

COMMERCIAL INTERNATIONAL FLIGHT BACK AT KING SHAKA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT AFTER A SEVEN MONTH HIATUS DUE TO HARD LOCKDOWN REGULATIONS

Durban, 05 October 2020 – After a seven months hiatus of international commercial flights, King Shaka International Airport yesterday welcomed back Qatar Airways.

This comes after Government announcement of regulations allowing for resumption of international flights and International guests under specific conditions.

Speaking after the successful processing of the Airline flight General Manager of King Shaka International Airport, Terence Delomoney said: “this flight represented a watershed moment as we continue to ease the lockdown restrictions and open up our country and economy, whilst still maintaining strict health and safety protocols. It is testament to the Aviation Industry, all our staff and stakeholders who continue to work hard behind the scenes to enable us to achieve moments like this. We are hopeful that this marks the start of many international flights to be processed through King Shaka International Airport.”

Earlier this week, the South African Department of Home Affairs released a list of high-risk countries, whose leisure travelling citizens will not be allowed entry into the country. Other categories of people from these countries, are allowed under special conditions, as it appears in the regulations and directions.

Delomoney says, “We have been greatly encouraged by how local domestic passengers have taken to the skies. We want to emphasise that continuing to maintain a safe airport environment is our key priority. This is largely dependent on the attitude and behaviour of our passengers, and if we could continue the success we have had on the Domestic front into the International part of the operation, we will continue to build confidence and trust amongst our travelling public; and hopefully convert more of our non-travelling public into travellers.”

Historically, the KwaZulu-Natal province attracts visitors throughout the year for leisure and business, the resumption of international flights will help revitalise the tourism sector and the economy. Local hotels, tourism destinations and all public spaces are fully geared to applying the rules and protocols that will keep all travellers safe.

“Since we resumed domestic flying a couple of months ago, we have applied a range of health and safety protocols with rigour and consistency. We are now very much accustomed to applying the rules and protocols, we ask our international visitors to familiarise themselves with the rules and protocols we use,” notes Delomoney.

All international passengers are required to do a Covid-19 test in their country of origin and present the negative test results document on arrival in South Africa. The test result must have been received no more than 72 hours before boarding the flight to South Africa.

Should the traveller display any COVID-19–related symptoms or been in contact with an infected person(s), they will be expected to take a mandatory COVID-19 test. This test will be at the traveller’s cost. If the COVID-19 test comes back positive, the traveller will be subjected to a 10-day quarantine at a designated site. The accommodation at a quarantine site will be at the traveller’s cost.

“King Shaka International Airport is calling on all passengers to be honest about their declarations, and anyone that maybe experiencing any symptoms should be protecting themselves and others, by not attempting to travel until they are medically cleared. The need to diligently follow the basic Covid-19 health and safety protocols that have been put in place cannot be over-emphasised .” adds Delomoney.

It is the traveller’s responsibility to ensure that they have a current visa where this is required. Port Health will continue to temperature screen passengers prior to them entering the terminal building; at this stage only travellers are allowed into the terminal building, and travellers must ensure that they have carefully followed all instructions and have all documents provided and advised by the airline.

Masks are always compulsory, not only in the airports in all public environments. It is compulsory to sanitise hands when entering the airport. There are sanitisation points at entrances and checkpoints spread across the airport.

Physical distancing is required and enforced. There are decals on the floors at points where passengers queue such as baggage retrieval, immigration, customs, Port Health screening points, check-in and security checkpoints.

In her capacity as the Leader of Government Business, the MEC for Economic Development, Tourism and Environmental Affairs Nomusa Dube-Ncube remarked: The arrival of Qatar Airways marks the new chapter in the history of aviation industry in KwaZulu-Natal since the outbreak of COVID-19. I wish to reiterate our position that as we reconstruct and transform our economy, the aviation sector remains critical.

We are looking forward to a period characterized by the prosperity and the growth of aviation, tourism and hospitality sectors.

She concluded: Working with all stakeholders, we offer to double our efforts to ensure the implementation of the KZN economic reconstruction and recovery plan.

Ends



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