



REGIONAL OFFICE FOR THE WESTERN PACIFIC
BUREAU RÉGIONAL DU PACIFIQUE OCCIDENTAL

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QUALITY OF DRINKING WATER ON INTERNATIONAL FLIGHTS

Progress Report by the Regional Director

The Regional Committee at its twenty-third session adopted resolution WPR/RC23.R5, operative paragraphs 1, 2 and 3 of which read as follows:

- "1. NOTES with concern the high proportion of samples which did not meet the international quality standards for drinking water recommended by WHO;¹
- "2. URGES the health agencies of Member countries in the Region to ensure that the quality of the drinking water and ice used for international flights meets the above standards; and
- "3. REQUESTS the Director-General of the World Health Organization to submit this important matter to Member countries of other WHO regions for their consideration."

The Regional Director acted on operative paragraph 2 of the resolution by sending a letter, in October 1972, to the governments of all Member countries in the Region, drawing their attention to the responsibility of the health agencies in this connexion.

Operative paragraph 3 was referred to the Director-General of the World Health Organization. In a letter dated 13 January 1973, the Director-General addressed the governments of all Member countries

¹International Standards for Drinking-Water (1971), 3rd ed.

of WHO, calling their attention to the need for improved quality of drinking water and food on international flights. The letter also gave the following information on the action taken at the international level:

- (a) The matter had been discussed at the twenty-third session of the WHO Regional Committee for the Western Pacific.
- (b) The matter had been considered at the seventeenth session of the WHO Committee on International Surveillance of Communicable Diseases in November 1972. The relevant report would be submitted to the Twenty-sixth World Health Assembly.
- (c) Consultation was taking place with the International Civil Aviation Organization and the International Air Transport Association on the steps which might be taken to reduce such health hazards as much as possible.
- (d) Member governments would be kept informed of the results of further studies on the matter.

The report of the WHO Committee on International Surveillance of Communicable Diseases in November 1972 was considered by the Twenty-sixth World Health Assembly. The World Health Assembly, in resolution WHA26.54, adopted the report, stressed the importance of maintaining a high standard of quality of drinking water and food in international traffic, and called the attention of all Member States to the provisions of Article 14 of the International Health Regulations.