

CABIN CREW FEEDBACK

Issue No: 25

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EDITORIAL

SECURITY

Since the revised airport security procedures were introduced, **CHIRP** has received reports from flight crew, ground engineers and air traffic control officers relating to allegations of inconsistencies in search procedures, inappropriate search methods and personal harassment. In stark contrast very few have been received from cabin crew.

After careful consideration of these continuing concerns, and on the advice of the CHIRP Air Transport Advisory Board, copies of the depersonalised texts of more than 70 reports were sent to the Civil Aviation Authority. However, it was acknowledged that the CAA, whilst having responsibility for safety regulation, has no responsibility for the security arrangements at UK airports. Therefore, a summary of the reported concerns was submitted to the Department for Transport, which we believe holds accountability for balancing security and flight safety. The matter was brought to the attention of the Permanent Secretary.

As confirmed recently by the Security Minister, enhanced airport security procedures will be required for a considerable time, if not indefinitely. In view of this, there is an urgent need for a consistent standard to be applied to those personnel employed in safety-critical roles to provide the appropriate balance between security and flight safety.

In previous issues of CABIN CREW FEEDBACK, we have stated that our policy is not to publish reports related to airport security procedures/deficiencies; this remains the case for matters that might provide information on security procedures. However, we would be interested to learn whether cabin crew are experiencing difficulties similar to those reported by flight crew, engineers and air traffic control officers.

If you should experience any difficulties relating to security staff/procedures, please report them either directly to your company, or if you would prefer, in a **CHIRP** report.

REPORTING TO **CHIRP**

It has been suggested that uncertainties arising from company mergers and other commercial pressures might be inhibiting some cabin crew members from submitting reports that relate to matters of safety.

Primarily any such issues should be reported using your own company's internal reporting system. However, if for whatever reason you feel unable to report directly to your company and by not doing so are concerned that the matter could have safety implications, please take the time to submit a report to **CHIRP**, using the report form on the back page of this copy of CABIN CREW FEEDBACK, or by completing the form on our web site. All **CHIRP** reports are dealt with on an absolutely confidential basis, without disclosing your identity; and any actions are taken only with your consent.

Please don't think that by raising a safety-related report you are being disloyal to your company. They would rather be made aware of any safety concern that needs to be addressed.

Kirsty Arnold

Number of Reports Received Since the Last Issue: 45

Topics Have Included:

Pressure to Continue
Reduced Crew Levels
Duty Lengths
Crew Rest

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A Cabin Crew Safety Newsletter

from **CHIRP** the Confidential Human Factors Incident Reporting Programme

REPORTS

INCOMPLETE BOARDING CARDS (1)

Report Text: On a return flight from [Africa], I was at the door boarding with the In Charge. Our company policy is to check boarding cards for every single pax boarding an aircraft, to comply with security measures. I found it very strange that some pax had boarding cards that were hand written, some only showing seat number; the boxes for "flight number" and "date" remained blank. Some had filled in the departure/arrival points but many were missing that information too! The In Charge also noticed the same but said it would be fine as ours was the only flight leaving to the UK.

I found the whole situation unacceptable and a security risk.

INCOMPLETE BOARDING CARDS (2)

Report Text: The Captain briefed the In Charge to ensure enhanced security check carried out on turnaround in this Eastern European location as he felt the area was 'dodgy' and unstable, although the current station threat does not classify as requiring enhanced checks. Enhanced checks performed as per Captain's request.

The check-in system went down. Approx 50% of presented boarding cards had either date/name/destination/airline or flight no. missing. Some had only a manual seat no. attached to a totally blank boarding card.

When the Captain was informed he advised us to board anyway. I and the other cabin crew felt uneasy carrying unidentified passengers, especially considering the enhanced security checks we were asked to perform.

CHIRP Comment: All operators should have a process in place for validating the identity of a passenger. The Department for Transport requires that "all UK operators must ensure that it is the same person who checked in hold baggage, who then boards the aircraft". The DfT does not specify how operators should achieve this. However, a passport can usually be used to confirm the passenger's identity.

Both of these reports were brought to the attention of the company concerned who advised **CHIRP** that there are procedures in place, which did not appear to have been adhered to. **CHIRP** was also advised that in instances where issues arise relating to security, such as boarding cards, company SOPs state that they are to be reported to the company immediately for internal investigation. This information was relayed to both reporters.

DE-ICING PROCEDURES

Report Text: On turnaround I noticed ice on the left wing, which I passed on to the rest of the crew. I noticed the ice while standing on the steps at D#L.

The Captain advised me he was going to de-ice the wings himself, by transferring fuel as it would save on de-icing costs.

During the boarding process I noticed 3 more walk-arounds being done by the flight crew, obviously keen to inspect the wings. This also involved them both sitting in overwing seats immediately prior to boarding to observe the upper wing surfaces.

Once all pax were boarded, the First Officer commented he had observed ice ridges on the underside of the right wing, so de-icing was requested, and a delay incurred.

