

Changi Ready Taskforce prepares to transport vaccines into Singapore



As the first and largest IATA CEIV Pharma certified community in the Asia Pacific and preferred pharmaceutical air cargo hub in the region, Changi Airport is ready for the safe and efficient transportation of the COVID-19 vaccines



Changi Airport's cargo handlers, dnata and SATS, have recently introduced cool dollies, temperature-controlled containers designed specifically for transporting temperature-sensitive goods

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.

Please note the following participating members:

Authorities

- Immigration & Checkpoints Authority
- Singapore Customs
- Singapore Police Force

Airline

Singapore Airlines

Cargo handlers:

- dnata
- SATA

Logistic Partners:

- Bollore Logistics
- CEVA logistics Singapore
- DHL Global Forwarding
- DSV Air & Sea Singapore
- Expeditors Singapore
- FedEx Singapore
- Global Airfreight International
- Kuehne + Nagel Singapore
- Schenker Singapore
- UPS SCS (Singapore)

“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,” says Mr. Ho Yuen Sang, Director (Aviation Industry), Civil Aviation Authority of Singapore and co-lead of the Changi Ready Taskforce.

Changi Airport is a preferred pharmaceutical air cargo hub in the region. As the first and largest IATA CEIV Pharma 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.

Recognizing 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, 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.

“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,” adds Mr. Lim Ching Kiat, Changi Airport Group’s Managing Director of Air Hub Development and co-lead of the Changi Ready Taskforce.



Further strengthening the airport's end-to-end cool chain integrity, both handlers are equipped with temperature-controlled truck docks and round-the-clock shipment monitoring



Steadily enhancing their cool chain infrastructure and equipment, dnata's CoolChain and SATS' Coolport offer a combined annual cool chain handling capacity of 375,000 tonnes

Temperature-controlled environment throughout the airport cool chain:

Over the years, Changi Airport's cargo handlers, dnata and SATS, have steadily been enhancing their cool chain infrastructure and equipment to support the growing demand 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°C, together cover more than 9,000- sqm. They offer a combined annual cool chain handling capacity of 375,000 tonnes with the ability to scale up when required.

Both dnata and SATS have also recently introduced cool dollies – temperature-controlled containers designed specifically for temperature-sensitive goods to be transported with the highest level of cool chain integrity and visibility on the tarmac, between the aircraft and their temperature-controlled warehouses. Further strengthening the airport's end-to-end cool chain integrity, both handlers are also equipped with multiple temperature-controlled truck docks and round-the-clock shipment monitoring. In addition, both handlers' facilities are equipped with essential surveillance systems to ensure the security of the cargo.

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, Changi's airline partners have been quick to ramp up charters and schedule 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 December 1, weekly cargo flights at Changi Airport have tripled to more than 950 flights.

Singapore Airlines operates multiple weekly flights from each of the key European pharmaceutical export hubs 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 customized 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.