Travel Industry Update
July 28, 2020

**Delta tightens its mask policy even further with new exclusions**

- Until now, airlines haven’t defined what exactly constitutes a face-covering. As long as your preferred mask covers your nose and mouth, you’ll satisfy the requirement.
- However, as of Saturday, July 25, not every type of mask will fly with Delta.
- Specifically, the carrier will no longer allow flyers to wear masks with exhaust valves. Per an update to the Delta mask policy, “Any mask with an exhaust valve is not approved as an acceptable face mask for customers traveling on any Delta operated flight.”
- As a Delta spokesperson further explains, “The latest guidance, informed by the many conversations we are having with health officials and other experts, is that face coverings and masks without vents work best for everyone’s safety. Delta has plenty of complimentary masks without vents for our customers at airports who may need one.”

**United tells two regional airlines it will continue contract with just one: union letter**

- United Airlines has told two regional airlines, ExpressJet and CommutAir, that it will drop its contract with one.
- ExpressJet and CommutAir each work exclusively for United and the plan would mean one would lose its major source of revenue.
- Chicago-based United has minority stakes in both companies, which operate Embraer SA E145 50-seat planes that bring passengers from smaller markets to destinations that United itself serves on larger jets.

**British Airways faces strike threat over job cut plan**

- The head of the trade union Unite has warned British Airways (BA) that it plans to move towards industrial action against the airline "with immediate effect".
- Unite and BA have been at loggerheads for several weeks. In April, BA owner IAG warned it could cut up to 12,000 jobs due to the impact of coronavirus.
- Staff were warned that if agreement was not reached, they would be handed their notice and re-hired on new contracts.
- For many long-serving staff, BA’s plan would involve significant pay cuts, as well as changes to terms and conditions.
- Unite - which represents thousands of BA employees including cabin crew, engineers and maintenance staff - has accused the airline of operating a 'fire and rehire policy’.
- The new contracts make BA competitive with lower-cost airlines, it said. It insists 40% of cabin crew would get a pay rise, while crew suffering cuts would see their basic pay drop by 20%, although they also stand to lose shift pay, meaning drops of around 40% are possible.
Seven more TSA workers in Atlanta test positive for COVID-19

- Seven more Transportation Security Administration employees at Hartsfield-Jackson International have tested positive for the coronavirus in the last week, including some who have been on leave.
- Three of the employees worked at the Atlanta airport last week at the main security checkpoint. The other four last worked at the airport July 17, June 17, March 17 and Feb. 20, according to TSA.
- In the past, TSA has closed down the checkpoint for deep cleaning after screening officers tested positive, causing long lines and wait times. This time, the main checkpoint has continued with regular operations. The agency says the checkpoints are now instead cleaned hourly and overnight.

Hotel Industry Applauds Release Of Senate COVID Relief Package, Calls For Swift Passage

- The American Hotel & Lodging Association (AHLA) applauded Senate Republicans for including several hotel industry priorities in the coronavirus relief package released today and urged Congress to move quickly to pass the legislation. Among the provisions in the Senate package are additional funds for the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) and limited liability protection for businesses as they reopen, both of which will support the hotel industry and our employees during this unprecedented crisis.
- "Hotels and hotel employees have been severely impacted by the pandemic," said Chip Rogers, president and CEO of AHLA. "We urgently need help just so hotels can remain solvent in order to retain and rehire our employees. We applaud lawmakers who have recognized this fact while crafting this critical legislation. We urge Congress to move swiftly to pass additional support directed at the industries and employees who have been most negatively impacted by this crisis."

Disney World delays some resort hotel reopenings as Florida COVID-19 cases spike

- Disney World has delayed the reopening of some of its resort hotels and is keeping others closed that were scheduled to reopen as coronavirus cases continue their upward trend in Florida.
- Many Disney resort hotels reopened in June, but others remained closed as the theme park reopened on July 11. Disney has since changed the reopening dates for some resort hotels it previously announced.
- According to an update on Disney World's website, the Polynesian Village Resort will reopen on Oct. 4, and the Art of Animation Resort will reopen on Nov. 1. Previously, both resorts were scheduled to reopen on Aug. 12.
- Disney's Beach Club Resort and BoardWalk Inn, which were supposed to reopen on Aug. 24 and Oct. 1, respectively, are to remain closed until further notice.

