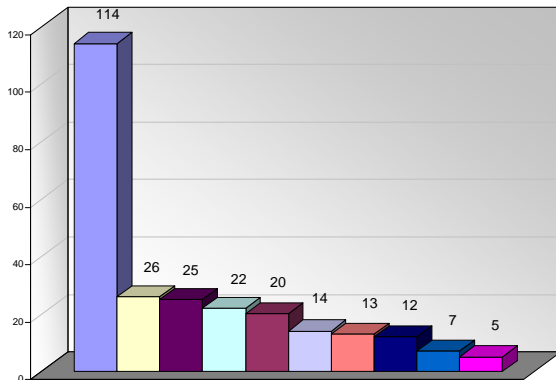


# CHIRP FEEDBACK

Issue No: 34

Winter 2009/10

## Most Frequent Cabin Crew Issues Received 12 Months Ending November 2009



- Duty**  
(Rosters/Rostering - 54, Length - 26, Rest - 16, Crewing - 4, Discretion - 14)
- Company Policies**  
(Operational - 25, Disciplinary/Grievance - 1)
- Pressures**  
(From Management/Supervision - 9, Commercial - 9, Time - 7)
- Works Council Referral**  
(Terms & Conditions/Industrial Relations - 21, Health & Safety - 1)
- Procedures**  
(Application/Use of - by Other Party - 18, Understanding/Interpretation/Complicated - 1, Inadequate - 1)
- Team Working**  
(Insufficient Team Work/Building - 10, Lack of Leadership/Assertivness - 2, Unrealistic Expectation - 1, Working in Conflict - 1)
- Communications - Internal**  
(Team/Shift/Watch - 12, Managers - 1)
- Regulation/Law**  
(Knowledge of - 11, Compliance with - 1)
- Aircraft Technical**  
(Cabin Equipment Deficiencies - 3, Systems - 2, Structure/Airworthiness - 2)
- Passengers**  
(Compliance with Instructions - 2, Medical Condition - 2, Behaviour - 1)

## EDITORIAL

### AN EXPLANATION OF ... FLIGHT TIME LIMITATIONS

From reports that we have received it is apparent that a number of cabin crew members are unclear about some aspects of their company's Approved Flight Time Limitations (FTLs) scheme and how it affects them. We are therefore publishing clarifications of several aspects of FTLs raised in confidential reports in this and the next issue of CABIN CREW FEEDBACK. The following guidance is based on the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) publication CAP 371 - Avoidance of Fatigue in Aircrews; however, it is important to understand that your company's Flight

Time Limitations scheme is approved by the CAA and thus, if different from the following, is the definitive document for your company's operations; a copy of your company scheme should be available to you.

**Report Times and Pre-flight Duties:** The report time specified by your company in your Approved FTL scheme is intended to give crew members sufficient time to complete all pre-flight duties required by your company under normal circumstances. There will be occasions when an individual might require additional time, such as when returning from a period of sickness/leave of absence; in such a case there is no obligation on your company to change the report time. However, if there has been a considerable change in circumstances at the report location (e.g. in security or crew baggage handling requirements) your company is required to be able to demonstrate to the CAA that the report time does allow the required pre-flight duties to be accomplished within the specified times under normal circumstances. If the time taken to accomplish your required duties regularly exceeds that provided by your report time, submit an internal company report giving the details to permit the matter to be reviewed.

**Flying Duty Period:** The Flying Duty Period (FDP) covers any time during which an individual operates in an aircraft as a member of its crew. The FDP starts when the crew member is required to report for a flight and finishes at on-chocks or engines off. The Maximum FDP permitted depends on a number of factors and can be calculated from the Tables published in CAP 371 and in your company's Approved scheme. It is important to note that the rules relating to cabin crew members permit the maximum FDP to be one hour longer than that for flight crew members.

**Duty Period:** Duty is defined as any continuous period during which a crew member is required to carry out any task associated with the business of an aircraft operator. The Duty Period includes an allowance for post-flight activities; this allowance is typically 30 minutes, but in the case of some operators may be less. Remember that once the aircraft is on chocks/engines are shut down your FDP has ended but your period of Duty continues for the period allowed for post-flight duties. As with the allowance for pre-flight duties, the post-flight allowance is the time required to complete company post-flight tasks under normal circumstances and may, in some circumstances, be exceeded. We have received reports stating that the time allocated for this 'period' for post FDP duties is routinely exceeded; if this is the case the matter should be reported to your company to permit the matter to be reviewed.

