

### The Experience of Utilizing International Health Regulations Core Capacities Responding to COVID-19 Pandemic at Points of Entry, Taoyuan International Airport

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#### Abstract

At the end of December 2019, the COVID-19 outbreak occurred in Wuhan City, China, and quickly spread across the world. To prevent the importation of COVID-19 cases from abroad, the Taiwan Centers for Disease Control established the "Central Epidemic Command Center (CECC)" on January 20, 2020. The World Health Organization (WHO) also declared the COVID-19 outbreak as a Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC) on January 31, 2020. As a result, the Taoyuan Airport Health and Safety Working Group held a meeting and converted the Working Group into the "Taoyuan Airport Response Center for Central Epidemic Command Center" on January 22, 2020, then took stock of the preparation situation of each unit in the airport. They worked together to implement the important border quarantine measures of the CECC, including the on-board inspection or anchorage quarantine for chartered flights or similar charter flights from high-risk countries, health declaration of inbound passengers through the "entry and quarantine system" website via smartphones, collecting deep throat saliva samples for PCR testing for inbound passengers, and implementing landing on-site inspections for specific arrival flights. The pandemic lasted more than three years, and the restrictions at borders have been lifted since October 13, 2022. During the pandemic, the Taoyuan International Airport

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utilized the core capabilities as designated ports under the International Health Regulations (IHR 2005). When facing threats and challenges such as emerging infectious diseases or major public health events in the future, such experiences in implementing multiple innovative border quarantine measures and contingency plans may be the reference to prevent overseas infectious diseases from threatening public health.

**Keywords:** Taoyuan International Airport, COVID-19, IHR core capacities at points of entry, border quarantine