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Funded by  
the Health Programme  
of the European Union

This document arises from the AIRSAN project which has received funding from the European Union, in the framework of the Health Programme. Sole responsibility lies with the author. The Consumers, Health and Food Executive Agency is not responsible for any use that may be made of the information contained therein.

## Editorial

### Benedikt Greutelaers, Robert Koch Institute, Germany

Daily practice shows that contact tracing still is a controversial topic. If a Public health authority (PHA) comes to the decision to perform passenger contact tracing, a resource intensive process starts. One recurring obstacle is that airline operators are not able to provide adequate contact data from affected passengers in time.

However, we assume that the actors involved (airlines, airports and public health authorities) share the same interest: to ensure safe and healthy air travel for passengers and crew members. On the one hand it is important to give passengers confidence that attention is paid to their health. On the other hand it is also central not to bother them through contacting them without good reason. The challenge is to meet the requirements of both aspects.

AIRSAN will develop a Guidance Document "Contact Tracing – Cooperation between airlines and health authorities" which aims to create a better understanding on diverging and joint positions of PHA and airlines in the area of passenger contact tracing. Hopefully this document positively contributes to intersectoral cooperation and to find a common best practise of performing contact tracing.

## News from the AIRSAN Coordination

### Andreas Gilsdorf, Robert Koch Institute, Germany

Representatives of the AIRSAN Coordination team were invited to the WHO Ports, Airports and Ground Crossing Network (PAGNet) Meeting in Lyon in April this year (read more in "[Recent meetings](#)").

It was really interesting and very rewarding to see which prominent position AIRSAN has already developed over its short life of one year.

The AIRSAN Review (read more in "[Recent developments](#)") was presented at the meeting and well received as a very useful tool ("Why have we not thought of it before?" was a reaction).

Furthermore, AIRSAN was also mentioned during the plenary presentations and working groups as an important project and many more possible activities were associated with AIRSAN.

While still working intensively on the deliverables for AIRSAN, we might already start thinking a bit ahead about the possible future after this first AIRSAN Project ends next year.

It seems that the joint effort to improve public health in air travel is very well perceived and appreciated by important partners in Europe. We should further build on this foundation.

## Recent meetings

### PAGNet Meeting 14-17 April 2014 in Lyon

WHO hosted the Ports, Airports and Ground Crossing Network (PAGNet) Meeting which took place in lovely Lyon from 16 to 17 of April 2014.

About 100 participants from all over the world attended the meeting. The programme was full of interesting presentations, well-moderated discussions rounds and room for networking in between.

Main topics covered the all hazards approach with a focus on radiological and nuclear emergencies as well as chemical safety, cross-border collaboration, mass gatherings and collaboration among public health, travel and transport sectors. AIRSAN was invited to present the AIRSAN Project to the PAGNet meeting participants, which was well received.

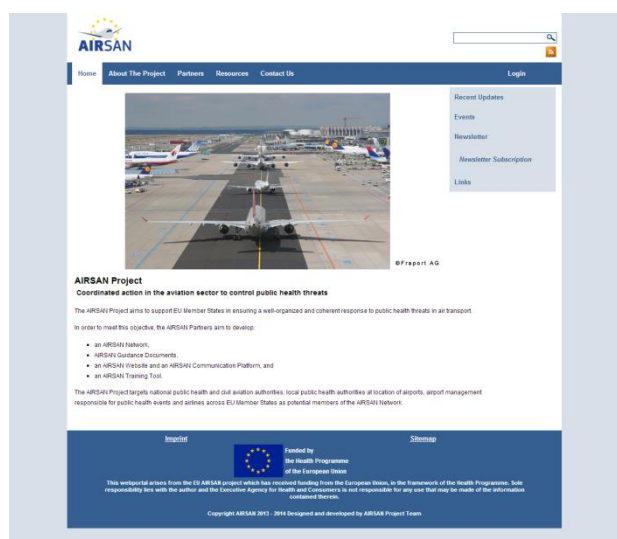
The PAGNet Meeting surely fostered collaboration, information and knowledge sharing within the public health community at ports, airports and ground crossings.

