Italy: New Disinsection Procedures

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In March 2024, an OPSGROUP member reported a fuss on arrival at LIRA/Rome from the US over **disinsection procedures.** Turns out their aircraft needed to be sprayed – a process that local agents appeared thoroughly confused about.

This was completed by the crew, but the Italian Health Department later said *not good enough* and they were required to arrange a cleaning company to do this for them at considerable delay and cost the next day.

We did some digging, and it turns out there are indeed some new (and pretty specific) procedures that now apply to **US operators** – along with a healthy dose of the rest of the world – due to concerns about mosquito borne illnesses. You'll save yourself a headache (no pun intended) if you can get it right the first time.

Here's what we know.

New Procedures

Health authorities now require one of two things on arrival, depending on where your aircraft has been in the **past 28 days:**

- **Aircraft been in an affected country = a disinsection certificate (aircraft sprayed)**
- **Aircraft NOT been in an affected country = an aircraft declaration**

Check this list to see what applies to your aircraft. This is the list of countries, according to WHO, with current or previous Zika virus transmission. This seems to be the source that the Italian authorities are referencing when they talk about "affected countries" – it seems a bit odd that they're doing this, because this list was last updated by WHO all the way back in Feb 2023, but .

Been in an affected country?

Option 1

If your aircraft has been in an affected country in the past 28 days (which includes the US), you'll need to show a **Residual Disinsection Certificate.**

This should be in line with ICAO Annex 9, Appendix 4 – you basically get the cabin sprayed with insecticide, and **get a certificate which is valid for 8 weeks** (i.e. the slime sticks around and kills any mozzies for this period of time).

⬆ This is what Italy wants you to do. Spray the cabin in the US (or wherever else) with the heavy duty stuff, get your certificate, and show it to them on arrival. And in theory, it sounds like a nice easy option. **The only problem is that you can't do this in the US** – according to the US Environmental Protection Agency who say so here.

Option 2

So if you can't get this whole thing done in advance, option 2 is this: **when you land in Italy they will do a mandatory spray of your aircraft** – but this might take time to arrange through your handler and could cause delays.

Option 3

As of Sep 2024, authorities said that if you can't do the residual disinsection (the preferred option) then they will allow you to **spray the aircraft before departing to Italy.** It's valid for one flight only, and has to be before the pax board, in accordance with the "pre-embarkation" rules in this WHO document. We checked with several FBOs at airports in Italy, and only half of them had heard about this latest update, so don't count on everyone being up to speed with this change!

Not been in an affected country?

If your aircraft has not been in an affected country, you will need to **submit a declaration** instead.

The requirements are quite specific. You don't need to spray, but you'll need to list every country your aircraft has been in the last 28 days (including any transit stops).

This must be emailed to the Italian Health Authority office at your point of entry at least twelve hours before you land.

This should be on your company's letterhead, and signed by a manager. If possible, include a version in both English and Italian.

Here is the example template Universal Italy put together.

Show me the official guidance

Welcome to *Operation Confusion*. Of the four local handling agents we reached out to, not one could actually direct us to the 'official' announcement from the Italian authorities they were referring to. Officially for us, this was **highly frustrating.**

But an intrepid OPSGROUP member found this link from the Italian Ministry of Health – it certainly looks like the one that talks about all these new rules.

So the advice above is our best attempt to streamline the process, based on the recent experience of OPSGROUP members and all available information.

