LEADING GLOBAL PROTOCOLS FOR THE NEW NORMAL

CONVENTION CENTRES, MEETINGS & EVENTS

#SAFETRAVELS

MAY 2020

OVERARCHING OBJECTIVES & APPROACH FOR THE TRAVEL & TOURISM SECTOR

OBJECTIVES

1. Have the sector lead the definition of industry best practices as Travel & Tourism moves from crisis management to recovery.

2. Put the safety, health and security of travellers and the Travel & Tourism workforce at the core of the development of global protocols.

APPROACH

1. Ensure coherence through a coordinated, collaborative, and transparent approach, supported by medical evidence, within the Travel & Tourism sector as well as with governments and public health authorities.

2. Share harmonised and consistent protocols which are outcome driven, simple and practical across destinations and countries.

3. Rebuild trust and confidence with travellers through effective communication & marketing; letting them know the protocols implemented and assurances available to keep them safe.

4. Advocate for the implementation of enabling policies to support the recovery and demand re-generation for the sector.

INTRODUCTION

The Convention Centres, Meetings and Events industry has for objective to maximise the encounters between people, products, and information, in turn creating value at the local, regional, and international level. Yet to create this value in the current context, the industry recognises the importance of establishing global common protocols focusing on health and hygiene to maintain its value.

The below suggested protocols for Convention Centres, Meetings and Events were compiled based on input from leading companies in the industry either directly or from their public announcements around the safe, healthy, and responsible reopening of convention centres, meetings, and events to the public. The objective is to ensure that protocols are in place across all relevant functions with an increased focus on health, safety, and physical distancing guidance which event participants and organisers will need and expect.

Note that these recommendations are subject to change and may be enhanced as new information about the virus becomes available. These recommendations are based on the operational characteristics of each space and consultation is recommended prior to implementation. Measures should be limited in time and re-evaluated and monitored regularly. In effect, it will be critical to reduce the measures as the risk diminishes. What is more, when more effective, suitable and less disruptive and scientifically supported measures become available, they should be implemented at the earliest opportunity and defunct measures removed.

For the Travel & Tourism sector to recover from the COVID-19 crisis, event participants will need to feel assured of their own safety when attending. In that context, it is important that participants are clearly and simply advised of the new protocols implemented within the Convention Centres, Meetings and Events to ensure their safety. Protocols are developed through a risk-based approach and will include as appropriate: health assessment and screenings, enhanced health and hygiene measures across the venue including catering, availability of hand sanitiser, recommended physical distancing measures, re-evaluation of timelines to avoid queuing and bottlenecks, the reduction in the venue participant capacity as appropriate and use of hybrid setting to enable participants to engage virtually.

For the purpose of alignment across industries within the Travel & Tourism sector, WTTC has divided the protocols in four pillars, namely:

1. **Operational and Staff Preparedness**

2. **Ensuring a Safe Experience**

3. **Rebuilding Trust & Confidence**

4. **Implementing Enabling Policies**

1. OPERATIONAL AND STAFF PREPAREDNESS

As the Convention Centres, Meetings and Events industry restarts their operations, they should ensure they can achieve operational excellence in the "new normal" and have trained staff to prepare and execute on the operational plans:

- Convention Centres, Meetings and Events may achieve operational readiness for reopening by having:
    o Obtained reopening license if required by local government
    o Developed a COVID-19 prevention plan including an action/checklist for infection prevention and a special cleaning and disinfection plan
    o Confirmed that key stakeholders such as airports, coaches and other transport partners have likeminded protocols in place
    o Reflected physical distance in office layout and limiting the number of staff in common back-of-house areas. Support working from home to reduce density in the workplace where possible and establish fixed shifts for the staff to minimise risk
    o Designed and shared visual of floor plans and layout to showcase preparedness
    o Implemented guidelines for staff safety and health, including health checks for staff if required by local legislation. If not required, the venue and organiser to issue and communicate a stay-home policy for anyone displaying any symptoms or an increased temperature as per World Health Organisation (WHO) guidelines
    o Shared physical distancing guidelines, especially for queues, and where possible, marked to clearly communicate to participants and staff
    o Considered revision of existing or implementation of new technologies to enable automation such as contactless registration and contactless payments where possible
    o Evaluated the use of digital innovations and technologies to integrate virtual experience as part of event where applicable
    o Evaluated innovations for cleanliness and disinfection with validation from expert bodies and governmental institutions, such as WHO, and share best practices
    o Confirmed that third party restaurants, cafes, kiosks and caterers have implemented likeminded protocols relating to supply chain control, food handling and preparation, hygiene, digitization, queue management and deep cleaning
    o Ensured use of personal protection equipment (PPE) to staff such as masks and gloves as long as required as per risk-based approach
    o Used digital invitations where possible for meetings and events rather than paper
    o Addressed and checked ventilation such as air-conditioning and air exchange

- Convention Centres, Meetings and Events should train staff to prepare and execute on operational plans by:
    o Created and implemented staff protocols for staff and operations by both venue and organiser. Ensure alignment between event and organiser
    o Provided staff with the tools and information necessary regarding infection control, physical distancing, interactions with guests and enhanced hygiene measures including hand washing, the mandatory use of masks and gloves as recommended by local health authorities or stricter if required by the venue's or organiser's procedures
    o Requested that key stakeholders such as catering companies, coaches and other transport partners have trained their staff on the basis of likeminded protocols
    o All training should be informed by the latest advice from public health authorities and/or WHO
    o Continuous monitoring of well-being of team members by leadership, encouraging them to following governmental and WHO guidelines