If you are interested to learn more about PAGNet, please visit: <https://extranet.who.int/pagnet/home>.

## Recent developments

### Redesign of AIRSAN Website and Development of AIRSAN Communication Platform (work package 5)

We have redesigned the AIRSAN Website to be more attractive in terms of layout as well as functionality with the aim to attract interested users as well as potential AIRSAN Network members: [www.airsan.eu](http://www.airsan.eu)



The main new functionalities are the AIRSAN Bibliography, the AIRSAN Communication Platform and the Registry.

The AIRSAN Bibliography makes the contents of 48 documents which were found to be relevant for public health in the aviation sector quickly accessible to those who need to know. Read more in the next topic and see yourself here:

[www.airsan.eu/Resources/Bibliography/Search.aspx](http://www.airsan.eu/Resources/Bibliography/Search.aspx).

The AIRSAN Communication Platform is a web based tool that was designed for sharing and exchanging public health information between the AIRSAN Network members. The Platform is hosted in a private – security area under the AIRSAN Website and can be accessed via login. It consists of the AIRSAN Network Registry and the AIRSAN Communication Platform. The AIRSAN Network Registry will consist of the contact details of all approved AIRSAN Network members that can use the AIRSAN Communication Platform in order to share and exchange public health information.

Register to the AIRSAN Network today and try it out: [www.airsan.eu/ContactUs/RegistertotheAirsanNetwork.aspx](http://www.airsan.eu/ContactUs/RegistertotheAirsanNetwork.aspx)

### AIRSAN Review and Bibliography (work package 4)

In September 2013, the AIRSAN Guidance Documents Survey was performed among AIRSAN Partners. The outcome of this Survey was a list of 48 documents issued by international organizations which were found to be relevant for public health in the aviation sector.

Our main objective was to find a reasonable way to make the contents of these documents quickly accessible to those who need to know; basically airline operators, airport operators, aviation authorities and public health authorities.

But how should we tackle our objective in the best way? By performing a scientific review?

Not really, as we faced one huge challenge: while a scientific review usually summarizes existing evidence coming from peer-reviewed journals, we only included so-called grey literature in our list of documents. These documents were published by international organizations in the area of public health in the aviation sector. The contents were often based already on extensive literature researches, e.g. RAGIDA, and nearly always incorporated high level expert opinions. As they were stand-alone documents, summarizing their contents would have meant to cut important information out. Therefore, we had to find another way of making the contents of these documents quickly accessible.

We came up with the idea of creating a bibliography.

Our vision was to develop an open-access online bibliography containing search functions for a list of specific keywords. Users can select a specific keyword and immediately receive a list of all documents and pages therein containing information about the specific keyword. To allow distinguishing between less and more detailed texts we allocated a score to each keyword specific page.

We are introducing hereby a new approach to make public health action-orientated information readily available.

Go and convince yourself on our newly designed website:

[www.airsan.eu/Resources/Bibliography/Search.aspx](http://www.airsan.eu/Resources/Bibliography/Search.aspx)

## Interim Reporting

Duly in time at the end of project month 14 we have submitted the interim financial, technical and evaluation reports.

## Next steps

### Preview on the AIRSAN Interim Meeting 16-17 June 2014, Berlin

The main objectives of the AIRSAN Interim Meeting are to present an update on the activities of the AIRSAN Project and to discuss current questions as well as next steps.

Among others the new AIRSAN Website and Communication Platform will be presented, the dissemination strategies and opportunities for the expansion of the AIRSAN Network will be discussed.

One major topic will be the discussion of the drafts for the AIRSAN Guidance Documents “Contact tracing – Collaboration between public health and aviation sector” and “Rapid assessment and management of biological threats on board of an aircraft or at the airport”.

Additionally, all work package leaders will be given the opportunity to present their work, to discuss critical questions and to elaborate on the next steps with all project partners.

We are looking forward to a fruitful meeting in Berlin!

