



The Changi air cargo hub is ready for the safe, reliable and efficient transportation of the vaccines.

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## Changi Ready Taskforce gears up for the distribution of COVID-19 vaccines into Singapore and the region

**Singapore, 8 December 2020** – The Changi Ready Taskforce, co-led by the Civil Aviation Authority of Singapore (CAAS) and Changi Airport Group (CAG), jointly announced today that the Singapore air cargo hub is ready for the transportation and distribution of COVID-19 vaccines.

Comprising 18 members from across the Changi air cargo community, the taskforce is a public-private collaboration involving government agencies,

cargo handlers, airlines and freight forwarders[\[1\]](#).

Mr Ho Yuen Sang, Director (Aviation Industry), Civil Aviation Authority of Singapore, and co-lead of the Changi Ready Taskforce said, “Over the years, Changi Airport has built a strong track record in pharmaceutical handling by air, from serving Singapore’s pharmaceutical manufacturing sector. We have good cold chain handling infrastructure and capabilities. With our strong air connectivity and SIA’s fleet of more than 200 passenger aircraft, we can deliver vaccines to multiple destinations according to demand. We are well-positioned to play a critical role in distributing COVID-19 vaccines to Singapore and the region. By bringing all players in the air cargo supply chain together through the Changi Ready Taskforce, CAAS and our partners can ensure the safe, reliable and effective transportation of these vaccines”.

Changi Airport is a preferred pharmaceutical air cargo hub in the region. As the first and largest IATA CEIV Pharma[\[2\]](#) certified community in the Asia Pacific, with at least one member in each node of the air cargo supply chain, the Changi air cargo hub offers an unbroken cold chain necessary for the effective handling of temperature-sensitive pharmaceutical shipments.

Recognising that the distribution of COVID-19 vaccines is a challenging task, the Changi Ready Taskforce has been set up to better prepare our air cargo community to meet the logistical demands of vaccines distribution. This includes assessing and ramping the hub’s ability to handle different types of COVID-19 vaccines, all within stringent temperature-controlled environment to maintain the vaccines’ efficacy, as well as to manage an expected surge in the volume of vaccines to be air transported to the region, once they are approved by regulators.

Since October this year, the Changi Ready Taskforce has sought to identify and address the potential challenges associated with air transportation of COVID-19 vaccines – through workstreams such as capabilities mapping of infrastructure and equipment, data visibility, and processes - to ensure that the COVID-19 vaccines can be safely, reliably and efficiently handled through the Changi air cargo hub for distribution into Singapore and to the region.

Changi Airport Group’s Managing Director for Air Hub Development and co-lead of the Changi Ready Taskforce, Mr Lim Ching Kiat said, “The Changi air cargo hub has always placed a strong emphasis on pursuing the highest standards in pharmaceutical cargo handling. Given our efforts in

infrastructure upgrades and manpower training over the years, our air cargo hub is well-poised to handle the transportation of COVID-19 vaccines”.

### ***Temperature-controlled environment throughout the airport cool chain***

Changi Airport’s cargo handlers - dnata and SATS, have steadily been enhancing their cool chain infrastructure and equipment over the years to support the growing demands for transporting temperature-controlled cargo. dnata’s CoolChain and SATS’ Coolport, which consist of temperature-controlled warehouses with adjustable temperature ranges between -25°C and +25[3] and round-the-clock shipment monitoring. In addition, both handlers’ facilities are equipped with essential surveillance systems to ensure the security of the cargo.

Handling vaccines that must be stored in a frozen or deep-frozen state may require dry ice. Changi’s cargo handlers have ready access to dry ice to cater to such shipments along with trained personnel to handle them.

### ***Robust air connectivity***

Even though the COVID-19 pandemic has decimated air travel demand, resulting in a steep decline in passenger aircraft movements with a corresponding reduction in belly-hold capacity[4], Changi’s airline partners have been quick to ramp up charters and scheduled freighter operations since the onset of the pandemic. CAG has also worked with its partners to facilitate the introduction and growth of passenger services for cargo conveyance to alleviate the air cargo capacity crunch. As of 1 December 2020, weekly cargo flights[5] at Changi Airport have tripled to more than 950 flights compared to end-2019. Changi Airport is now connected to about 80 cities by weekly cargo flights.

Changi Airport is well-positioned to serve as a regional hub in Southeast Asia and Southwest Pacific, to support the efficient distribution of COVID-19 vaccines. Singapore Airlines operates multiple weekly flights from each of the key European pharmaceutical export hubs, such as Amsterdam, Brussels and Frankfurt, and has an extensive network in Southeast Asia and Southwest Pacific. In addition, leading global integrators – such as DHL, FedEx and UPS – have established their regional hubs in Singapore with strong network connectivity from Changi Airport.

Changi's extensive air network is complemented by Singapore's position as a leading sea-port. With seamless air-sea connectivity, Singapore will also be able to offer customised solutions for pharmaceutical manufacturers to distribute their vaccines into the region in the steady state.

### ***Global Collaboration***

Both CAG and SATS are also part of the global task force Project Sunrays – a joint initiative between The International Air Cargo Association (TIACA) and Pharma.Aero. This project aims to create transparency between pharma shippers and the global air cargo industry and establish useful guidelines for the air cargo industry to ensure the proper handling, storage, and transportation of high volume COVID-19 vaccines.

[1] See Annex B for the full list of Changi Ready Taskforce members

[2] CEIV Pharma, or the Center of Excellence for Independent Validators in Pharmaceutical Logistics, was created by IATA to support the global air cargo supply chain to achieve pharmaceutical handling excellence.

[3] The area of a building where goods are loaded on and unloaded from vehicles.

[4] Cargo carried in the belly-hold of passenger aircraft.

[5] Includes freighter operations and passenger aircraft carrying cargo only (PACC) flights.

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### ***About Changi Airport Group***

Changi Airport Group (Singapore) Pte Ltd (CAG) ([www.changiairportgroup.com](http://www.changiairportgroup.com)) was formed on 16 June 2009 and the corporatisation of Singapore Changi Airport (IATA: SIN, ICAO: WSSS) followed on 1 July 2009. As the company managing Changi Airport, CAG undertakes key functions focusing on airport operations and management, air hub development, commercial activities and airport emergency services. CAG also

manages Seletar Airport (IATA: XSP, ICAO: WSSL) and through its subsidiary Changi Airports International, invests in and manages foreign airports.