CHIRP Comment: This is another example of excellent vigilance and appropriate action by cabin crew.

Although transferring fuel can in some circumstances clear lightly contaminated surfaces, the operator confirmed that the company SOPs stated that an aircraft must be clear of all forms of frost, ice, slush and snow before take-off, and that there was no other de-icing procedure in their SOPs other than using an approved de-icing fluid.



The pink coloured areas on the wing in this photograph are patches of snow/ice remaining after de-icing.

GROUND OPERATIONS

Report Text: We operated into (Major UK airport), after Captain's command to disarm slides, I was watching through the door window waiting for the stairs, after a short while the ground staff arrived with the stairs. I was surprised (as I had my hand on the handle waiting for the signal that it was clear to open) that I felt the door opening and realised that it was the guy opening the door from outside. Once the door opened I asked him why he had opened the door and did not give me the correct signal, he just looked at me and carried on with his tasks. This procedure was not safe for him, me or the pax.

We finished boarding for the return flight but we were still refuelling, I was at my position with the door open and the stairs attached, when I turned back the stairs were gone. I alerted my In Charge and was told to

call them back but it was too late, I had no choice but to close my door. I tried to call the Captain but he was too busy to answer, I stayed in place until the refuelling had finished, I then disarmed the doors and we continued our duties.

CHIRP Comment: **Regrettably, incidents of this nature are not unusual; the reporter followed the correct course of action by immediately reporting this incident to their company on return to base, after which an internal investigation was carried out.**

Any lapses in adherence to ground operations SOPs require investigation. All cabin crew are urged to be vigilant and report any discrepancies to the operator using the company's internal reporting system.

LOCKED FLIGHT DECK DOOR POLICY

Report Text: This report is not related to any specific flight but involves a serious issue that I believe needs addressing. On numerous occasions recently I have witnessed a worrying disregard for flight deck door procedures. On approximately a third of flights I have been placed in the uncomfortable position of having to remind senior crew of the correct procedure.

I now have to re-brief EVERY crew on door procedures before departure to ensure they know that I take it seriously. It makes them think I am being pedantic and have a CRM down side but it just might make sure I don't get to host an unwanted guest on the flight deck.

It might help my CRM if the company were a little more forthright in highlighting the importance of these procedures.

My door is only armoured when it's closed!

CHIRP Comment: **This report was submitted by a flight crew member. The risk of an unwarranted intrusion onto the flight deck is minimised when the door is opened infrequently and only for a short period of time. Therefore, it is important that crew members strictly comply with their company SOPs and ensure that the flight deck door is opened only when essential and then for the least amount of time required.**

BIRD STRIKE, IS IT SAFE TO CONTINUE?

Report Text: Rejected take off due to birdstrike which resulted in a number of hysterical/aggressive pax. Pax were disembarked whilst aircraft was inspected and later returned after it was cleared to go.

On the subsequent take off a strong smell of burning was in the cabin (presumably due to the a/c packs being turned on) which cleared but returned on the descent. The crew were concerned and scared and after speaking with them and listening how they felt the In Charge decided that we, as a crew, were not fit to operate the last sector. The Captain spent 20 mins talking to us to try to reassure us but the crew were obviously not reassured and the In Charge informed the Captain that we could not operate the flight.

The company then called to ask if we could position to ### (crew were concerned by the burning smell -

they were not concerned about dealing with disgruntled pax). After speaking to the crew initially and informing the Captain of our decision I feel that the company put undue pressure on us (and the In Charge) to continue.

My feeling was that rather than being supportive of the crew, the company's only concern was a financial one.

CHIRP Comment: **It is apparent from the report that the Captain tried to calm the crew down and to explain what had happened. In instances such as this, crew have to accept that the ground engineer/flight crew are professionals and will only allow an aircraft to operate when it is safe to do so.**

Sometimes following a birdstrike incident, a 'burning' smell may be apparent in the cabin even some time after the actual event; this can occur after take-off, at the top of climb or during the descent, when there are changes in air flow through the air conditioning packs. As we always say, report any smell to the flight deck as soon as you are able; however, be prepared to accept the explanation/assurances when they are provided to you.

ROSTERING ISSUES

Report Text: Report 0725Z, for an AAA(UK)-BBB(North Africa)-AAA trip. Flight times approx 5.5hrs each way, after approx 1.5hr delay.

Flight to BBB uneventful, although full service delivery given. Turn round and similar service on return to UK. On chocks at 1130Z, with a rostered 45mins to disembark and bank the bar.

Following day rostered a CCC(Med1) which I was in hours by 5 whole minutes. Report at 1410Z, back into AAA at 2255Z. After this, and after approx 13.5hrs rest, my next duty is a DDD(Med2). Another 12hr+ duty which reports at 1220Z and is rostered to arrive at 0010Z.