## Development of AIRSAN Guidance Documents (work package 4)

Under consultation with the AIRSAN Partners, the AIRSAN Team at the RKI is currently developing two AIRSAN Guidance Documents.

The AIRSAN Guidance Document “Contact tracing” shall help airlines and public health authorities to understand each other’s rationales and possibilities when performing contact tracing in order to find a common best practice.

The AIRSAN Guidance Document “Rapid assessment and management of biological threats on board an aircraft or at the airport”, shall base upon a draft guidance document developed by WHO named “Technical Advice for Management of Public Health Events in Air Transport”. The new aspect of the AIRSAN Guidance Document will be the focus on practical aspects for specific target groups, e.g. medical first responders.

## Expansion of the AIRSAN Network (work package 4)

With the newly designed AIRSAN Website including the Communication Platform and the online AIRSAN Bibliography we now have created an excellent figurehead for the project which will attract stakeholders in public health and aviation to become members of the AIRSAN Network.

In the upcoming months we will contact public health and civil aviation authorities, airports and airlines across the EU Member States, present the AIRSAN Project and invite them to become Members of the AIRSAN Network.

This AIRSAN Network will facilitate greater mutual understanding of the requirements, practicalities and impact of proposed measures in the management of public health threats in air transport.

Last but not least AIRSAN Network members will benefit from the features of the AIRSAN Network Registry and the Communication Platform in the password protected members’ area of the AIRSAN Website. Here, all Network Members from the various sectors in aviation and public health all around Europe will be listed with their contact details and can directly be addressed via the Communication Platform.

Register now and convince yourself:

[www.airsan.eu/ContactUs/RegistertotheAirsanNetwork.aspx](http://www.airsan.eu/ContactUs/RegistertotheAirsanNetwork.aspx)

## People from the AIRSAN Project

We will use this and the upcoming issues of the AIRSAN Newsletters to introduce you to the main teams of the Associated Partners and also to some individual persons who support the AIRSAN Project.

### AIRSAN Team at the National Institute for Public Health and the Environment (RIVM), The Netherlands

The RIVM is the Dutch National Health Institute and is an agency of the Dutch Ministry of Health.

RIVM is the Netherlands' main public sector knowledge institute in the field of public health, nutrition, safety and environmental management. It conducts research and has a number of practical tasks which are intended to promote public health and ensure a clean and safe environment. Risk assessment and risk management are key concepts underpinning RIVM's activities, with a focus on human health, safety and the quality of ecosystems. A further key concept is the integration of knowledge. RIVM has some thirty separate units (laboratories, teams and centres), each of which focuses on a specific area of research. The units are grouped into four divisions, each of which has its own director. RIVM has a total of approximately 1,500 staff.

RIVM has joint responsibility for a number of national crisis management functions. Providing a rapid response to a crisis, or a potential crisis, is clearly a task for national government. It is essential to analyze the situation as quickly as possible and to respond appropriately on the crisis. There are various types of crisis: an outbreak of an infectious disease, a food safety incident or an environmental accident, for example

Within the National Coordination Centre for Outbreak Control, a small but enthusiastic team is working for the AIRSAN work package 6: the development of an AIRSAN Training Tool. The aim of this work package is to build an online Training Tool to support exercises in the field of risk assessment for infectious disease control in relation to air travel.

Let us introduce the three core members of this team:



**Corien Swaan** is the head of the unit for preparedness and response at the RIVM. With her background as medical doctor, she is responsible for the national coordination of outbreaks. She was involved in the implementation of the IHR in the Netherlands and was the coordinator for the EU

SHIPSAN project in the Netherlands.



**Saskia van Egmond** is an experienced designer of trainings and exercises. With her background as a public health nurse, she works at the Municipal Health Service (MHS) in Kennemerland and the RIVM. The Dutch main airport Schiphol is closely situated to the working area

of this MHS. The MHS Kennemerland is therefore responsible for public health related problems at the airport. Saskia has close relations with the airport and the medical service at Schiphol.



**André Jacobi** is a policy advisor within the preparedness and response unit of the RIVM. With his experience in national and international outbreak control and preparedness, he is developer of exercises and training material for risk assessment and risk management.



