

CHIRP FEEDBACK

Issue No: 17

Autumn 2005

EDITORIAL

COMMENTS ON *CHIRP* - DO YOU HAVE ANY?

It has been over a year since we carried out the *CHIRP* Survey. In the Survey we asked if you and your colleagues were aware of the Programme, if you thought it made a useful contribution to the promotion and improvement of flight safety and whether confidential reporting was a good idea for cabin crew. We also asked for comments on the content and layout of CABIN CREW FEEDBACK, thanks to all of you who responded.

Don't worry, we are not conducting another Survey but if you do have any comments/suggestions on *CHIRP* or this newsletter, please let us know.

TEMPERATURES ON BOARD

CHIRP has recently received a number of reports regarding working in either extremely cold or extremely hot conditions; reporters have asked whether there are any minimum/maximum temperature limits on board an aircraft.

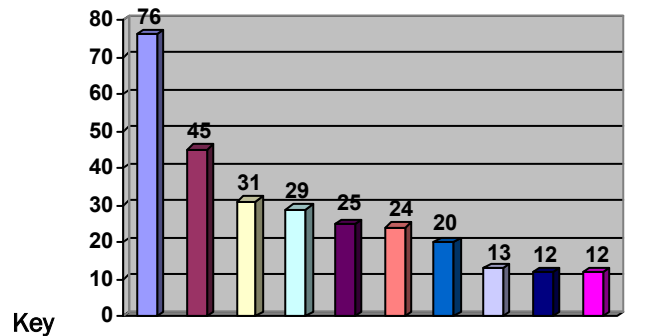
For your information, whereas there are minimum temperature limits applicable to offices, there are no similar limits on board an aircraft. There are no maximum temperatures applicable to the workplace either on the ground or on board an aircraft.

Kirsty Arnold
Cabin Crew Programme Manager

WHAT'S IN THIS ISSUE?

	Page
Contacting <i>CHIRP</i>	Bottom of This Page
Opening the Door With Engines Running	2
Minimum Crew Requirements	2
Are You Well Rested?	2
Rush, Rush, Rush - On Time Departures.....	2/3
First Officer Too Ill to Operate	3
Is It Safe Yet?	3
Report Form	Outside Back Cover

Most Frequent Cabin Crew Issues Received October 2004 - September 2005



- Key**
- Procedures**
(Application by Other Parties, Application by Reporter, Understanding/Interpretation, Adequacy)
 - Duty**
(Crewing, Length, Rosters/Rostering, Discretion, Rest, Disruption)
 - Company Policies**
(Safety/Internal Reporting, Operational, Absence of)
 - Pressures**
(Time, Commercial, From Flight Crew/In Charge Crew Member)
 - Security**
(Ground/In-flight)
 - Relationship Management (CRM)**
(Flight Crew, Fellow Cabin Crew)
 - Ground Handling**
(Check-in, Servicing, Ground Staff, Loading/Boarding)
 - Environment**
(Extreme Temperatures, Cabin Air Quality, Mobile Phone Usage)
 - Passengers**
(Compliance with Instructions, Aggression, Behaviour, Medical Condition)
 - Communications - Internal**
(Flight Crew, Fellow Cabin Crew)

Number of Reports Received: 01.07.05 - 30.09.05:
38

CABIN CREW FEEDBACK is also available on the *CHIRP* website - www.chirp.co.uk

A Cabin Crew Safety Newsletter

from *CHIRP* the Confidential Human Factors Incident Reporting Programme

REPORTS

OPENING THE DOOR WITH ENGINES RUNNING

Report Text: On pushback I issued the instruction for door crew to place doors to automatic. One of the doors would not go into 'auto' and the flight crew were informed - the engines were running.

The first officer came to the door and instructed the crewmember to crack the door open and then close it. The arming lever still would not go into 'auto'. He then instructed the crewmember to open the door fully (engines running) where he removed a piece of carpet; he then assisted in closing the door and set it to 'auto' successfully.

Company SOPs state ground service equipment must be in place before doors opened.

