration form (which can be found in the annex) has been translated into over 10 languages. Edeclaration is also available on mobile phone—passengers can declare through an applet developed by China Customs, and scan the generated QR code when passing Customs.

3. Strict entry/exit health and quarantine measures. All cross-border passengers are subject to a three-step screening approach at border crossings. 1) Passengers are required to declare their health conditions, have their temperature taken, and accept initial health assessment. 2) Those who are found in step one with COVID-19 related symptoms, or from most affected countries or regions, or have been exposed to confirmed cases, will be further screened through epidemiological investigation, medical examination and laboratory testing. 3) Those who are identified in step two as confirmed cases, suspected cases or close contacts, or showing relevant symptoms, will be transferred or quarantined for further treatment or medical observation, in line with the requirements of the Joint Prevention and Control Mechanism. The three-step approach enables early detection, early report, early quarantine and early treatment. Other major infectious diseases such as Ebola and Lassa fever have also been carefully watched among incoming passengers to prevent other outbreaks.
4. Collaboration among multiple agencies. China Customs works closely with other border agencies to share information and coordinate the procedures for screening, quarantine and referral of passengers. A comprehensive prevention and control network was put in place to contain the spread of the disease.

5. Application of big data for transmission prevention. Since it is difficult to identify the passengers travelling on flights that have departed from most affected countries (regions) and transited in a third country (region) before arriving in China, China Customs has been using big data to conduct correlation analysis on global flight routes and schedules, thus taking more precise border quarantine measures.

6. International Cooperation. China Customs has been strengthening cooperation on border health and quarantine with its counterparts in other countries and regions. Contact points were designated for communication and coordination of anti-epidemic efforts. Exchanges have been made on border health and quarantine policies, laws and regulations, and on experience and practices of prevention and control of COVID-19.

III. Trade facilitation measures

1. Facilitated clearance for anti-epidemic supplies. A Sub-group has been set up under the ad hoc Working Group to ensure fast clearance of anti-epidemic supplies.

For imported supplies, all local Customs are required to open exclusive counters and green lanes 24/7 to ensure fast clearance; imported pharmaceuticals, disinfection supplies, protective suits, treatment equipment and other supplies will be released without delay. For exported supplies, green lanes are provided 24/7 to minimize the clearance time.

2. Supporting foreign trade and economic development. To promote social and economic development amid current anti-epidemic efforts, the GACC has rolled out policies and measures on faster clearance, minimum-interference customs control, certification services, acceleration of market access process for imported agricultural products, among other, to help businesses resume operations and boost foreign trade growth.

3. Information availability. China Customs has made information available on news media, GACC official website, Customs official Weibo and WeChat accounts and journals.

Link to GACC official website: http://english.customs.gov.cn.


IV. Suggestions
We suggest that WCO play a more vigorous role in enhancing coordination and cooperation among Member Customs in the following respects: 1) encourage Members to share information of cross-border passengers who have been identified as confirmed cases, suspected cases or close contacts of COVID-19, and conduct health screening on outbound passengers, so as to jointly contain the spread of COVID-19 at borders; 2) encourage Members to facilitate and expedite the clearance of imported, exported and transit anti-epidemic supplies; 3) strengthen international customs cooperation, and refrain from taking excessive measures against the movement of cross-border goods and transport conveyances, to ensure the security of global supply chain and trading network, and promote the development of international trade at the special time.