Hong Kong revised entry rules for flight crew

David Mumford
24 November, 2020



Hong Kong has published **extensive guidance on its entry rules** via its dedicated Covid website, but in a bizarre twist, it's actually the Notams which make it clearer to quickly work out exactly what's allowed here:

A1199/20 – IN VIEW OF THE LATEST SITUATION OF COVID-19, THE HONG KONG SPECIAL ADMINISTRATIVE REGION GOVERNMENT IS IMPLEMENTING THE FOLLOWING MEASURES:
1. ALL NON-HONG KONG RESIDENTS COMING FROM OVERSEAS COUNTRIES AND REGIONS BY PLANE WILL BE DENIED ENTRY TO HONG KONG.
2. NON-HONG KONG RESIDENTS COMING FROM THE MAINLAND, MACAO AND TAIWAN WILL BE DENIED ENTRY TO HONG KONG IF THEY HAVE BEEN TO ANY OVERSEAS COUNTRIES AND REGIONS IN THE PAST 14 DAYS.
3. ALL TRAVELLERS COMING FROM MACAO AND TAIWAN, INCLUDING HONG KONG AND NON-HONG KONG RESIDENTS, WILL BE SUBJECT TO A 14-DAY COMPULSORY QUARANTINE, WHICH IS THE SAME AS THE ARRANGEMENTS FOR PEOPLE ENTERING HONG KONG FROM THE MAINLAND.
4. HONG KONG RESIDENTS ARRIVING IN HONG KONG WHO HAVE BEEN TO ANY OVERSEAS COUNTRIES AND REGIONS IN THE PAST 14 DAYS WILL BE SUBJECT TO A 14-DAY COMPULSORY QUARANTINE.
5. AIR CREWS ARE EXEMPTED SUBJECT TO CONDITIONS. DETAILS CAN BE FOUND IN HTTPS://WWW.CORONAVIRUS.GOV.HK/ENG/INBOUND-TRAVEL.HTML
29 SEP 07:39 2020 UNTIL 29 DEC 15:59 2020 ESTIMATED. CREATED: 29 SEP 07:39 2020

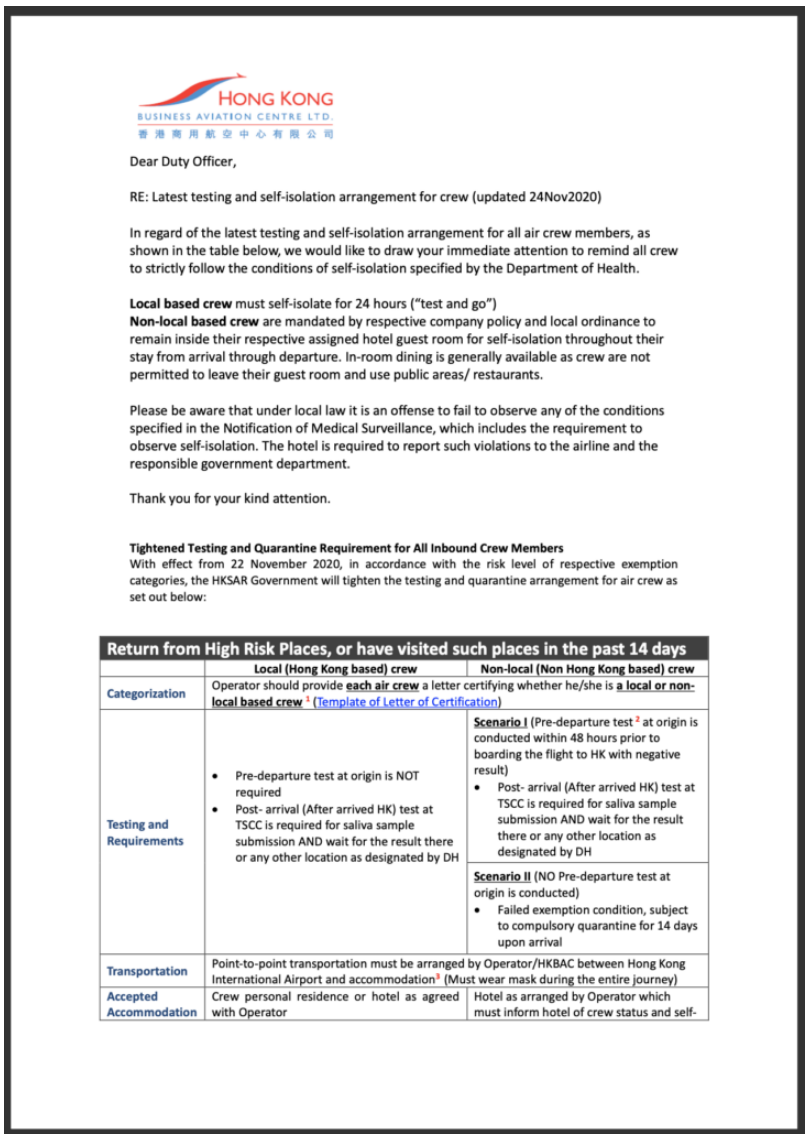
Ok, still not actually that clear. Big block of text, all upper case, an assault on the eyes…

So, to make that even clearer, between now and Dec 29:

- Non-residents may only enter if coming from China, Macao or Taiwan, but not if they have travelled to any other country within the past 14 days.
- All inbound pax, including Hong Kong residents, are subject to a 14-day quarantine.
- There are **special rules for flight crew**…

Rules for Flight Crew

On Nov 24, Health authorities in Hong Kong published a document with the revised entry rules for flight crew. There are basically slightly different rules depending on whether crew have been in “very high risk places” in the past 14 days. Either way, all crew should have a negative PCR Covid test taken within 48 hours of operating, along with a letter from their airline/company that certifies an accredited laboratory was used. On arrival, all crew get tested again and must isolate until departure.



