Wildlife Trafficking Prevention (WTP)

Virtual APEX Assessment Programme

Reference Document

Edition 1

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1. Vision

To be the leading enabler of Member Airports in the achievement of commitments set out in the United for Wildlife Transport Taskforce Buckingham Palace Declaration (BPD).

2. Mission

To provide the necessary tools to Member Airports in their efforts to progress immediately on the commitments outlined in the BPD and applicable to the airport industry, in alignment with globally recognized guidance materials on Wildlife Trafficking Prevention (WTP) developed by Airports Council International (ACI), the USAID Reducing Opportunities for Unlawful Transport of Endangered Species (ROUTES) Partnership and United for Wildlife (UfW).

3. Objectives

To assist airports in aligning and enhancing current practices with a view to continuously improve as an engaged member of the community and the global value chain, and to support the BPD commitments and the global WTP agenda endorsed by ACI, ROUTES, and UfW.

4. Benefits to Host Airports

The Wildlife Trafficking Prevention (WTP) Virtual APEX Assessment Programme will:

- Assist in adopting best practices and expert recommendations to continuously improve airport practices in combatting wildlife trafficking in alignment with BPD commitments.
- Provide an understanding of key issues and challenges faced by airports around the globe in combatting wildlife trafficking.
- Provide tailored guidance, training, tools, and techniques on how to close identified gaps and support the airport industry's efforts in combatting wildlife trafficking and move towards the sustainable achievement of BPD commitments, including the development of action plans for improvement and staff training.
- Provide the opportunity to collaborate and coordinate with external stakeholders and industry partners towards the achievement of the BPD commitments.
- Provide with direct access to industry guidance materials and documentation, as well as subject-matter experts in the field of WTP.
- Allow airports to demonstrate their commitment to environmental sustainability and their leadership in combatting the proliferation of illegal wildlife trafficking.

5. Role of Participants

Implementation of the WTP Virtual APEX Assessment Programme (WTP Virtual APEX Programme) will include stakeholders from ACI, the APEX Review Team, the Host Airport, as well as relevant industry and government stakeholders. Each participant has a role to play in the successful achievement of the WTP Virtual APEX Programme.

Role of ACI World

ACI World will serve as the facilitator of the WTP Virtual APEX Programme. ACI is responsible for providing guidance and expert knowledge on the subject matter. The APEX Review Team will be subject matter experts from across the globe identified by ACI, who will perform review and assessment based on the standards established by the Programme.

Host Airport

The Host Airport will be responsible for the cost of project management and team leading, including active participation from its staff and support from relevant stakeholders.

Airport Partner

The Airport Partner is an airport at which there are staff who have experience in planning and implementing measures to combat wildlife trafficking. The Airport Partner is willing to provide expert volunteers who will become part of the APEX Review Team. These volunteers will serve at no cost to ACI or the Host Airport.

Industry Partner

An Industry Partner includes organizations who enter into a partnership with ACI and can provide expertise, guidance materials, and post review trainings to support Member Airports in combatting wildlife trafficking.

