



U.S. Department
of Transportation
**Federal Aviation
Administration**

SAFO

Safety Alert for Operators

SAFO 05006
DATE 11/30/05

Flight Standards Service
Washington, DC

http://www.faa.gov/other_visit/aviation_industry/airline_operators/airline_safety/safo

A SAFO contains important safety information and may include recommended action. SAFO content should be especially valuable to air carriers in meeting their statutory duty to provide service with the highest possible degree of safety in the public interest.

Subject: Avian influenza (AKA, avian flu, bird flu) – current information for crewmembers.

Background: A public Web site maintained by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) contains current information about the avian flu, including information of particular importance to crewmembers. This flu is an infection caused by avian influenza viruses. There are several strains of the virus, but only a few strains are believed to be transmissible to and between humans. The virus occurs naturally among birds and usually does not infect humans; however, since 1997 there have been about 120 known cases of the H5N1 strain of avian flu infecting humans. The U.S. Government is concerned about a pandemic if H5N1 or some other strain should become easily transmitted from one human to another. The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), and its component office, CDC, are making important, current information available to the public. See Web addresses, below.

Discussion: On November 18, 2005, the CDC updated its Interim Guidance for Airline Flight Crews and Persons Meeting Passengers Arriving from Areas with Avian Influenza travel notice, which was originally released in February 2004. The FAA is recommending that crewmembers adhere to the CDC recommendations for general infection control. Although the CDC used the term “flightcrew,” the recommendations logically extend to all crewmembers including flight attendants. A complete list of CDC guidelines and recommendations for airline crewmembers and other people (e.g., Transportation Security Administration (TSA) personnel) who may come in contact with passengers arriving from areas with avian influenza is provided on the CDC Web site.

Recommended Action: Directors of safety, directors of operations, fractional ownership program managers, and crewmembers of transport-category airplanes should be familiar with the CDC Web site and CDC’s recommendations for the avian flu, including the general infection control measures. These persons should periodically revisit these Web sites and adopt new or revised CDC recommendations, as appropriate.

CDC: <http://www.cdc.gov>
CDC guidance for crewmembers: http://www.cdc.gov/travel/other/avian_flu_ig_airlines_021804.htm
HHS: <http://www.pandemicflu.gov/>