CHINA STEPS UP MONITORING ACTIVITY FOR ZIKA VIRUS

News / Business aviation



China is stepping up its monitoring requirements for general aviation arrivals in the wake of the Zika virus outbreak. Authorities are calling for people to report any flu-like symptoms or any other symptoms of the Zika virus to the quarantine office when arriving from an area linked to the Zika virus outbreak. In addition, officials may come aboard such arrivals to carry out a visual inspection, Robert Moya, manager of Universal Weather and Aviation's "X-ray" team, told AIN.

Authorities are also requiring the declaration of any articles that could carry the virus, such as microbes, human tissues, biological products and blood. Insects and animals that could transmit infectious diseases–such mosquitoes, rodents and cockroaches–are forbidden, according to the latest Chinese alert, which adds, "Any violations will incur the due legal responsibilities."

At this time, China has not required "disinsection" (read on for explanation of this word) as Italy and a few other countries have required, Moya said. But he warned that restrictions are continually changing and advises that operators check prior to departure. "For the time being China is practicing more of a monitoring approach," he said. "With aviation, it does change quite often. As

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the Zika virus spreads, more and more countries are becoming more stringent with their requirements.”

The Chinese list of affected areas includes Brazil, Colombia, Mexico, Salvador, Honduras, Guatemala, Paraguay, Barbados, Bolivia, Martinique, French Guiana, Haiti, Surinam, Ecuador, Guyana, Panama, Puerto Rico, Nicaragua, Venezuela, Curacao, Dominica, Guadeloupe, U.S. Virgin Islands, Costa Rica, Cape Verde, Samoan, the Solomon Islands, New Caledonia, Fiji, Vanuatu, Maldives, Thailand and Indonesia.

Disinsection is a process that treats cabins with an approved pesticide before departure, to avoid the need for spraying on arrival. The procedure, approved by the World Health Organization, involves using a nebulizer to apply the pesticide so that a residual film is left in the cabin providing protection for up to eight weeks.

The aircraft then has to be left vacant for four hours before departure, but this approach means that the aircraft does not have to be sprayed on arrival before the passengers disembark. Local officials do swab cabin surfaces on arrival to quickly check that the residual pesticide amounts to at least 0.2 grams per square meter.

Australia and New Zealand have long required arriving aircraft to be sprayed with an anti-insect treatment, and many South American countries now require this, too. Other European Union states are expected to follow suit.

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