Additional measures taken by Republic of Azerbaijan in respect of Covid-19 pandemics at border checkpoints

- In order to strengthen sanitary control at customs border checkpoints during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, the Medical Service Department of the State Customs Committee of the Republic of Azerbaijan prepared “Methodical Recommendation on sanitary-hygienic behavior of customs officers during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic” and submitted to the staff.
- According to the Decision of the Operational Headquarters under the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Azerbaijan, in order to prevent the spread of coronavirus infection, as well as to ensure the safety and health of citizens’ entry-exit by land and air (including domestic flights) were suspended with the exception of cargo transportation.
- In accordance with the respective Decision of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Azerbaijan “On approval of the Rules for quarantine control of infectious diseases transmitted by airborne droplets in the territory of the Republic of Azerbaijan” drivers of the vehicles carrying out cargo transportation entering the territory of the Republic of Azerbaijan from the checkpoints, undergo a medical laboratory examination and are taken under quarantine control in accordance with the sanitary rules at the place of residence or stay until the results of the examination are obtained.
- In accordance with the above-mentioned Decision health check of drivers of the vehicles crossing transit the territory of the Republic of Azerbaijan are made and their smooth movement on condition not to leave the vehicle in the direction of their destination point is provided by accompanying officers of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan. Vehicles are provided with fuel to the point of destination. In case of need to refuel at a gas station, drivers must use protective supplies and observe a minimum distance (at least 1 (one) meter) depending on the nature of the infectious disease when communicating with other people. Necessary needs of drivers are met in the same way.
- In accordance with the above-mentioned Decision if during the assessment of the health of drivers of vehicles crossing transit the territory of the Republic of Azerbaijan a suspicion of infection aroused at the border checkpoint, they shall be returned to the competent authorities of the country of arrival. When these drivers are suspected of having an infectious disease after entering the territory of the Republic of Azerbaijan or while traveling to the country of destination, they are sent to a medical sorting facility with a laboratory examination. A final decision on their treatment is made depending on their results of laboratory tests.
- A modern “PCR” virus laboratory has been established within the Medical Service Department of the State Customs Committee of the Republic of Azerbaijan and necessary conditions have been created for appropriate medical examination of customs officers.

Remarks from the International Road Transport Union
14.09.2020

Despite restrictions on the movement of persons across borders during COVID-19 pandemic, Azerbaijan’s borders remain open for the movement of goods.

The State Customs Committee is taking the following measures to limit the spread of the pandemic:

- Preventive measures have been stepped up and are in place at all customs border checkpoints.
- All vehicles entering the country are disinfected several times, both by a stationary disinfection device and manually.
- Cargo imported to Azerbaijan from Iran and its territory is unloaded onto vehicles with Azerbaijani registration plates.
- Vehicles carrying transit cargo are escorted to their destination by the State Traffic Police.

Source: Permanent Mission of the Republic of Azerbaijan to the UN Office and other International Organizations Geneva

09.04.2020

Goods:

In accordance with the decision of the Government of the Republic of Azerbaijan, foreign drivers of freight vehicles will be able to enter the territory of Azerbaijan or transit through Azerbaijan without obstacles.

Maritime transportation (including trucks and container transshipment) with certain restrictions with neighboring countries (Turkmenistan and Kazakhstan) is open and ongoing.

- Only Turkmen freight drivers can use Turkmenistan ships heading to their country. Also, only trailers and semi-trailers will be allowed to be loaded on to the Turkmen ships.
- All drivers are obliged to test in the Port of Baku, in the guarantee zone before loading. Only the drivers with negative test result certificates can enter Turkmenistan and Kazakhstan. The test results are made available within 6-8 hours.
- At the Port of Baku, truck drivers wait for the ship in dedicated clean zones and food is being provided.

Road Transport: all border-crossing points (with Iran, Russia, Georgia and Turkey) are open for road transport (only for freight).

- Accompanied (police escort) freight vehicles from Iran and from Alat port, heading in the Georgia direction, are allowed to cross the borders of Azerbaijan.
- According to the order of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan, free food and rest places are provided for international truck drivers.

Passengers:

- The border between Azerbaijan and Iran is closed to all passenger traffic as of 29.02.2020.
- The border between Azerbaijan and Georgia is closed to all passenger traffic as of 14.03.2020.
- The border between Azerbaijan and Turkey is closed to all passenger traffic as of 14.03.2020.
The State Customs Committee agrees to use places designated in the territory of Baku International Sea Trade Port as warehouse of temporary storage and customs warehouse. The use of these warehouses has created conditions for storage of transit transported goods, continuing its transit by loading goods to containers, railway wagons or auto vehicles.