**Thomas Hofmann,**  
**WHO Regional Office for Europe,**  
**Area Coordinator IHR**



- Could you, please, shortly describe your professional background?

Very early my professional passion became international health policy. It started during an internship in the US within my first studies in Health Economy. Entirely surprising, I could accompany a senior manager to an international meeting on hospital reimbursement at the Senate in Washington. After half a year with the European Commission and some research work at Bielefeld University, I was working for several years in the International Relations Department of the Federal Ministry of Health in Germany, in the meantime as graduate in Public Health. Now in the last 6 years with WHO, working to support the use of the International Health Regulations (IHR) as framework for surveillance and response, I find it particularly fascinating how technical collaboration serves as a diplomatic mechanism.

- How did you start to work in the area of public health and/or the aviation sector?

My professional path is typical for public health. Most public health experts, when they start, don't expect to be where they are today. My first exposure to ports and airports behind the scenes was in Hamburg. In 2008, WHO organized a training workshop at Hamburg port with strong support of the Port Health Center, which is at the same time in charge of public health issues at Hamburg airport. I will never forget the professionalism of the experts and the hands-on inspection of a container ship.

- Which were your most important experiences in the field of public health and/or the aviation sector?

I find that every time public health policy becomes real in the context of a country, this is the most exciting part of my job. This can be an inspection of a container ship in Hamburg, but also a training workshop at the airport in Bishkek in Kyrgyzstan. And all that involving not only health experts, but experts from various sectors.

- What motivates you to contribute to the AIRSAN Project?

Travel, trade and transport are global issues. As much as I'm in favour of strong coordination mechanisms and high standards in EU countries, it is very good that the project has partners from ICAO and WHO, who have very close experience with low- and middle-income countries. Only this way we can make sure that the work we do within the project is sustainable and adaptive.

- Which three benefits do you expect from the AIRSAN Project?

1. I expect a basis for more coherent policies and practices in this area. For many years, there was a frequently expressed coordination gap among the EU countries.
2. I hope that also Eastern European countries will eventually benefit from the outcomes of the project, like they did from other EU projects such as REACT, RAGIDA and SHIPSAN.
3. The project can specify and complement technical advice provided by WHO. WHO has to aim at standards, which can be applied globally. This often leaves many questions open for countries, which would like to advance.

- Do you have some personal remarks?

I very much look forward to work with the AIRSAN partners and hope we will be able to find motivated hosts in the network to host the next CAPSCA/Europe meeting.

## Airports at a glance

### Amsterdam Airport, The Netherlands (by Arjen Blom)

#### Statistics (2013)

- IATA code: AMS
- Passengers: 52.6 Mio.
- Cargo: 1.53 Mio. tons
- Aircraft movements: 426,000
- Employees: 65,000
- Hub for: AF/KLM, KLM Cityhopper, Transavia.com, Martinair Cargo, Easyjet



© Amsterdam Airport

#### About the airport

Amsterdam Airport (AMS) is the 5<sup>th</sup> largest airport in Europe in terms of total air transport movements. Its mission is to connect the Netherlands with all important economic, political and cultural centres in the world. The key figures mentioned above show that the airport is a huge contributor to the economy in the Netherlands. Apart from the employees of the airport itself it provides jobs for 290,000 people in 500 companies around the country. Amsterdam is located in 'de Randstad', the industrial heart of the Netherlands in a highly populated area. All major companies and facilities are situated within 100 kilometres from the airport. The AF/KLM network accounts for 70% of the air traffic at Amsterdam Airport. Among air travellers the airport is highly appreciated for its 1 terminal concept.

Developing and effectively running an airport of this scale and standard means assuming some very special responsibilities and striking a careful balance between the economy, safety and the environment. To keep up with company and passenger expectations the airport

invests 1.5 million Euro every day to enhance infrastructure and renovate the airport.

