



23 April 2020

ETRC Best Practice Guidelines on practical measures necessary to reopen Duty Free & Travel Retail shops¹ in the wake of the COVID-19 outbreak

The European Travel Retail Confederation supports EU, international and national efforts to ensure this public health crisis is managed responsibly and effectively. Coordination and alignment of measures across the EU and internationally is crucial to guaranteeing that the transition towards resumption of regular air connectivity and associated activities is as successful as possible.

Duty Free and Travel Retail (DF&TR) is a critical source of revenue and cashflow to airports and ferries at a time when this is urgently needed, and an integral part of the travel experience for passengers.

The first priority for our industry is the health and safety of staff and travellers passing through our shops and travel retail operators will therefore implement measures aiming at minimising any health risks to employees and travellers.

SPECIFIC NATURE OF DF & TR STORES

In adopting coordinated hygiene and social distancing measures for European airports, we will need to consider the specificities of how Duty Free & Travel Retail is organised:

- DF&TR shops are an integral part of airport terminal infrastructure capacity – they have been built as part of the airport infrastructure, not as standalone retail operations.
- The large DF&TR stores operate differently to supermarkets. Most importantly, in this context, is the fact that walk-through shops do not usually have designated entry and exit points.
- Passengers typically have limited dwell time and our shops are designed to cater for the passenger in a hurry, who needs to choose their product and pay for it quickly and continue on their journey.
- We would advise against any significant limits on passenger access to shops as it would result in more pressure on capacity elsewhere in the system. See example in annex of Hamburg airport plaza which is representative of many mid/large European airports.
- Allowing continued access to DF&TR general and specialist shops will contribute to improving the overall passenger experience, giving them an increased sense of security and wellbeing.

BEST PRACTICE MEASURES

A safe and secure passenger experience is important. Just as important, is that this is achieved in a way that supports passenger confidence. Measures taken will need to be easily understood by the travelling public and allow for a maximum of safety and comfort.

With this in mind, ETRC therefore recommends the following measures are adopted:

Protection of staff

- Effective training to ensure the highest and most appropriate standards of customer service and product handling, as well as welfare of staff
- Availability of protective equipment (masks, sanitary gels, gloves (where relevant))

¹ Duty Free and Travel Retail shops serve international passengers while travelling through airports and ports, and on board airlines and cruise and ferry vessels. While some of the rationale is most relevant for airport shops, most measures outlined in this document are relevant to the entire channel.

- Plastic screens at till points
- Signage at cash register area to actively encourage payment card usage and especially contactless payments

Protection of customers

- Communications to customers on social distancing and hygiene measures
- Clear signage on social distancing in the shops including further spacing with clear signage to ensure appropriate distancing at the cash register area (floor markers)
- Availability of hygiene equipment (hand sanitizers, sanitary gels stations)

Accompanying in-store measures

- Strict hygiene protocols including regular cleaning and disinfecting of contact points (floors, shelves etc) and equipment (tills, shopping baskets, card readers, etc)
- Strict hygiene protocols for all goods delivered to the store (all supplies arriving in outer boxes and goods to be placed in store by staff with gloves)
- For large ‘walk-through’ stores, streamlined organisation of shop furniture to ensure steady and efficient flow of passengers at a safe distance, including supervision of passenger access and movement in the shop, and adapted central aisles to increase flow and comfort
- For smaller stores, such as specialist stores, the same principle as currently operating at small stores on the High Street may apply – a limited number of customers permitted to enter the store at any one time, with social distancing within the store

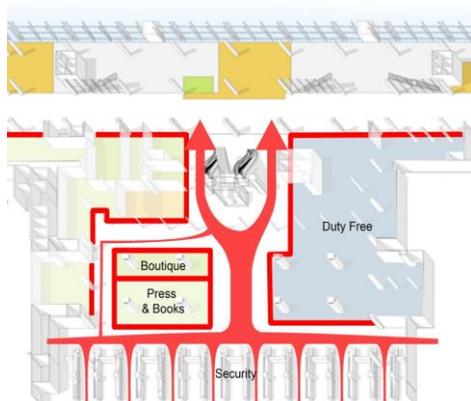
Finally, whilst these measures are essential and will be implemented for as long as necessary it is important to remember that over the next year and possibly longer, passenger numbers will be significantly lower and therefore the pressures upon the system will not be as great.

We are confident that the proposed measures will allow Duty Free and Travel Retail shops to reopen safely and simultaneously with the resumption of viable passenger traffic numbers, and quickly build passenger confidence to travel again, while providing vital revenue for the recovery of the passenger transport ecosystem.

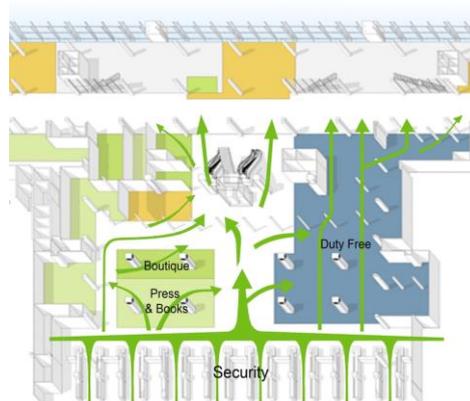
Finally, ETRC would recommend that those measures and those taken by other partners in the aviation and maritime passenger transport are supported by an EU communications campaign aiming at reassuring passengers, boost confidence in transport and support the recovery of tourism in Europe.

ANNEX: Example of Hamburg Airport Plaza

Passengers flow between closed shops



Open shops spread the flow



For questions, please contact Julie Lassaigue, ETRC Secretary General at julie.lassaigue@etrc.org