I feel this roster pattern is ridiculous. To do such a long busy flight at the start of a 3 day pattern, with some people having 4 and 5 day patterns, is dangerous which could result in crew making mistakes through tiredness or fatigue.

CHIRP Comment: **This report is one of a number that we have received regarding this type of roster sequence, which although being within the operator's Approved FTL Scheme, crew have reported as being particularly tiring. The reports, appropriately disidentified, have been forwarded to the CAA for information. CHIRP has also provided the CAA with an analysis of flight crew and cabin crew reports received which relate to rostering/FTL issues.**

BACK ISSUES

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



CABIN CREW REPORT FORM

CHIRP is totally independent of the Civil Aviation Authority and any Airline

NAME: _____	1. YOUR PERSONAL DETAILS ARE REQUIRED ONLY TO ENABLE US TO CONTACT YOU FOR FURTHER DETAILS ABOUT ANY PART OF YOUR REPORT. 2. YOU WILL ALWAYS BE SENT AN ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FOLLOWING RECEIPT OF YOUR REPORT 3. THIS WHOLE REPORT FORM WILL BE RETURNED TO YOU WHEN YOUR REPORT IS CLOSED. No RECORD Of Your Name And Address Will Be Kept
ADDRESS: _____	
POST CODE: _____ TEL: _____	

PLEASE COMPLETE RELEVANT INFORMATION ABOUT THE INCIDENT/SITUATION

YOURSELF - CREW POSITION			THE FLIGHT/EVENT					
CABIN CREW IN-CHARGE	<input type="checkbox"/> SENIOR CABIN CREW	<input type="checkbox"/>	DATE OF INCIDENT		CABIN LIGHTING:			
CABIN CREW	<input type="checkbox"/> SUPERNUMERARY	<input type="checkbox"/>	TIME	LOCAL/GMT	BRIGHT <input type="checkbox"/> MEDIUM <input type="checkbox"/> DARK <input type="checkbox"/>			
OTHER:			AIRCRAFT LOCATION		DAY <input type="checkbox"/> NIGHT <input type="checkbox"/>			
EXPERIENCE/QUALIFICATION			THE AIRCRAFT		CABIN ACTIVITY			
TOTAL YEARS	YEARS WITH CURRENT AIRLINE		TYPE/SERIES		BOARDING	<input type="checkbox"/> BEVERAGE SERVICE <input type="checkbox"/>		
AIRCRAFT TYPES QUALIFIED ON:			NUMBER OF CABIN CREW		TROLLEY SERVICE	<input type="checkbox"/> MEAL SERVICE <input type="checkbox"/>		
1.	2.	3.	NUMBER OF PAX ON BOARD		TRAY SERVICE	<input type="checkbox"/> DISEMBARKING <input type="checkbox"/>		
4.	5.	6.	NUMBER OF EXITS		FILM	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:		
TYPE OF OPERATION			WEATHER (IF RELEVANT)			FLIGHT PHASE		
SCHEDULED	<input type="checkbox"/> CHARTER	<input type="checkbox"/>	CLEAR	<input type="checkbox"/> CLOUDY	<input type="checkbox"/>	PRE-DEPARTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> TAXI	<input type="checkbox"/>
CORPORATE	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:		RAIN	<input type="checkbox"/> FOG	<input type="checkbox"/>	TAKE-OFF	<input type="checkbox"/> CLIMB	<input type="checkbox"/>
PASSENGER(S)/INJURY(IES)			ICE	<input type="checkbox"/> SNOW	<input type="checkbox"/>	CRUISE	<input type="checkbox"/> DESCENT	<input type="checkbox"/>
PASSENGER(S) INVOLVED?	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>	TURBULENCE	<input type="checkbox"/> THUNDERSTORM	<input type="checkbox"/>	APPROACH	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDING	<input type="checkbox"/>
INJURY TO PASSENGER	<input type="checkbox"/> INJURY TO CREW	<input type="checkbox"/>	OTHER:			STAND/GATE ARRIVAL	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:	
THE COMPANY			MY MAIN POINTS ARE:					
NAME OF COMPANY:			A:					
REPORT TOPIC			B:					
MY REPORT RELATES TO:			C:					

ACCOUNT OF INCIDENT/SITUATION - (PLEASE ATTACH ADDITIONAL SHEETS IF NECESSARY)

The UK Confidential Human Factors Incident Reporting Programme



PLEASE PLACE THE COMPLETED REPORT FORM, WITH ADDITIONAL PAGES IF REQUIRED, IN A SEALED ENVELOPE (no stamp required) AND SEND TO:

CHIRP • FREEPOST (G13439) • Building Y20E • Room G15 • Cody Technology Park • Ively Road • Farnborough • Hampshire • GU14 0BR • UK

Confidential Tel (24 hrs): +44 (0) 1252 395013 or **Freefone** (UK only) 0800 214645 and Confidential Fax: +44 (0) 1252 394290

Report forms are also available on the **CHIRP** website: www.chirp.co.uk