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Delivery of COVID vaccine needs 8,000 jumbo jets – 12th August, 2020

Level 4

If a vaccine for COVID-19 arrives, governments will need many aircraft. Distributing the vaccine will be a huge logistical operation. Experts say transporting 7.8 billion doses of a vaccine - one dose for everyone on Earth - will need 8,000 747 cargo planes. Governments must start planning for the "mission of the century". Even if half the vaccines can be transported by land, the air cargo industry will still face its largest single transport challenge ever.

The experts said many obstacles must be overcome. One key element is to create temperature-controlled cargo hubs to keep the vaccine at the same temperature. Staff must quickly become experts at safely handling the vaccine. Another challenge would be security and cross-border controls. The experts said: "Vaccines will be highly valuable commodities. Arrangements must be in place to ensure that shipments remain secure from tampering and theft."

Level 5

When there is a vaccine for COVID-19, governments will be scrambling for aircraft. Distributing the vaccine will be one of the biggest logistical operations ever. Airline experts say transporting the vaccine globally will need 8,000 747 cargo planes. This is enough for 7.8 billion doses of a vaccine - one dose for everyone on Earth. The experts warned governments they must start planning for the "mission of the century". They said: "If we assume that half the needed vaccines can be transported by land, the air cargo industry will still face its largest single transport challenge ever."

The experts said many obstacles must be overcome to distribute a vaccine. One key element is to create temperature-controlled cargo hubs and warehouses. The vaccine must be kept at the same temperature throughout its journey. Staff must be trained and quickly become experts at safely handling the vaccine. The experts said another challenge would be security and cross-border controls. They said: "Vaccines will be highly valuable commodities. Arrangements must be in place to ensure that shipments remain secure from tampering and theft."

Level 6

Whenever scientists create a vaccine for COVID-19, governments worldwide will be scrambling for cargo aircraft. Distributing the vaccine will be one of the biggest logistical operations ever. Aviation experts have forecast that transporting the vaccine across the globe will require around 8,000 747 freight planes. This is sufficient to ship 7.8 billion doses of any vaccine - one dose for everyone on Earth. The International Air Transport Association (IATA) has warned governments they must start planning for the "mission of the century". It said: "Even if we assume that half the needed vaccines can be transported by land, the air cargo industry will still face its largest single transport challenge ever."

IATA has warned governments that many obstacles must be overcome to ensure the effective distribution of a vaccine. One critical element of this is the creation of temperature-controlled cargo hubs and warehouses. It is essential the vaccine be kept at the same temperature throughout its journey. This would require extensive training of staff worldwide, who must quickly become expert in safely handling and moving the vaccine. IATA said a further challenge would be security and cross-border controls. It said: "Vaccines will be highly valuable commodities. Arrangements must be in place to ensure that shipments remain secure from tampering and theft."