

Points of entry under the IHR (2005)

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Points of entry provisions in the International Health Regulations (2005) or (IHR (2005)) are designed to minimize public health risks caused by the spread of diseases through international traffic. The IHR (2005) define a point of entry as "a passage for international entry or exit of travellers, baggage, cargo, containers, conveyances, goods and postal parcels, as well as agencies and areas providing services to them on entry or exit". There are three types of points of entry: international airports, ports and ground crossings.

Roles for Competent Authorities and Conveyance Operators

States Parties to the IHR (2005) are required to identify the competent authorities to carry out : (i) development of core capacities at designated points of entry; (ii) implementation at points of entry of appropriate levels of hygiene and sanitation as well as ensuring effective vector, rodent and environment control measures and procedures; and (iii) application of health measures at points of entry in affected areas.

Designating points of entry and assessing core capacity requirements

States Parties shall designate airports and ports and may designate certain ground crossings to develop the capacities provided in Annex 1 of the IHR (2005). These points of entry should be identified as early as possible because countries have no more than two years from entry into force of the Regulations (until 15 June 2009) to assess the ability of their existing national structures and resources to meet the minimum capacity requirements and no more than five years from the date of entry into force to strengthen these capacities (deadline 15 June 2012).

Ship Sanitation Certificates

Under the IHR (2005), the current Deratting and Deratting Exemption certificates have been replaced by Ship Sanitation Control Exemption and Ship Sanitation Control certificates which address a broader range of public health risks on sea going vessels. Deratting and Deratting Exemption certificates issued before 15 June 2007 will be valid for six months. Accordingly, such certificates will be valid after 14 December 2007. All expired Deratting and Deratting Exemption certificates will be replaced by the Ship Sanitation Control Exemption and Ship Sanitation Control certificates beginning 15 June 2007.

Guidance on IHR (2005) implementation at points of entry

Guidance materials are being developed in the following areas:

- Management of public health risks at points of entry
- Provision of technical assistance in developing points of entry capacities
- Maintenance of accessible data for designated points of entry, including capacity to issue Ship Sanitation Control Exemption and Ship Sanitation Control certificates
- Inspection and WHO certification criteria for airports and ports
- Recommended measures for affected travellers, conveyances, containers, cargo and goods
- Ship sanitation and hygiene and sanitation in aviation
- Application of health measures at ground crossings