CHIRP Comment: *CHIRP* raised this report with the Company who confirmed their policy that no cabin door shall be opened, closed or left open without ground service equipment in place. The Company emphasised the importance of reporting this type of incident internally so an investigation can be carried out, as the flight crew should not have made the request. There is a serious risk of injury or worse should someone fall, not to mention the risk of inadvertently activating a slide.

It is understood that some operators permit their crew to 'crack' a door in exceptional circumstances.

MINIMUM CREW REQUIREMENTS

Report Text: I reported for a duty operated on a ### (Regional Jet), which is normally manned by two cabin crew, to be informed that due to sickness I would be operating as a single cabin crew.

I queried the decision but was met with an inadequate response and was eventually brow beaten into operating the series of flights (four 35-min sectors).

In my opinion the safety implications are wide-ranging e.g. a toilet fire where the CC would be unaware until flight deck informed, or even CC incapacitation with no way of advising flight deck with the current closed cockpit policy.

CHIRP Comment: JAR-OPS states that, for the purpose of safety, on an aircraft with 0-19 passenger seats there is no requirement for cabin crew. For aircraft with 20-50 passenger seats, normally only one cabin crew member is required. Many companies operate with more than the minimum number of crew for their own operational reasons.

To cover situations such as described in this report, company SOPs should have procedures in place for single crew operations detailed in the Operations Manual.

ARE YOU WELL RESTED?

Report Text: Started standby at 0600 - called out at 13.10 to do AAA (UK) - BBB (UK) - CCC (Med) - BBB - AAA. Flight departed AAA at 1610 - arrived back at AAA

01.20. Because I had been on standby over 6 hours when I was called, I was considered rested and was actually legal to operate for longer than those who just reported at the call out time (others were changed from flights departing at similar times).

I was up at 0600 to make sure I was partially ready for work in case of call out. As far as I'm concerned I was rested for a day flight - and was fully prepared for call out during my standby period. I was shocked to be called for a night flight out of BBB when I had been on standby 7 hours. It appears that you are considered well rested if you are called out over 6 hours into your standby - and someone who is called out less than 6 hours into their standby can actually work fewer hours than you.

The duty was 4 sectors (no pax between AAA-BBB/BBB-AAA) and I was in effect on duty from 0600 - 0120 almost 19.5 hours and I was very tired, bordering on fatigue.

My point is: where is the logic in this standby operating system? I was more tired than anyone, yet could have continued working for hours. When I was actually called out I didn't feel too tired but I soon became tired (19.5 hours is a long time to be awake for anyone in any job). I think this seriously needs to be addressed. The company says "it's legal" but is it safe? I know we can ring-in fatigued - but it's difficult when you're already down route. I don't think we should be put in this position.

CHIRP Comment: CAP 371 permits a cabin crew member to be called out from standby to conduct a flight duty period (FDP) after having completed more than six hours standby duty. In such a case, the total FDP permitted is the allowable FDP (which for cabin crew is one hour longer than the relevant FDP for flight crew) plus six hours standby. The total FDP commences from the start of the standby duty, in this case 0600.

If the reporter had no safety duties on the empty sectors, they could be regarded as positioning flights and the total FDP would have ended at 0115. If the reporter had operated all four sectors the total FDP would have ended at 2345. In both of the above cases, the Captain could have elected to exercise discretion and extend the total FDP by up to a further 3 hours.

As we have pointed out before, time spent positioning subsequent to the FDP is not limited as it is not considered to be a flight safety issue; however, it should be a consideration in relation to an employer's 'duty of care' responsibilities

The reporter is correct in stating that he/she would be considered to be adequately rested on reporting for duty.

RUSH, RUSH, RUSH - ON TIME DEPARTURES

CHIRP Narrative: Yet more reports relating to rushed checks/departures:

(1)

Report Text: Recently on several occasions whilst waiting for the 'CABIN SECURE' from colleagues prior to take-off, I have been phoned by the flight crew to inform

me that "We are waiting for take-off" or "We are next in line" or "Are you secure yet" etc.

