

SATS' cool capabilities

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The SATS Coolport received its CEIV Pharma certification from IATA in 2010

The year 2020 will be remembered in the world of commercial aviation suppliers as one where they were called on to quickly develop new solutions and adapt the businesses to find new sources of income.

But not many will be able to lay claim to helping turn around the deadly COVID-19 virus in direct, concrete ways. However, one ground handler, Singapore-based [SATS](#) has the capability to handle major COVID-19 vaccines.

Officials at the company were not able to comment directly on whether any parties had contacted SATS about possible vaccine transports in early December. However, a statement from the company indicates that SATS is seriously watching developments in weeks and months ahead.

“This would be of great importance to all of us at SATS as the COVID-19 pandemic has affected millions of lives globally,” the statement reads. “SATS is merely playing a small part in a larger ecosystem to give those who need inoculation against the virus access to life-saving vaccines.”



SATS has 18 rooms in its Coolport in Singapore

Located in a balmy city approximately 150 kilometers north of the Equator, the SATS Coolport at [Changi Airport](#) was opened 10 years ago. It was Asia's first on-airport perishable handling center and the world's first facility to be awarded the CEIV Pharma certification from the [International Air Transport Association \(IATA\)](#). Its purpose is the cold chain handling of perishable and pharmaceutical airfreight for import, export and transshipment.

The Singapore Coolport has 18 rooms spread over 8,000 square meters. Four main temperature zones range from 25 degrees Celsius to -28 degrees Celsius. To handle the vaccine, liquid nitrogen would also be required, but the company says the procedures would be similar to other cargo that the Coolport has handled. In 2019, it processed more than 300,000 tonnes of perishable cargo. It has multi-level ULD storage for up to 250 pallets and more than 2,000 square meters of warehouse space. There are 12 land-side temperature-controlled truck docks and a full-service Perishable Handling Centre (PHC) in front of the airport's freighter bays also ensure product integrity during cargo handling. There is also the option of adding refrigerated trucks or active temperature-controlled containers on site to boost temporary storage.

"In line with this, SATS is increasing its charging points in anticipation of having to accommodate such storage needs," said the company.

In addition to SATS in Singapore, other SATS joint venture coolports in Asia that IATA or GDP certified including Beijing Aviation Ground Services in Beijing, AISATS Coolport in Bengaluru, SATS Saudi Arabia in Dammam, Asia Airfreight Terminal in Hong Kong, JAS Airport Services in Jakarta, and Transom SATS Cargo in Muscat.