Crew Reports

We have received several of these since first posting this article, from various different airports across Italy:

LIML/Milan Linate (March 2024): *We had to proceed with disinsection (organized by the FBO). The process lasted 30 mins with a requirement of having all aircraft doors closed for one hour. They accepted to postpone until the crew was ready to leave. Expect a light greasy deposit on the furnitures. No odour.*

LIPE/Bologna (March 2024): *We did two trips into LIPE this week, hardly a mention of any spraying. I gave them a letter saying I treated with AeroSafe, presented 3 empty canisters and requested our ship not be sprayed. Our aircraft was not sprayed on either trip into LIPE.*

LIMC/Milan Malpensa (April 2024): *We set up disinsection through Universal and it took 5 mins. I told their crew I didn't want any of the seats sprayed and just the carpet. APU was running and crew was outside for the 5 mins. After they finished we continued to clean up the airplane. They gave a cert in Italian to the handler and one to me in English. Cost was around 400 Euros. The stuff they used was EMULDRY 50 Plus Residual Insecticide.*

LIRP/Pisa (April 2024): *Plane was shut down, when they said oh by the way we have to do this. So back out to the plane, open it up, fire up the APU for air circulation, set the bug bomb in the plane, and set it off. It was all done by some company contracted by the airport – they didn't let us have anything to do with it. Close all the doors with no one on board, APU running, for 20 minutes. Then open cargo door and main entry door for 20 minutes for venting, APU still running. Process is done at this point. Plane needs to be secured and back in to clear customs, etc. This took an extra hour or more of time. Plane is now good for 8 weeks they say, make sure you get the certificate they give you. The spray didn't smell much. It was a massive time suck, and I haven't seen such nonsense since Covid.*

LIRA/Rome (April 2024): *We arranged to have the airplane treated upon arrival. After the airplane was cleaned and crew ready to depart for the hotel, a contracted individual boarded the airplane with a Ryobi electrostatic sprayer loaded with chemical. After treatment, we closed the doors and left for the hotel. 4 days later, there wasn't any trace of the chemical. The service costs around €450. We are headed back to LIRA in a few days with the same airplane. They have accepted the disinsection certificate since we are still within the 8 week active period of the chemical.*

LIRA/Rome (May 2024): *They made up the process on the spot. Charged €500 and the actual process took about 5mins. They would not do the disinsection or any other services at the long term parking stand, or at the short term parking stand with the APU running. So we had to shut down the APU, get the fuel/lav done, start the APU back up to have the beacon on for towing to the long term stand, wait for a follow-me car and clearance to tow about 150' then open all the doors, sign 5 pieces of paper, remove all blankets and pillows and let them do the spray and close the doors. After we closed the doors (this is now 2hrs after arrival) one ministry official said we had to leave it for 2hrs and the other one told us we'd have to leave it for 40 mins then come back and open it for 20. They instructed us to leave the APU on during this time and leave the area. I told them this was not happening and that we were already over our duty day. That I would have to shut down the APU and re-close the doors and leave. I further told them I would be back a few days later and would open the doors for 20mins before we entered the airplane. After a 5 min conference, they allowed this but wanted me to take all the pillows and blankets with us. This was simply not practical so I said no and put them in the coat closet before I left. They said OK to that also. They didn't seem to know what was to be done other than signing the papers. Everything else they made up as they went along and capitulated to any pushback.*

LIML/Milan Linate (Aug 2024): *On arrival, we told them that we really didn't want to get the aircraft sprayed. The FBO advised us that we needed to pay the charge anyway. We said no problem, so we paid the charge, but we didn't get sprayed! I was surprised, but they were very easy about accommodating our request not to be sprayed. Overall, couldn't have been better service, 5 lineman greeted us upon arrival.*

LIRI/Salerno and LIEO/Olbia (Aug 2024): *Last week we flew into both of these airports from the US and we were not asked a single question about dissection, seems that they did not care at all.*

Keep an eye out for new requirements elsewhere too

Dengue, in particular, seems to be in the outbreak stage of its cycle. Zika virus is also showing signs that things may soon get worse again.

Both the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and World Health Organization (WHO) provide the most up-to-date information on active outbreaks of these kinds of illnesses. If you have layovers in affected countries, it is highly recommended you keep an eye on things – both for your own health, and for potential impact to your operation.

If you do experience new procedures, **please let us know** so we can pass that info to the rest of the group: team@ops.group