ACI EUROPE and ACI World urge G7 to support development of interoperable digital health passes

Interoperability and use of passes central to the successful reopening of aviation.

Brussels and Montreal, 10 June 2021 – As the G7 Summit formally begins in the United Kingdom tomorrow, ACI EUROPE and ACI World have jointly written to the leaders of France, Germany, Italy and the United Kingdom to urge their support for the continued development and swift implementation of digital health passes which will promote the safe and swift reopening of borders.

As the number of individuals already vaccinated continues to climb around the world – and the use of testing to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 continues – ACI EUROPE and ACI World have worked with their partners in the aviation industry and with the private sector, to develop principles and standards for digital health passes. The interoperability of these passes will be a major contributor to the reopening of aviation, allowing the industry to be a key driver of the global economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic.

Key to the success of digital health passes, however, will be for governments to:

- Recognise the health status documentation which is already in circulation, such as more than a billion vaccine certificates, proofs of recovery, and evidence of test results.

- Ensure they are effectively integrated in the passenger's journey as seamlessly as possible, with verification taking place upstream (preferably through online check-in) and avoiding duplications. This is essential to avoid chaos at airports as air traffic picks-up and reduce queues and waiting times for passengers, as recently warned by ACI EUROPE[1].

ACI EUROPE and ACI World have proposed that the G7 Summit explicitly recognizes this in its communique:

"We recognise that as the aviation industry recovers and as our citizens start to travel they will need to be assured of their health and safety throughout their journey. We therefore commit to support the development and introduction of digital health passes such as those being introduced by the European Union and the Blueprint developed by the Good Health Pass Collaborative and to take all possible steps to ensure their interoperability. We further commit to ensure that there is equity of access and treatment of those who do not hold a digital certificate and to ensure that all qualified travellers are able to satisfy the necessary border requirements with the minimum of restrictions or controls."

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[1] "Airports send stark warning over potential summer chaos due to COVID-19 checks"

"The urgent need to restore international civil aviation is unquestionable as it is a key engine of economic recovery for the national, regional, and global communities that the industry serves," **ACI EUROPE Director General Olivier Jankovec** and **ACI World Director General Luis Felipe de Oliveira** said.

"Airports stand ready to assist in any way they can, but they need Governments to provide the necessary regulatory frameworks, technical support and resources for the effective and successful implementation of digital health passes.

"We urge the G7 leaders to grasp this crucial opportunity to support the development and introduction of digital health passes and, most importantly, to take all possible steps to ensure the interoperability and integration of these passes in the passenger journey. Indeed, the use of the health passes that are safe, reliable and protect the data of users will have benefits beyond the aviation industry and could be used for other social and economic activities.

"For a system of interoperable digital health passes to have the best chance of success, there needs to be equity of access for those who do not hold a digital certificate and to ensure that all qualified travellers are able to satisfy the necessary border requirements with the minimum of restrictions or controls."

Throughout the pandemic, ACI has represented the interests of airports in the international community at a global and regional level to support measures which can deliver a safe and sustained restart and recovery of the aviation industry.

Notes for editors

1. Stay up to date with COVID-19 developments on ACI World's dedicated news hub.

2. ACI World has provided practical and policy support to the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) as it has developed global recommendations including its Take-Off Guidance Document.

3. ACI World also supported the medical advice developed specifically for the aviation industry through the Collaborative Arrangement for the Prevention and Management of Public Health Events in Civil Aviation (CAPSCA).

4. ACI EUROPE has continuously provided advice and support to the European Commission, the European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA), the European Center for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) European Governments – including *Considerations for the Use of Health Passes at European Airports*, which effectively served as a basis for the EC proposal for the EU Regulation on the Digital COVID Certificate.

5. Airports Council International (ACI), the trade association of the world's airports, was founded in 1991 with the objective of fostering cooperation among its member airports and other partners in world aviation, including the International Civil Aviation Organization, the International Air Transport Association and the Civil Air Navigation Services Organization. In representing the best interests of airports during key phases of policy development, ACI makes a significant contribution toward ensuring a global air transport system that is safe, secure, customer-centric and environmentally sustainable. As of January 2021, ACI serves 701 members, operating 1933 airports in 183 countries. ACI is run by ACI World and 5 ACI Regions: ACI Africa, ACI Asia Pacific, ACI EUROPE, ACI Latin America & Caribbean and ACI North America.

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