HONG KONG
BUSINESS AVIATION CENTRE LTD.
香港商用航空中心有限公司

Dear Duty Officer,

RE: Latest testing and self-isolation arrangement for crew (updated 24Nov2020)

In regard of the latest testing and self-isolation arrangement for all air crew members, as shown in the table below, we would like to draw your immediate attention to remind all crew to strictly follow the conditions of self-isolation specified by the Department of Health.

Local based crew must self-isolate for 24 hours (“test and go”)
Non-local based crew are mandated by respective company policy and local ordinance to remain inside their respective assigned hotel guest room for self-isolation throughout their stay from arrival through departure. In-room dining is generally available as crew are not permitted to leave their guest room and use public areas/ restaurants.

Please be aware that under local law it is an offense to fail to observe any of the conditions specified in the Notification of Medical Surveillance, which includes the requirement to observe self-isolation. The hotel is required to report such violations to the airline and the responsible government department.

Thank you for your kind attention.

Tightened Testing and Quarantine Requirement for All Inbound Crew Members
With effect from 22 November 2020, in accordance with the risk level of respective exemption categories, the HKSAR Government will tighten the testing and quarantine arrangement for air crew as set out below:

Return from High Risk Places, or have visited such places in the past 14 days		
	Local (Hong Kong based) crew	**Non-local (Non Hong Kong based) crew**
Categorization	Operator should provide **each air crew** a letter certifying whether he/she is **a local or non-local based crew** [1] (Template of Letter of Certification)	
Testing and Requirements	• Pre-departure test at origin is NOT required • Post- arrival (After arrived HK) test at TSCC is required for saliva sample submission AND wait for the result there or any other location as designated by DH	**Scenario I** (Pre-departure test [2] at origin is conducted within 48 hours prior to boarding the flight to HK with negative result) • Post- arrival (After arrived HK) test at TSCC is required for saliva sample submission AND wait for the result there or any other location as designated by DH
		Scenario II (NO Pre-departure test at origin is conducted) • Failed exemption condition, subject to compulsory quarantine for 14 days upon arrival
Transportation	Point-to-point transportation must be arranged by Operator/HKBAC between Hong Kong International Airport and accommodation [3] (Must wear mask during the entire journey)	
Accepted Accommodation	Crew personal residence or hotel as agreed with Operator	Hotel as arranged by Operator which must inform hotel of crew status and self-

Click to download the rules!

Rules for Positioning Crew

You have to go through all the same health checks, but there’s a way to get around the 14-day quarantine on arrival. You need to prepare a letter in advance (see below). As positioning crew, you’re required to self-isolate at a hotel for medical surveillance whilst you’re waiting for your outbound flight. You’ll have to wear a mask and get your temperature checked daily for reporting to the authorities. If you have a residence in HK, you should be allowed to go there instead.

To apply for the **exemption from the 14-day quarantine for positioning crew**, you have to send a letter to HKBAC, who will charge you HKD500 (around $65 USD). Here’s how it works, and the info you need to include:

1. *Flight Operator issues the letter with company letter head describing travel purpose and duty of the concerned crew*
2. *The Operator sends email to HKBAC to get verification endorsement on the letter. After verification, a scanned copy of the letter would be sent to the Operator by email.*
3. *The Operator provides that letter with verification by HKBAC to its concerned crew.*
4. *The concerned crew brings along the letter when travelling as passengers on commercial flight*
5. *Upon landing in Hong Kong, the crew approaches Crew Channel to obtain exemption from the Duty Immigration Officer before going through Immigration as passenger*

Remarks:

1. *HKBAC's checking is only for the identity verification based on the information provided by the Operator. HKBAC does not hold any liability on the exemption approval process.*
2. *Administration fee at HKD500 per endorsement would be applied and will be charged to the Operator which requests for the crew exemption letter.*
3. *Validity of the letter for crew exemption will be 7 days from the commercial flight date.*
4. *Although air crew can be exempted from the compulsory quarantine, the Department of Health (DH) will arrange Medical Surveillance for persons under the exempted categories of persons during their stay in Hong Kong. Exempted persons are subject to the temperature check and health declaration procedures carried out by DH.*
5. *In order to avoid your crew members being denied check in or boarding the commercial flights, please contact the commercial airlines that the crew would be travelling in in advance to ensure they are aware of the exemption.*
6. *Please be advised there is no guarantee that HK Health accepts the air crew letter for inbound positioning crew.*

Hong Kong has always been a tricky place to fly to, unless you're an airline with landing rights secured for the next two decades. As the world's third busiest airport, with only two runways, it goes without saying that **congestion is a big issue here!**

Things have gotten slightly easier this year due to the **downturn in traffic** caused by the Covid pandemic, with airport authorities now allowing airlines to keep their slots even if they don't use them. So, good news for them, but also good news for GA/BA operators, as the overall reduction in traffic means that **a lot more slots are available right now – daytime ones too!** So if need to go to Hong Kong and can navigate the entry rules, slots and parking should not be a problem.

Have you flown to Hong Kong recently? How did it go? Send us an email and let us know, or even better – file a report on **Airport Spy** and it will automatically go out to everyone in the group!