



January 19, 2022

Dr. Theresa Tam  
Chief Public Health Officer of Canada  
Public Health Agency of Canada

**Re: Post arrival testing**

On behalf of the International Air Transport Association (IATA) and its 290 member airlines, I am writing to express our continued strong opposition to the requirement that all air passengers arriving in Canada be tested for COVID-19 and remain in isolation until they receive their test results. This policy can neither be justified from a scientific or public policy perspective given current pandemic realities and already existing Government of Canada restrictions.

Pre-departure PCR test and various procedures are already mandated by the Government of Canada to protect against the importation of COVID-19. Air travel itself has been demonstrated to be safe by the WHO and leading health experts and has been proven to not be a meaningful spreader of the disease.

The most recent data published by the Government of Canada reports that the positivity rate for the 1.2 million fully vaccinated passengers arriving by air between November 28 – December 25, 2021, stands at 1.08%. Today, Canada has approximately 2.82 million reported cases of COVID-19, the vast majority of them resulting from the spread of the Omicron variant. Clearly, post arrival testing cannot be justified as a means to control the spread of the virus when the virus is already well established in the country.

The post-arrival testing requirement is a significant barrier to travel to Canada as it forces passengers to stay at home or at hotel while they wait for the results of their PCR test. Widely reported delays in providing those results to arriving passengers only increases the likelihood that passengers will avoid travel to Canada other than in exceptional circumstances.

The recovery of the airline industry is critical to building back a better Canada. Damaging that recovery to stop the spread of a virus that is already present in 20-40% of the population makes no sense and should be eliminated immediately. Alternatively, any post arrival requirement should utilize rapid antigen tests rather than the more expensive and less timely PCR tests.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Douglas Lavin  
International Air Transport Association