Surely the whole point of the "CABIN SECURE" notification is just that, and no amount of reminding from the flight crew will hurry things along. We are secure when we are secure and not a moment before. It takes some considerable time to ensure that an aircraft is secure for take-off and we should be allowed that time and not be contacted as a reminder to "hurry up".

CHIRP Comment: This report shows the pressure under which cabin crew members may be placed in order to get an aircraft away on time.

This report is also being published in the Flight Crew version of Air Transport FEEDBACK to remind flight crew that the persistent chasing of the cabin crew does not speed the checks up but in fact slows them down as they have to leave their duties to answer the intercom!

(2)

Report Text: I (Senior) and fellow crew member were completing cabin security checks in the Premium cabin.

At this time passengers started boarding, yet I had not given my "cabin security checks complete" to the In Charge.

We rushed to finish our checks during which time passengers were moving through the aircraft. I then had to fight my way through passengers to give the checks.

Before completing the checks, I informed the In Charge they had not been done. Passengers continued boarding. Checks were given when completed.

These checks are of paramount importance. Whilst I appreciate the necessity to get the aircraft away on time, I do not think an on-time departure should jeopardise our security checks by hindering our search with pax boarding!

CHIRP Comment: This report was raised with the operator who has published reminder in their cabin crew newsletter for In Charges to wait for the "cabin security checks complete" notification before boarding pax.

FIRST OFFICER TOO ILL TO OPERATE

Report Text: En route from hotel to airport our First Officer looked extremely pale ... signs and symptoms of food poisoning. He was physically sick more than once. On arrival at the airport, he was asked to go to the Medical Centre for a check-up. Departure was delayed and to our surprise we were told that he was fit to operate. He was again sick (physically) on board. (He had been given medication to stem the vomiting).

Concerns: surely FO shouldn't have operated? Possibility of infecting Captain and crew who were in close proximity? Risk of pilot incapacitation? Risk that Captain had also consumed same meal?

CHIRP Comment: As we always say, it is the responsibility of the crewmember to deem whether

he/she is fit to fly - this report is a good reminder that although having sought medical advice, the final decision must rest with the individual. In this case it would appear the First Officer was not fit to operate the sector and should have declared himself unfit.

IS IT SAFE YET?

Report Text: On departure from AAA I operated as Senior in the ### cabin. On climb out the "fasten seat belt was on" so I was strapped in with full harness.

The In Charge came to inform me that the Captain had stated that he felt it was OK for cabin crew to leave their seats. In my opinion it wasn't; if it isn't safe for the passengers then it isn't safe for myself and the crew. Only when the fasten seat belt sign is switched off do I deem it safe to carry out my duties and start pulling out heavy trolleys etc.

I told the In Charge that I chose to stay in my seat as I did not deem it to be safe, which they weren't too pleased about.

Another few minutes passed and they came back to say it was safe to leave my seat and start work as everyone else was. I said "No" as the fasten seat belt sign was still on and I still didn't feel it was safe (surely my choice!!)

I felt very strongly that I was being bullied into leaving my seat to start work and where would I stand legally if we hit turbulence and "the fasten seatbelt sign" was on in the climb?

When crew leave their seats on ascent with the fasten seat belt sign still on, passengers look at crew walking around and then do the same. There must be standardisation in this, where both passengers and crew remain in their seats until the sign is switched off, then EVERY ONE knows what's going on and there isn't a big grey area.

NOTE: During the cruise, when the fasten seat belt sign comes on, after checking the passengers seat belts are secure, I always sit down and tell my crew to do likewise whenever possible for their own safety.

CHIRP Comment: This report was raised with the Company and they confirmed that it is the In Charge who decides when it is safe to commence the service. The Company was concerned that the reporter felt he/she was being bullied.

CHIRP Note: If you did not receive a copy of CABIN CREW FEEDBACK from your Crew Room/Pigeon Hole and you would like copies to be made available to you and your colleagues, ask your Cabin Crew Manager/Base Manager to contact Kirsty at **CHIRP** on 01252 395013 or kirsty@chirp.co.uk and she will arrange for copies to be mailed direct to your Base.

BACK ISSUES

Back issues of CABIN CREW FEEDBACK are available on our website: www.chirp.co.uk