According to the agreement reached with Azerbaijan Railways CJSC re-compiling of railway bill of lading is not required for rail-ferry transport on the Trans-Caspian International Transport Route, and railway bill of lading accepted for transporting ferries in Kazakhstan are used.

According to the respective decisions of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Azerbaijan the export of certain medical supplies and medicines from the country was temporarily restricted, a number of medical supplies imported to Azerbaijan and raw materials required for their domestic production were temporarily exempted from import duties.

Disinfection barriers were installed at all customs border crossing points and disinfection activities are carried out regularly as well as stationary and portable thermal imagers were installed, and isolation places provided with special equipments were developed at checkpoints.

Taking into account the requirements of some countries for entry into the territory of the country on the basis of a certificate confirming the analysis of Covid-19 virus by drivers involved in international transport, organization has been made to take these tests both on borders and in the port area and provide relevant certificates.

Importation of risk category animals, wild animals brought for zoo shops and zoos, products of animal origin and sea products, directly or from transit countries, are temporarily restricted.

WCO Secretary General Mr. Kunio Mikuriya as a Chairman of the Council, heads of customs services of Azerbaijan, Dominican, India, Bahrain, Guinea and Botswana as Deputy Chairmen held a videoconference on April 22, 2020 to strengthen international customs cooperation for fulfilling the tasks ahead in the fight against pandemics and regular consultations are held.

A joint video conference meeting among the Ministers of Economy/Trade and heads of customs Administrations of the member and observer states of the Cooperation Council of Turkic Speaking States and observer states was held on May 6, 2020 on the current state of the economy and international trade and measures taken in the condition of the Covid-19 pandemics.

Source: State Customs Committee
28.03.2020


In order to implement the above mentioned Action Plan and decisions of Operational Headquarters under the Cabinet of Ministers, the Customs Administration has taken following measures:
- all customs border crossing points have set to work in enhanced mode;

Note: In all these cases, allowances are made for citizens of Azerbaijan to cross the border to return home, and vice-versa.

Other:

The visa registration through “ASAN Viza” electronic portal is suspended due to the global epidemic situation.

Useful links and hotline:
- The State Agency on Mandatory Health Insurance (TABIB)
- COVID-19 Hotline of TABIB: 1542
- Operational Headquarters under the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Azerbaijan
- Ministry of Emergency Situations of the Republic of Azerbaijan (Information in Azerbaijani only)

Source: Ministry of Transport, Communications and High Technologies of the Republic of Azerbaijan
- decision to temporarily close the state border between the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Islamic Republic of Iran, Georgia and the Russian Federation was made based on mutual agreement in order to ensure safety and protect the health of the citizens of both countries;

- goods that are imported from the Islamic Republic of Iran or through their territory by trucks are transshipped to the Republic of Azerbaijani trucks at terminals, close to customs border crossing points;

- decision allowing transportation of trucks that come from the Islamic Republic of Iran through a dedicated transit corridor with police escort was initially adopted;

- fast and smooth movement of goods required for COVID-19 treatment has a special priority;

- staff has been trained by specialists from the Ministry of Health;

- the use of provided personal protective equipment such as gloves, masks, coveralls and glasses is mandatory for staff;

- relevant hygiene measures such as hands washing and disinfection, disinfection of surfaces and public areas;

- disinfection of trucks and vehicles;

- employees who do not maintain essential services are put on standby duty;

- persons returning from risk areas may not enter the office for 14 days after their return;

- continuous dissemination of leaflets with WHO recommendations regarding prevention of COVID-19 among passengers at all customs border crossing points;

- body temperature screening at planes, ships and buses;

- body temperature checks and health inquiry on departure at airports, seaports and ground points of entry;

- isolation and transfer to hospital of suspected passengers with symptoms like fever or cough for further testing and observation;

- isolation and transfer to hospital for further testing and observation of passengers who have visited countries listed in the relevant decision of the Operational Headquarters under the Cabinet of Ministers for the last 28 days;

- entry passengers are required to fill in health declaration forms, providing all necessary information about their address, contact information and countries visited for last 28 days;

- continuous data exchange between the relevant agencies.
Azerbaijan and Georgia, the decision on the temporary closure of the state border, adopted on March 13, 2020, was extended until April 20. There is a transit corridor for cargo transportation.

The decision made on 29 February 2020 to temporarily close the state border between the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Islamic Republic of Iran is extended until April 20.

(Source: https://cabmin.gov.az/az/article/762/)