2. ENSURING A SAFE EXPERIENCE

As the Convention Centres, Meetings and Events industry works to ensure they deliver a safe experience for their staff and their participants through enhanced cleanliness and hygiene best practices, they should ensure they have:

- Implemented processes focused on enhanced sanitation, disinfection and deep cleaning practices as well as increase their cleaning/disinfection frequency.
    o Selected disinfecting products by venue approved by health authorities
    o Revisited guidance for cleaning crew to all areas of the venue including washrooms, elevators, escalators, conference areas, lobbies, and common areas with a specific focus on top touch points. Extraneous items should be removed
    o Provided participants with recommended elevator etiquette to ensure physical distancing through venue
    o Approved disinfecting products at sanitation stations made available to participants in the form of alcohol-based or hypochlorous acid water hand sanitiser as appropriate throughout the venue based on high-traffic areas. Provide or make available for purchase additional individual disinfecting products for participants
    o Adapted frequency of waste disposal by venue

- Implemented physical distancing for seating distribution, booths, and aisles, gathering size, utilising government guidance if available. Created visual support to show intent as appropriate

- Reduced participant capacity limits in venues as appropriate and required by local legislation. Distinguished between different areas of risk in the venue and consider measures accordingly

- Implemented customer processes including participant information and physical distancing:
    o Considered pre-arrival risk assessment questionnaire
    o Implemented participant health/temperature checks if required by legislation
    o Limited physical interaction and possible queuing at reception and registration if allowed by legislation
    o Registered operational staff in advance to enhance participant flow
    o Created isolation units outside the venue where possible for individuals showing COVID-19 symptoms

- Enhanced food safety and hygiene by:
    o Avoiding participant handling of food at buffets
    o Cleaning regularly machines handled by participants
    o Create water/soft drinks protocols whereby it is recommended for participants to travel with their own refillable water bottles in areas where there is safe drinking water
    o Enhancing sanitation and clean & disinfect tables immediately after participant has left
    o Implementing physical distancing through table spacing and participant seating with suitable reinforcement
    o Considering minimising what is placed on participant tables and provide mono-packaged items if feasible
    o Implement food protocols relating outsourced food

3. REBUILDING TRUST & CONFIDENCE

As the Convention Centres, Meetings and Events industry works to rebuild trust and confidence through transparency and communication with their participants and organisers, they should:

- Provide clear, consistent, and enhanced communication with customers on new health & hygiene safety protocols via the organisation's channels, both digitally and physically at venues. Participant facing/front office staff should be trained to answer questions

- Share participant guidelines both ahead of event via email and in person on the basis of advice from health authorities which may include the wearing of face masks, guidance on hand hygiene and avoiding physical contact. Provide clarity to guests on extent duty of care responsibility of venue and organiser. The venue could also share sample floor plans to demonstrate preparedness

- Implement clear signage throughout the venue to inform participants of the enhanced cleaning protocols, physical distancing, and recommendations.

- Make available approved disinfecting products to participants in the form of alcohol-based hand sanitiser as appropriate based on high-traffic areas. Provided or made available for purchase additional individual disinfecting products for participants

- Inform guests about support available if questions or concerns arise. Guest facing staff should be trained and prepared to answer questions, resolve challenges and share protocols before and during trip to reassure traveller

- Collaborate with a third-party provider to offer insurance covering COVID-19

- Consider the possibly of hosting hybrid events in the future using virtual platforms, enabling participants to engage even when deciding not to travel to the host destination

- The venue should set up medical service point and ensure the team can deal with COVID-19 cases

4. IMPLEMENTING ENABLING POLICIES

As the Convention Centres, Meetings and Events industry works to recover, it is essential that enabling policies be implemented at the governmental level. The Convention Centres, Meetings and Events industry call on governments to:

- Work collaboratively with industry, third party providers and other governments as new rules for cross-border travel for people and cargo are developed

- Provide financial relief to the sector through the reduction of taxes, fees and charges to stimulate demand

- Create incentives and provide direct support to boost stay in host destinations as well as offering tax incentives

- Enhance destination promotion to boost demand and attract events both domestically and internationally

CONTACT

For any questions or to discuss engagement further please contact, Tiffany Misrahi, Vice-President of Policy, WTTC at tiffany.misrahi@wttc.org.

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WORLD
TRAVEL &
TOURISM
COUNCIL

The World Travel & Tourism Council is the global authority on the economic and social contribution of Travel & Tourism.

WTTC promotes sustainable growth for the Travel & Tourism sector, working with governments and international institutions to create jobs, to drive exports and to generate prosperity. Council Members are the Chairs, Presidents and Chief Executives of the world's leading private sector Travel & Tourism businesses.

Together with Oxford Economics, WTTC produces annual research that shows Travel & Tourism to be one of the world's largest sectors, supporting 330 million jobs and generating 10.3% of global GDP in 2019. Comprehensive reports quantify, compare and forecast the economic impact of Travel & Tourism on 185 economies around the world. In addition to individual country fact sheets, and fuller country reports, WTTC produces a world report highlighting global trends and 25 further reports that focus on regions, sub-regions and economic and geographic groups.

To download reports or data, please visit **www.wttc.org**

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