

Airports and Integrated Check Post Health Organizations **(APHOs/ICP Health Units)**

Brief Background

International spread of diseases and agents responsible for various diseases from one country to another is a well-established phenomenon. Accordingly, Health units were established at international airports and ports were established during 1950s under Indian Aircraft (Public Health) Rules as well as India Port Health Rules, primarily to keep vigil on 6 diseases of international significance during that time. Health arrangement at points of entry of international traffic is a statutory requirement.

These organizations are functioning since more than 6 decades and have played a significant role in mitigation of risks due to a number of dangerous diseases like Yellow Fever, Ebola fever, Swine flu, SARS etc. The role played by these Organizations during the plague outbreak, DHF and recent pandemic of swine flu is enough evidence about the utility of the units in the overall interest of the country. In the past also the roles played by APHOs and PHOs in preventing international spread of Plague in 1994, SARS in 2003 is well known. Apart from this, the units are involved in keeping constant vigil towards preventing the introduction of yellow fever into the country which is a dangerous disease with high mortality and morbidity rate, presently prevalent in around 41 countries of African and South American continents and there is all likelihood of this disease being imported to India through mosquitoes and human traffic.

Consequent upon adoption of new International Health Regulations by 65th WHA, many specific functions are mandated for events related to All Hazards approach.

The **International Health Regulations 2005** are legally binding regulations (forming International Law) that aim to a) assist countries to work together to save lives and livelihoods endangered by the spread of diseases and other health risks, and b) avoid unnecessary interference with international trade and travel. The purpose and scope of IHR 2005 are to prevent, protect against, control and provide a public health response to the international spread of disease in ways that are commensurate with and restricted to public health risks, and which avoid unnecessary interference with international traffic and trade. (Article 2, IHR 2005). India has become IHR-2005 complaint in year 2016.

Presently, the health units are functioning only at 26 Points of Entry i.e., 11 airports, 12 ports and 3 Land Borders:

- A. Twelve major ports at Mumbai, Kolkata, Kandla, Chennai, Cochin, Mandapam Camp, Marmagoa, Visakhapatnam, JNPT Nava Sheva, Tuticorin, Paradip and Mangalore.
- B. Eleven international airports at Delhi, Kolkata, Chennai, Mumbai and Tiruchirapalli, Bengaluru, Hyderabad, Cochin, Ahmedabad, Calicut and Trivandrum.
- C. Three Integrated Check Post Health unit at Land border of Amritsar, Agartala and Petrapole.

Further, New Health Units at 22 International Points of Entry have been approved and are under process for strengthening (in terms of manpower, equipment, etc.), i.e., 18 Airports and 4 Land Borders:

- A. Eighteen international airports at Amritsar, Lucknow, Coimbatore, Varanasi, Goa, Jaipur, Nagpur, Pune, Srinagar, Gaya, Port Blair, Guwahati, Bagdogra, Patna, Mangalore, Imphal, Bhubaneshwar and Tirupati.
- B. Four Integrated Check Post Health unit at Land border of Raxaul, Jogbani, Moreh and Dawki.

In the recent years, there has been manifold increase in the air traffic flow in India and all over the world. Simultaneously, during the last few decades, there has been emergence and re-emergence of a number of diseases, which have spread to many countries/continents through international travel and trade like SARS, Avian Influenza, Ebola Virus disease, influenza A H1N1 pandemic etc. Adoption of new IHR and development of core capacities at all designated POEs for all events (chemical, biological, radio-nuclear and food safety) having potential for international spread, occurring both inside country and those occurring outside. This has necessitated the need to expand the manpower for health measures and clearance facilities at major international ports and airports of the country which are experiencing heavy passenger loads to ensure that these diseases are not introduced and if introduced their spread can be contained effectively.

MAJOR FUNCTIONS OF AIRPORT HEALTH ORGANIZATION (APHO)

- Airport Quarantine work: The inspection of documents of international passengers referred by immigration staff for yellow fever disease at International airports and referral of suspect travellers to designated quarantine facility.
- Disinfection, disinsection and deratting of aircrafts including inspection and supervision of control measures.
- Supervision of sanitation, quality of drinking water supply, anti-mosquito and anti- rodent work inside airports.
- Public health clearance of Dead bodies/human remains.
- Administration of yellow fever vaccine and issue of yellow fever vaccination certificate.
- Arrangements for the quarantine of yellow-fever suspects at designated quarantine facilities.
- To attend aircraft medical emergencies.
- Food inspection for VVIP.
- Inspection of food stuff, catering establishments inside the premises of airport under the FSSAI, 2011.
- Assistance in sampling of imported food items and forwarding the lab analysis report, as and when requested by custom authorities.
- Inspection and Licensing of eating establishments within the local limits of airports as designated officer under FSSAI, 2006.
- Activities during Public Health Emergencies of International Concern (PHEIC) like passenger screening, isolation & quarantine, contact listing, aircraft disinsection, transportation, arranging logistics for various public health measures etc.
- To undertake effective surveillance activities on international travellers, aircrafts, cargos, conveyances, goods, postal parcels & human remains so as to prevent the spread of disease of international concern.
- To ensure a safe environment for travellers using point of entry facilities, including potable water supplies, eating establishments, flight catering facilities, public washrooms, appropriate solid and liquid waste disposal services and other potential risk areas.
- To co-ordinate with all service providers and stake holders to ensure minimum core facilities requirement as per IHR, 2005.

