



WoAG Travel Advice 2020/09

23 June 2020

Resumption of Domestic Air Travel

Dear Travel Manager,

Hello from WoAG Travel. Travel by entities has justifiably been extremely limited over recent months with travel mostly occurring to deliver essential services related to COVID-19 and its impacts.

Many officials, therefore, have not undertaken work-related travel for some time. When travel resumes, officials will notice a number of changes that have been made to the travel industry, particularly for air travel, which will likely apply for all flights moving forward.

As travel recommences, it is essential that Travel Managers, Travel Bookers and travellers are made aware of these changes. This Advice summarises some of these, however, this list is not exhaustive and we recommend that Travel Managers visit airline and relevant Australian Government websites regularly to check for further relevant updates.

Please note, this Advice relates only to **domestic** air travel. An updated Advice will be issued when it is determined by governments and health authorities that it is safe for international air travel to resume.

WoAG Travel is currently working with its contracted suppliers to develop arrangement-specific guidance that will provide more tailored information on the air, hotel and vehicle rental sectors. We expect this guidance to be released to entities in mid-July.

Key Points – Domestic Air

- Important changes have been made to:
 - Pre-flight and boarding procedures;
 - In-flight behaviours and disembarkation; and
 - Hygiene and biosecurity activities.
- In line with advice from health authorities, do not travel if you are unwell. At check-in, airline staff may ask travellers to affirm that they are fit to fly.
- Travellers are asked to take responsibility for their own health and wellbeing and should remain aware of the health and wellbeing of other travellers, air crew and airport employees.
- Travellers should arrive at airports earlier than was customary pre-COVID-19 to allow additional time for pre-departure procedures.
- Practice good hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette, and limit contact with surfaces.

What Travellers Should Expect

Pre-flight

- To prepare travellers for the new processes, airlines will send information to travellers prior to before departure. To ensure this information is received, we strongly recommend that mobile phone numbers are included in all Australian Government traveller profiles held securely by QBT.
- Use contactless check-in (via online or app) and self-serve bag drop.
- Expect changes at departure gates and lounges (once re-opened), including:
 - Physical distancing measures;





- Floor markings;
- Decreased seating;
- Hand sanitising stations and enhanced disinfection of surfaces; and
- Adjustments to food and beverage services.
- Extended wait-times are conceivable at security screening points.

Boarding and during flight

- Sequenced boarding will be used to minimise congregating, which will extend total boarding time.
- Masks may be provided to all passengers on each flight. Some airlines will mandate the wearing of masks whilst on board their aircraft. Masks are important from a safety point of view and can provide comfort to other passengers.
- Sanitising wipes will be offered to travellers to wipe-down seats and seat belts, trays and armrests.
- Food and beverage service will be simplified.
- Travellers should limit movement around the aircraft cabin, once boarded.
- In-flight magazines may have been removed from seat-back pockets.

Disembarkation

- Follow the directions of air crew and ground staff when deplaning.
- Apply physical distancing measures as recommended by the Department of Health. Remain a minimum of 1.5 metres away from others where practicable, including at high traffic areas such as exit gates, escalators, lifts, baggage carousels and taxi queues.
- Continue to practice safe hand hygiene practices while transiting through terminal buildings.

Additional Hygiene Information

WoAG Travel is advised that the air conditioning systems of modern passenger planes are fitted with hospital-grade *HEPA* filters, which filter out 99.9% of all particles including viruses. On average, air inside the passenger cabin is refreshed every five minutes during flight.

Airlines are regularly cleaning all aircraft with a disinfectant effective against Coronaviruses, focussing on high-touch areas such as handrails, seats and seatbelts, overhead lockers, air vents and toilets.

Further Information and Next Steps

The Australian Government recommends that all citizens download and activate the *COVIDSafe* app and use other Australian Government online information sources to make informed decisions about domestic travel.

The principles of the WoAG Domestic Air Travel Policy (RMG-404: Official Domestic Travel – Use of the lowest practical fare) are unchanged. The WoAG Travel team is currently reviewing this policy and may provide additional policy guidance in the future.

Links to the websites of our domestic airline partners appear below.

[Qantas and Jetstar](#)

[Virgin Australia](#)

[REX](#)

Where can I get assistance?

Should you require further information on the contents of this Advice, please contact the WoAG Travel team on (02) 6215 2447 or email woagtravel@finance.gov.au.

