



[REDACTED]

Stockholm, 18 December 2020

ECDC Ref: DIR-2020-OUT-4971-AAReTa

**Re: Letter by Dr Colette Bonner for attention of Chair of MB and Director of ECDC**

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for forwarding the letter of Colette Bonner, Irish MB member, communicating to us both praise and critical remarks on our work. We would like to note at the outset of this reply, that we acknowledge that in the light of feedback received since the publication of Guidelines for COVID-19 testing and quarantine of air travellers – Addendum to the Aviation Health Safety Protocol (2 December, 2020), there are elements of the phrasing in this document that we now believe need to be modified, and that we are proposing to change. We also recognise that our original approach of separating out the risk assessment conclusion that travel should be discouraged and limited only to essential journeys from the guidelines on proportionate measures for mitigating the risks of travel for those who do need (or want, despite advice) to travel, was unfortunate. We had not anticipated that readers of the one document would not read, or would choose to ignore, the other document. We are now proposing changes to the joint EASA-ECDC document to address both of these issues. However, we would also wish to note that we consider that the scientific rationale for the conclusions in the joint EASA-ECDC document is sound, based on the evidence currently available, and in the response in Annex 1, I seek to explain this in more detail.

It is important for ECDC to describe in detail the processes engaged in when producing guidance in conjunction with another agency. ECDC has been requested by the European Commission to co-author a number of guidelines in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic with sister agencies in the transportation and maritime sector. In those joint documents ECDC undertook the task to provide the scientific evidence on COVID-19 properties and the potential control measures, the non-pharmaceutical interventions appropriate for the particular settings and advice to operators and passengers. The more detailed replies to your questions are captured in Annex 2.

Let me assure you that ECDC takes seriously all comments by the Member States and we will discuss internally how to improve our internal procedures when developing such guidance in particular when it entails collaboration with other institutions.

Best regards,

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