The List containing Airport Health Organization and Airport Health Office is as under:

S.No	Name and Address	Telephone/Fax	E-mail address
1	Airport Health Officer Airport health organization NSCBI Airport, Kolkata-700052	033-25119370(Tel) 033-25691122(Fax)	aphokolkata@yahoo.co.in
2	Airport Health Officer Airport Health Organization Tiruchy-620007	0431-2340078(Tel) 0431-2340078(Fax)	aphotrichy2008@gmail.com
3	Airport Health Officer incharge Airport Health Organization C.S.I. Airport, Sahar Mumbai-400099	022-28392302(Tel) 022-28392429(Fax)	mumbaiapho@gmail.com
4	Airport Health Officer Airport Health Organization New Building, Mahipal Pur, Near Radisson Blu Hotel, On Approach Road to T-3 Opp. Toll Barrier, New Delhi- 110037	011-2565212(Tel) 011- 25655081(D)(Tel) 011-25655079(Fax)	aphopalam@gmail.com
5	Airport Health Officer, Airport Health Organisation, Chennai Airport Chennai-600027	044-22560789(Tel) 044-22560788(Fax)	apho_chennai@yahoo.in
6	Airport Health Officer Airport Health Organization Cochin International Airport Ltd. Nedumbassery, Cochin-683111	0484-2610115 Ext. 2261(Tel) 0484-2666060(Fax)	aphocochin@gmail.com
7	Airport Health Officer, Airport Health Organization, Calicut International Airport, Calicut Airport P.O, Malappuram, Dist- 673647		calicutapho@gmail.com
8	Regional office of Health & Family Welfare , Bangalore 2nd Floor 'F' Wing, Kendriya Sadan, Koramangla, Bangalore-560034	080-25537310 080-25537688(Tel) 080-25539249(Fax)	rhobng@nic.in aphobng@yahoo.com
9	Regional office of Health & Family Welfare , Hyderabad 3rd Floor, B Block, Kendriya Sadan, Sultan Bazar, Hyderabad-500095	040-24656923(Tel) 040-24657923(Fax)	rohwhyd@yahoo.co.in
10	Regional office of Health & Family Welfare, Thiruvanthapuram, TC-14/2151(1), Meads Lane, Cantonment, Thiruvanthapuram-695034	0471-2322710(Tel) 0471-2322710(Fax)	rohfwvm@kerala.nic.in
11	Regional office of Health & Family Welfare, Ahmedabad Anand Estate, Industrial Estate Corner, Bapu Nagar, Ahmedabad-380024	079-22740714(Tel) 079-22742447(Fax)	rhfw.ahd@rediffmail.com rhfw_62ahd@rediffmail.com

MAJOR FUNCTIONS AT INTEGRATED CHECK POST:

- Health screening and medical examination of the travellers and inspection of baggage, cargo, containers, lorry, train or other vehicle, goods, postal parcels, human remains and relevant documents, whenever necessary.
- Surveillance of International Passengers and Crew for yellow fever disease.
- Quarantine of Passengers.
- Public health clearance of dead body/human remains.
- Public Health clearance if Death of Passenger takes place during journey.
- Medical Emergencies.
- Activities during Public Health Emergencies of International Concern (PHEIC) like passenger screening, isolation& quarantine, contact listing, aircraft disinsection, transportation, arranging logistics for various public health measures etc.
- Food Hygiene & Safety Duties Supervision of Sanitation, drinking water supply, anti- mosquito and anti-rodent work Training Activities VVIP food inspection.

The List containing Port Health Organization and Port Health Office is as under:

S.No	Name and Address	Telephone/Fax	E-mail address
1	Airport and Border Quarantine Health Officer, Airport and Border Quarantine, 7 – A, Court Road, Amritsar-143001	0183-2565337 (Tel) 0183-2565337 (Fax)	abqasr@gmail.com
2	ICP Health Officer, ICP Health Organization Agartala. (Managed by APHO Kolkata, Airport Health Officer, Airport Health Organization, NSCBI Airport, Kolkata-700052)	033-25119370(Tel) 033-25691122(Fax)	aphokolkata@yahoo.co.in
3	ICP Health Officer, ICP Health Organization, Petrapole. (Managed by PHO Kolkata, Port Health Officer Port Health Organization Marine House, Kolkata-700022.)	033-22230414 033-22230178(Tel) 033-22230904 (Fax) 033-22230435 (Fax)	phokolkata@rediffmail.com drmkbag28@gmail.com