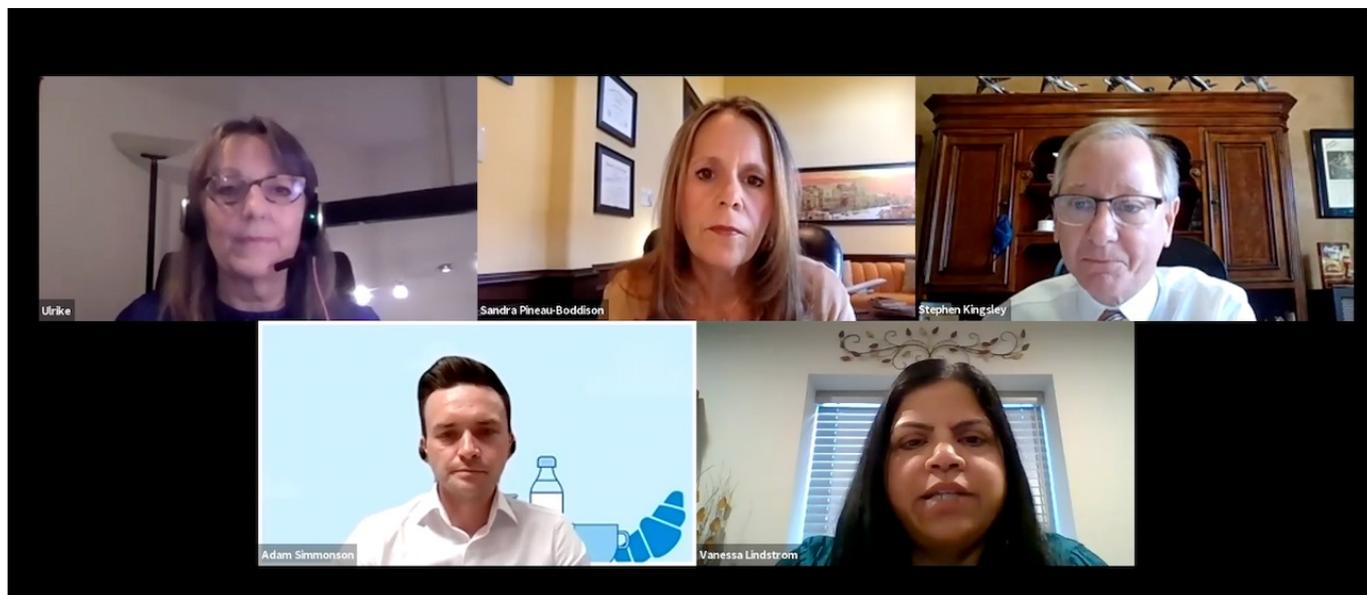


ACA, IFSA give update on joint catering standard to be released in early 2021



Clockwise from left top, Ulrike Enneking, Sandra Pineau-Boddison, Stephen Kingsley, Vanessa Lindstrom and Adam Simmonson

Airline caterers can expect to move into the new year with determination and a new volume of standards with two associations set to launch a joint set of worldwide guidelines early next year.

The passion and resiliency to emerge from the pandemic came through in one of the final sessions of [FTE APEX Virtual Expo](#). The panel discussion entitled *Inflight catering evolution according to ACA & IFSA*, focused on a new volume of COVID-19 catering guidelines that is nearly complete. Also, panelists discussed a shared determination that will be needed throughout the new year, as vaccinations roll out worldwide and the public gains more confidence to travel.

“It has been a devastating blow, but this is a very resilient business and it will come back,” said Stephen Kingsley, Executive Vice President – Strategic Development [at Flying Food Group](#) and the new President of the International Flight Services Association ([IFSA](#)).

The one-hour session was moderated by Sandra Pineau-Boddison, Partner at the [Hayward Partnership](#). Other panelists were Ulrike Enneking, Vice President Quality at [LSG Sky Chefs](#), Vanessa Lindstrom, Director Food Safety and Regulatory Compliance [at United Airlines](#) and Adam Simmonson, head of Compliance at [dnata](#) Catering United Kingdom.

The first half of the discussion was taken up with the detailed steps that were required to combine the [Airline Catering Association’s COVID-19 ACA Guidelines](#), published in June, and the [IFSA COVID-19 Preparedness Guidance for Airlines and Airline Catering](#), published a month earlier.

“When you are facing a global pandemic, you need a global response,” said Simmonson.

Enneking laid out the five-step approach to merge the documents for a worldwide audience and relevancy:

1 - Compare to find common logic among the guidelines

2 - Test how to merge the documents in the best way

3 - Identify the redundancies and eliminate items that were too specific to the United States

4 - Check recent audits, update the Pandemic Response 4P's

5 - Create a new table of contents that defines the structure of the document

What emerged from the massive project by the two associations is a slimmer volume pared down to 28 pages from 71 and a patterned guideline that fits catering scenarios around the world. The new joint standard is due to be released in January 2021, Ulrike said.

"That is when we do our best work, when we bring all our ideas to the table," Lindstrom added.

As the industry moves into a new year, and air travel slowly comes back, two of the most important points of focus will be a generic "pandemic plan" and a strategy for "business continuity" that can see the industry through another crisis, the panelists agreed.

"We are going to face something like this again, and I think it was a wake-up call for all of us," said Kingsley. "Business travel and leisure travel is coming back, and it will be a vibrant industry once again."