Amsterdam Airport is responsible for all the various facilities that guarantee the fast and smooth movement of goods and passengers and their baggage. Responsibility for the infrastructure needed to make all this possible lies entirely with the airport operator: from the drop-off roads and the terminal with its check-in desks and baggage systems to the piers and their layout, from the aircraft stands to the runways and aprons. Schiphol also grants the concessions to shops and catering outlets in the shopping centres before and after passport control. Preventive security checks on passengers and baggage in the terminal are tasked to Amsterdam Airport. Final responsibility for these security checks lies with the Minister of Safety and Justice, while the Dutch Border Police (Koninklijke Marechaussee) ensure the checks are carried out correctly.

The Aviation Act places responsibility for civil aviation in the Netherlands and for air safety in general with the Ministry of Infrastructure and the Environment. The Ministry assigns landing rights to airlines, for example, based on agreements between the Netherlands and other countries. This means that the Ministry is co-responsible for determining which airlines are granted access to Amsterdam Airport. The Ministry of Infrastructure and the Environment focuses on creating a well-designed, clean and safe environment with high levels of accessibility and smooth traffic flows. The Aviation Department is part of the Directorate-General for Mobility and Transport and the Ministry of Infrastructure and the Environment, which focuses on infrastructure, the environment, legislation and regulatory oversight. It develops and implements policy on connections to the worldwide aviation network, airports, aviation safety, the organisation and use of airspace, and air traffic control services. As such, the Aviation Department contributes to the network quality, safety and sustainability of Dutch aviation. The Department oversees airline permits and accreditations, issues those permits and monitors them.

A 'slot' is permission granted to an airline to take off and land at a 'slot-coordinated' airport either in the day or at night. Each year, Amsterdam Airport Schiphol determines how many slots can be issued while remaining within the noise emission limits. Effectively distributing the available arrival and departure times among the airlines, particularly during rush and night-time hours, is the responsibility of a slot coordinator, who is appointed by the Minister of Infrastructure and the Environment. The slot coordination system is a neutral, transparent and non-discriminatory system for distributing (scarce) departure and landing times at Amsterdam airport.



© Amsterdam Airport

Air Traffic Control the Netherlands (Luchtverkeersleiding Nederland, LVNL) is responsible for the correct use of the approach paths to and from Amsterdam Airport and for the safety of aircraft taxiing at Schiphol itself. The LVNL's task is to ensure the safe, orderly and speedy passage of civil aviation.

Air traffic control in the tower at Schiphol (Tower or TWR) regulates aircraft taking off, landing and taxiing on the apron. Traffic to and from Runway 18R-36L is regulated in the daytime from a second (satellite) tower. Approach and departure control regulates traffic in the area around Schiphol from just after take-off to just before landing. Once an aircraft is airborne, control is handed over to area control. The Area Control Centre (ACC) regulates civil aviation in the 'general traffic area' up to an altitude of 24,500 feet (around 7.3 kilometres).

In the event of a crisis, Amsterdam Airport is responsible for directing its own services and for steering the primary process at the airport. It is also required to maintain order and safety around aprons, roads, open spaces and buildings as a form of crisis prevention. The Security Regions Act assigns final responsibility at crises in and around Schiphol to the mayor of the municipality of Haarlemmermeer. In the event of a crisis, Amsterdam Airport Schiphol will work closely with government emergency services as needed and in accordance with the provisions of the Schiphol Crisis Management Plan. There are specific procedures for fires, disorder, infectious diseases, emergency service provision, incidents in tunnels, and aircraft accidents, actual and potential.

The Alders Platform is a consultative body with the aim of developing plans for the growth of air traffic at Amsterdam Airport, the reduction of disturbance and maintaining the quality of the environment, with all parties involved for the period until 2020. The platform is led by the independent chairman Hans Alders and is comprised up of the following members: the State (representatives of the Ministry of Infrastructure and the Environment), the aviation sector, the Province of North-Holland and the Province of South-Holland, the municipalities of neighbouring cities, and representatives of residents living in the vicinity of Amsterdam Airport, via the Schiphol Regional Consultative Committee (CROS) and the Association of Joint Platforms (VGP).



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