CABIN CREW FEEDBACK is also available on the **CHIRP** website - [www.chirp.co.uk](http://www.chirp.co.uk)

A Cabin Crew Safety Newsletter

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

**Rest Period:** The Rest Period is the period of time before starting an FDP, which is designed to give crew members adequate opportunity to rest before a flight. The minimum length of the Rest Period is determined by the preceding Duty Period (i.e. the time period between reporting for a flight and the end of the post-flight allowance). The minimum rest period for cabin crew members permitted by CAP 371 is either at least as long as the preceding Duty Period less 1 hour, or 11 hours.

**Positioning after a Flight Duty Period:** The time spent positioning after the completion of an FDP, whether by air, coach or taxi only counts as Duty in so far as the calculation of the minimum length of the subsequent Rest Period. The length of the post-flight positioning journey is not regarded as a safety issue by the CAA but is an aspect of your company's Duty of Care obligations to employees in relation to, for example, an individual's fitness to drive home.

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### NOISY DOOR SEAL

**Report Text:** As soon as we were into the cruise, it became apparent that the seal at D#R was making an extremely loud whining noise. We were unable to hear anything when using the interphone. On checking, this issue had already been put into the Tech Log and cleared for operation by the engineers. A colleague had also operated on this aircraft a few days previously, with the same loud whining noise - yet still it was the same on our flight.

The Captain contacted engineering who promised faithfully that it would be sorted immediately the aircraft returned to the UK. In the meantime, they suggested we pack the door out with hot towels, which we did, but which made not the slightest difference apart from giving us some solidly frozen towels! This issue had still not been rectified some two days later.

For the crew working at the back, the noise emanating from the door was a nightmare, leaving crew with major headaches and also causing a distraction. I am also concerned because it more or less put the interphone at D#R out of action.

Nothing is being done despite crew completing incident reports. The company needs to take these reports seriously.

**CHIRP Comment:** Some technical problems, such as door seal leaks, are sometimes difficult to replicate on the ground. Minor door leaks can be extremely noisy but they present no risk to the airworthiness of an aircraft.

If a reported cabin defect has not been corrected, it would be appropriate for the SCCM to seek advice from the Captain as to what action has been taken and to ensure that the defect is re-entered in the Technical Log, if necessary. Whilst cabin crew may feel that some Tech Log entries are not addressed, it should be noted that an aircraft's Minimum Equipment List (MEL) may permit these items, such as the door seal raised in this report, to be 'deferred' and give a timescale within which the defect is to be rectified - these are specified as a number of days, sectors or hours.

In order to enable engineering staff to rectify technical problems in the most timely manner cabin crew need to record defect(s) in a clear, concise way and provide sufficient detail to facilitate a thorough engineering investigation.

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### PRE-FLIGHT DUTIES / ENTERING DISCRETION

**Report Text:** My company have relocated our crew report centre to an airside location. This means that crew have to go through security to gain access and therefore check-in hold baggage before reporting for duty. On arrival at the 'new' crew centre there are several duties that have to be completed. Electronic check in, read safety and operational memos and the safety briefing. In addition, crew who are returning from a period of absence also have to report to a duty manager. To carry out these duties we are only provided 10 minutes! As you can no doubt appreciate this is not possible and crew are completing the majority of the above tasks in their own time.

Added to the above, we are also being rostered some very long duties that are very close to maximum hours and can regularly enter into discretion. Examples are 0900 report/off duty 2250 (13hr 50min duty) and 0750 report/off duty 2335(14hr 45 min duty.)

As you can see if these pre-report duties were put into the equation then these duties would not be possible. I completely understand the need to cut back as much as possible in these hard times but are they not covering-up the actual time that crew are actually performing company duties?

**CHIRP Comment:** An operator is required to schedule an FDP within the maximum limits that have been approved between that operator and the CAA. Company time allocated for pre-flight duties should be sufficient to permit all required company related tasks to be completed under normal circumstances. The disidentified text of this and other similar reports has been forwarded to the CAA for information.

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### VISIBILITY TO PASSENGERS / WEARING YOUR UNIFORM IN FLIGHT

**Report Text:** We had a Manager who arrived at the briefing (in uniform) to operate this longhaul trip. The crew should have included two SCCMs but this was not the case and we only had one. The Manager was asked what their role would be during the day as we were short of a second SCCM. The SCCM was informed that they were there to observe and would assist 'as and when' but they would not act as the second SCCM. As the Manager was in uniform and 'part of the crew', the SCCM enquired if he/she would be answering emergency questions etc during the briefing as they may be the first person on the scene of an incident. They responded that "I am not part of the crew" and refused to partake in that part of the briefing.

