Travel Industry Update
May 26, 2020

Some US airlines want to resume flights to China but are waiting for approval

- Last week the US Department of Transportation claimed regulators in Beijing were "making it impossible" for US carriers to fly between the two countries.
- United Airlines and Delta Air Lines want to restart US-China routes in early June and have submitted applications to the Civil Aviation Administration of China (CAAC) to do so, according to the US Department of Transportation.
- The problem facing the US carriers is that the CAAC, in an effort to stop imported cases of COVID-19, ordered all airlines to use their flight schedules for the March 16-22 week as a benchmark to determine how many flights they could operate to China until further notice. By that date, US airlines had "completely ceased flying passenger service to China," according to the Department of Transportation.
- The CAAC has not responded to United and Delta's requests to resume operations, according the US agency.
- Meanwhile, several Chinese airlines have continued to fly US-China routes throughout the pandemic. But the Chinese aviation regulator has limited each of them to operating just one weekly flight to the United States.
- The Chinese aviation regulator told US officials that they are considering removing the March benchmark, but the cap of one weekly flight to China would also be imposed on US airlines. That would violate an air transport agreement between the two countries.

US Dept of Transportation gives approval for airlines to drop more routes

- The US Dept of Transportation informed 15 airlines late Friday that it will allow them to cancel flight service to about 60 cities where there is little demand for flights.
- However, no city will be left without service altogether.
- The Department stated that it reserved the right to reverse any decision, however, if it were to result in “inadequate capacity or connectivity” to a destination.

TSA screening numbers for Memorial Day weekend

- Thursday, May 21, 2020 TSA screened 318,449 people
- Friday, May 22, 2020 TSA screened 348,673 people
- Saturday May 23, 2020 TSA screened 253,190 people
- Sunday, May 24, 2020 TSA screened 267,451 people
- Monday, May 25, 2020 TSA screened 340,769 people
- While this represents the 6th weekend in a row with growth in screening numbers, the numbers are still lower by at least 1-1.5 million screenings per day.
Amtrak asks for another $1.475 billion in bailout money

- Amtrak told Congress in a letter made public Tuesday it needs another $1.475 billion bailout or it will be forced to make sweeping service cuts and likely suspend some routes.
- In April, Amtrak received $1 billion in emergency funding.
- Amtrak said it will reduce its operating costs by approximately $500 million including restructuring its workforce and controlling discretionary expenses.

Lufthansa receives bailout from German government

- Germany threw Lufthansa a 9 billion euro ($9.8 billion) lifeline on Monday, agreeing a bailout which gives Berlin a veto in the event of a hostile bid for the airline.
- The government will get a 20% stake, which could rise to 25% plus one share in the event of a takeover attempt.
- The bailout terms took weeks to hash out, with the airline wrangling over how much control to yield in return for financial support.

Ryanair will contest Lufthansa’s government bailout

- “Ryanair will appeal against this latest example of illegal state aid to Lufthansa, which will massively distort competition,” said Ryanair CEO Michael O’Leary.
- The government-backed aid will allow Lufthansa to “engage in below-cost selling” and make it harder for Ryanair, its Laudamotion subsidiary and rival low-cost carrier easyJet to compete, O’Leary said.

Emirates has new safety standards

- Emirates has unveiled new measures for employee and customer to redefine safety and hygiene standards on board and on the ground.
- “The risk of catching an infection on an aircraft is already very low, but we have spared no effort in reviewing and redesigning every step, from check-in to disembarkation. Every measure implemented is an additional reduction in risk, and taken altogether, our aim is really to make flying as safe as possible. We are working with all the stakeholders in Dubai – including the airport, immigration, health and aviation authorities to implement such measures, and we will continue to review and consult expert advice for any development and changes,” said Emirates’ chief operating officer, Adel Al Redha.
- Emirates has introduced complimentary hygiene kits to be given to every passenger upon check-in at Dubai International Airport and on flights to Dubai. These kits comprise of masks, gloves, antibacterial wipes and hand sanitizer.
- Gloves and masks are mandatory for all customers and employees at the airport in Dubai, while only masks are mandated on Emirates flights.
- On arrival at the airport, thermal scanners at various areas monitor the temperatures of all passengers and employees.
- Physical distancing indicators have been placed on the ground and at waiting areas to help travelers maintain the necessary distance at check-in, immigration, boarding and transfer areas.
- Passengers transiting through Dubai International Airport and transferring onto another flight will go through thermal screening upon disembarkation.
• The boarding sequence has been staggered and passengers board by row, from the last row to the first, in small numbers.
• All cabin crew on board will be fully kitted out in PPEs.
• Emirates has added a cabin service assistant (CSA) to the crew complement on flights over 1.5 hours. The CSAs will ensure lavatories are cleaned at frequent intervals of every 45 mins. Each lavatory has been equipped with sanitizing soap and hand washing instructions.
• To minimize the risk of infection by touch, magazines and print reading material will not be available during this time.
• In premium classes, single-use menus and wine lists will be provided to passengers.
• Comfort items such as mattresses, pillows, blankets, headphones and toys will be hygienically sealed. Emirates will resume its service with hot meals, using high quality, cutlery and crockery, sterilized before each use.
• Cabin baggage has to be checked-in, and customers can only bring essential items such as a laptop, handbag, briefcase or baby items on board.
• Customers are reminded to bring pens to fill out Health Declaration Forms required for some destinations.
• After its journey and on landing in Dubai, each aircraft will go through enhanced cleaning and disinfection processes to ensure safety and proper sanitation.
• Layovers in destination cities have been reduced where possible, and on long-haul flights, where layovers are necessary, the crew are put up in individual rooms in hotels.
• On return to Dubai, where all Emirates cabin crew are based, COVID-19 tests are done on all crew.
• Every crew member has been mandated a 14-day quarantine in their homes after every flight unless they are on duty.