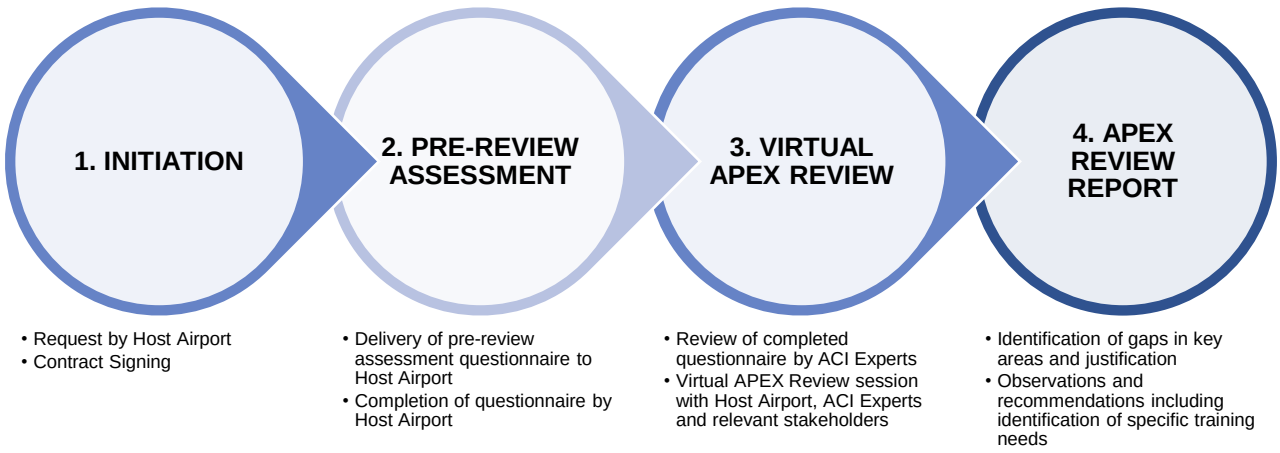
Airport Stakeholders

The WTP Virtual APEX Programme will likely include the participation of several stakeholders: airlines, ground handlers, retailers, suppliers, regulatory bodies, as well as border and enforcement agencies. Secondary stakeholders may include wildlife/animal welfare authorities, transport authorities, food safety authorities, sustainability and environmental partners, conservation organizations and the local community.

6. Pre-Review Assessment, Review Process, Timelines, and Scope

The WTP Virtual APEX Assessment Programme includes two main components – a Pre-Review Assessment Questionnaire and a Virtual APEX Review – both which can be conducted virtually. The review process (Figure 1-1) would begin after an express request has been initiated by the ACI Member Airport ("Initiation"). Requests are initiated by the Host Airport through the ACI World website. The Virtual APEX Programme page on the ACI World website will also include a description and a link for members to initiate the APEX review request.

Table 1-1: Overview of Review Process for WTP Virtual APEX Programme



Following receipt of a signed contract, the pre-review assessment questionnaire would be provided to the airport by ACI World as a tool to review and assess key areas of focus before the Virtual APEX Review takes place ("Pre-Review Assessment").

The pre-review assessment questionnaire will be built using key areas of focus identified in the ACI Handbook on Combatting Wildlife Trafficking (Chapters 4 to 7) as the main reference and basis for evaluation and future recommendations, namely:

1. Documented airport policy,
2. Internal awareness and training,
3. Public awareness and signage,
4. Community engagement,
5. Stakeholders,
6. Reporting system, and
7. General exchange/working groups.

The themes and questions in the pre-review assessment questionnaire should be aligned with globally recognized guidance materials developed by ACI, ROUTES, and UfW, including the four areas for action stated in the BPD commitments.

The third phase ("Virtual APEX Review") will involve discussions, presentations, reviews, and at times mentoring sessions on key areas carried out by authorized APEX experts under the leadership of the ACI Team Leader. Discussions and recommendations will derive mainly from the pre-review assessment questionnaire completed by the Host Airport, as well as observations provided by designated ACI experts, Airport Partners, and/or Industry Partners during the virtual review. This review phase will include discussions on the use of technologies, tactics, and intelligence techniques that airports can adopt in order to support global efforts to progress on the BPD commitments. These will be delivered by designated subject-matter experts, as and if required and agreed between ACI World and the Host Airport.

The fourth phase ("APEX Review Report") will be submitted to the Host Airport thirty (30) days after the completion of the Virtual APEX Review and should include identification of gaps and recommendations on how to close those gaps, including on specific training needs in key areas where improvement is needed.

7. Cost Model

The Host Airport would normally be responsible for covering costs related to the implementation of the WTP Virtual APEX Programme. However, since the proposed Programme will be carried out by expert volunteers using primarily virtual platforms of communication, no fees tied to travel and logistics will be needed. The fee is established at USD$3800,00 and the Virtual APEX Review will be carried out over 2-3 days.

8. To request a review

To request a review and have an assessment conducted by peers on your airport, simply contact us through our website and webpage and request for a virtual review in WTP https://store.aci.aero/form/virtual-apex-solution/ or contact us at apex@aci.aero.