Washington DC expands quarantine requirements to 27 states

- One of the United States’ most popular tourist locations is becoming a lot less accessible to travelers. Washington D.C. instituted new travel restrictions requiring residents of 27
states to quarantine for 14 days before moving about the city. The order goes into effect today July 27.

- This graph depicts the 27 states (shaded)

![Graph showing states in red shaded for quarantine]

**Travelers can now wear a button to avoid government quarantine at Cayman Islands**

- Cayman Islands may possibly have the most innovative reopening plans as it prepares to begin a six-month phased reopening of its borders on Sept. 1.
- In preparation for welcoming tourists, the local government said it was partnering with U.S.-based biotech company BioIntelliSense to provide a new option for health monitoring. BioButton, the company’s FDA-approved technology device, can track trends that might indicate a respiratory infection like the coronavirus. Specifically, the device monitors heart rate at rest, respiratory rate and skin temperature.
- BioButton can also help with contact tracing efforts if need be. Its health sensors connect to the BioMobile smartphone app via Bluetooth to monitor the user’s whereabouts, but proximity and duration to other BioButton devices can track users and report them to contact tracing operations.
- While all travelers coming into the Cayman Islands still need to provide a proof of a negative PCR test 72 hours prior to departure, they will now be provided an option to wear a BioButton for 14 days. The stipulation to that, however, is self-isolation in a private accommodation is still required for five days until they take a second PCR test in five days and get a negative result.
- If travelers decline that option, they will have to resort to staying in a government-managed facility for 14 days.
- Despite these new technological advancements, Cayman Islands still seem to be taking a conservative approach with its border reopening. No commercial flights will resume for its reopening, and anyone hoping to come must first register with TravelTime for permission to travel on one of the government-arranged repatriation flights or by private air.
U.S. Travel CEOs: Economic Recovery Impossible Without National COVID-19 Testing Plan

- The CEOs of 14 travel companies have sent an urgent letter to President Trump insisting that more and better COVID-19 testing is critical to saving their industry.
- The letter called on the president and congressional leaders to play a stronger role in devising a national testing strategy. After many states began reopening following a spring lockdown, cases of coronavirus exploded forcing many governors to reimpose confinements and mandatory mask rules.
- “The travel industry has aggressively gathered data on the coronavirus outbreak and its fallout in order to inform our exhaustive deliberations on best health practices, trends and attitudes among travel consumers, and the proper timing of a safe reopening of the American travel economy,” the letter reads. “Analysis of the data leads to the conclusion that broader testing—in concert with other key factors such as a robust federal policy framework of relief and stimulus, rigorous health and safety standards adopted by travel-related businesses, and the universal embrace of good health practices (such as the wearing of masks) by the public—is an essential component of reopening and recovery...Testing enables reopening. Testing enables rehiring. Testing enables recovery.”

Meetings Industry Leaders Call for Unity and Consistency

- The meetings industry will need to work together to create consistent standards, separate itself from other kinds of mass gatherings and encourage government toward appropriate policies, according to speakers on a virtual webinar called The New Meetings and Travel Journey held by the Meetings Mean Business Coalition, which was created seven years ago by the U.S. Travel Association.
- Fred Dixon, CEO of NYC & Company and co-chair of Meetings Mean Business, who moderated the panel, said recovery will be gradual but “it is certain.” He said that while many think of New York as a leisure destination, “without business travel there will be no recovery.”
- “The industry has changed for good – just as it did after 9/11,” said Roger Dow, president and CEO of U.S. Travel. He said all the research shows leisure and drive travel will come back first, then business travel, followed by smaller meetings, bigger meetings and finally international travel. He said one obstacle is corporate travel policies, which makes liability protection for travel suppliers crucial to a recovery.
- The industry will have to take the lead in figuring out how to do things like take the temperatures of thousands of people and check to see if they have symptoms.
- Similarly, Kerri Kapich, COO of the San Diego Tourism Authority, said the meetings industry must distinguish itself from gatherings like backyard parties and concerts.