

**TO ALL NATIONAL COMMITTEES
TO ALL TECHNICAL COMMITTEES, SUBCOMMITTEES, SYSTEMS COMMITTEES AND
TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEES
TO THE OFFICERS OF THE CONFORMITY ASSESSMENT SYSTEMS**

Information related to Coronavirus

1. Background

In view of the increasing spread of the new Coronavirus the IEC is issuing the following guidelines, which will also be posted on the IEC website and regularly reviewed and revised based on recommendations from WHO and Swiss department of foreign affairs.

2. TC/SC and CA Systems meetings

To date, the large majority of scheduled meetings in the IEC Meeting Registration System (MRS) for the period of February, March, April and May, are maintained. However, please double-check in MRS before travelling.

Some peer assessments and assessors from China may be impacted by the outbreak, please doublecheck with the Assessment Team leader.

The IECEx Executive has decided today to move the Operational meetings in May from Shanghai to Dubai.

For all other meetings not administered through MRS, WG meetings for example, the decision is up to the group Convenor and the host. Please contact them for confirmation.

Experts who are not allowed to travel due to corporate policy, country specific restrictions or do not wish to attend for personal reasons, are invited to participate remotely. National Committee Delegates remote participation to Committee plenary meetings provides the same voting rights and P-Members participation rights.

Organizers of meetings are asked to make available hand sanitizers and face masks for participating experts, to be used at their own discretion. All experts are requested to check national travel restrictions prior to planning their physical attendance at meetings.

3. Attendance to meetings and travels

We ask all experts who have a fever, cough and/or difficulty breathing to not travel/participate in IEC meetings or visit IEC premises, and to seek immediate medical attention.

To reduce exposure and transmission to the new Coronavirus, WHO recommends the following:

- frequently wash hands with soap or disinfect them with hand sanitizer
- when coughing or sneezing cover your mouth with a tissue – throw tissue immediately away and wash hands
- avoid close contact with anybody who has a fever or cough
- if you have a fever, a cough or difficulty breathing seek immediate medical care, don't travel or participate in meetings; wear a face mask to avoid spread of the disease

4. FAQs

What are the symptoms of the new Coronavirus?

Symptoms typically include fatigue and fever, followed by dry cough and difficulty breathing. Initial symptoms resemble those of the flu without the runny nose or throat ache. One person in five develops more severe illness.

How does the virus spread?

Viruses such as the flu, common cold or the coronavirus are transmitted through microdroplets when an infected person coughs or sneezes. They reach the mucous membranes of mouth, nose and eyes of a person in proximity (less than 1 meter). For this reason, infected persons should use a basic protective mask to hinder the spread of the disease.

How can I protect myself?

Frequently clean hands with hand sanitizer or soap and water

When coughing or sneezing cover your mouth and nose with a tissue – throw the tissue immediately away and wash your hands

Avoid close contact with anyone who has a fever and cough

Ordinary masks don't offer protection to a healthy person as they are not able to filter the virus. Masks are best worn by an infected person to limit the spread of microdroplets.

What if we have visitors from China?

The likelihood that a visitor to the IEC or a technical meeting is infected is extremely small. If you are still worried, follow WHO recommendations to reduce exposure and transmission. Also, experts with fever and a cough are asked to abstain from participating in meetings or visiting IEC premises.

How many cases are known?

There are currently 7 700 recorded cases of Coronavirus infection mostly in China and at least 16 countries globally, and today's count stands at 170 dead.

Useful link: <https://www.who.int/health-topics/coronavirus>

Yours faithfully,

F.W.P. Vreeswijk
General Secretary & CEO

PSE