As this individual was in uniform and had a presence in the cabin, their safety knowledge should have been assessed. As they declined to be part of the crew they should not have been in uniform and should take no part in any cabin service. In an emergency situation

passengers will look to anyone in a cabin crew uniform for assistance.

Lessons Learned: As yet I'm not sure. Can a manager, in uniform, be offloaded for not answering SEP questions?

**CHIRP** Comment: The reporter is quite correct. The SCCM can offload any cabin crew member in uniform who is unable to answer SEP questions, which includes Managers. All personnel wearing a cabin crew uniform on board an aircraft are required to be trained in accordance with EU-OPS Subpart O and therefore should be subject to a check of competency as part of the cabin crew safety briefing. To avoid confusion to passengers and crew, Managers who are not part of the operating crew should not wear a uniform that could identify them as a cabin crew member.

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### EXCESS BAGGAGE

**Report Text:** Full passenger load on this flight to the USA. Most but not all passengers had boarded and the Senior Cabin Crew Member (SCCM) was informed that all overhead bins and wardrobes were full.

More passengers boarded so the SCCM stopped the baggage at the door, crew members had also brought some bags to the boarding door from other passengers inside the cabin to be tagged and put in the hold. The items consisted of seven wheelie bags, a guitar in a big black case and a pushchair. The SCCM informed the Dispatcher that we were unable to stow these items safely in the cabin (these items had already been tagged) and they needed to go in the hold. The SCCM was informed that the hold was closed and the ground team had left and it would take 20 minutes to get them back to re-open the hold which would create a delay.

The SCCM informed the Captain that we were unable to stow some baggage and was informed to "stow it anywhere as we need to get going". The Captain then took two wheelie bags and the guitar to stow in the flight deck - unsecurely! The remaining bags were stowed in toilets and empty catering stowages in the galley.

The ground staff had let too many bags through, some exceeded the maximum dimensions for cabin baggage and some were very heavy for crew to be dealing with, let alone leaving them in unapproved stowages. The SCCM was powerless to override commercial pressure for an on-time departure to ensure the safe stowage of bags and was not supported by the Captain. Two Business Class passengers voiced their concerns to the SCCM about the amount of baggage on board - what was he/she to say to them?

Lessons Learned: Ground staff need to intercept oversize/overweight bags. Next time, hopefully the SCCM might have a Captain that is more supportive without worrying about punctuality.

**CHIRP** Comment: This is another example of the commercial 'tail' (pressure for an On Time Departure) wagging the flight safety 'dog'.

The stowage of excess bags in unapproved stowages on-board and on the flight deck is not legal. More importantly, if moderate/severe turbulence is encountered, inadequately restrained bags on the flight

deck could present a serious flight safety hazard such as impeding the use of flight controls or possibly causing injury.

Failing to control cabin baggage is a self-inflicted problem and one that is managed effectively by many UK operators through their loading procedures. The allocation of a 'delay' against the flight/cabin crew as a result of an upstream failure to manage the problem, combined with the underfloor holds being closed (sometimes 20 minutes before departure), is unacceptable on the basis of the flight safety risk that unrestrained baggage in the cabin represents.

Cabin crew who proactively monitor the cabin baggage situation and make frequent PA's to passengers can assist in monitoring this problem. An assertive SCCM who delays closing the aircraft door until excess cabin baggage has been stowed appropriately will usually resolve the situation. If ground staff wish to attribute the delay to cabin crew, maybe an increase in such delays might encourage an operator to look at resolving the issue.

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### PRESSURE TO BOARD

We were late leaving AAA (US) and the ground staff were under pressure to board quickly. They closed the main passenger door before the SCCM was content for them to do so - approx 20 passengers were still standing up as they were having difficulty in finding stowage space for their bags. The SCCM phoned the flight crew and advised them not to push back due to the passenger situation and was advised that too were being pressured to push back. The SCCM reiterated that we were not safe to do so as we still had a lot of people standing up and was practically pleading with them not to push back. The flight crew said they'd give the SCCM "a couple of minutes" and told him/her to do a PA to ask people to sit down quickly. Approx one minute later we pushed back - some people were still standing. During the flight the SCCM challenged the flight crew, who responded that "we were holding up ATC and had to go then".

Lessons Learned: It is extremely difficult to keep the door open once the last passenger has boarded. The ground staff have punctuality targets to adhere to and I feel that punctuality took precedence over safety in this instance.

**CHIRP** Comment: This is another report that shows the pressure that cabin crew are under to close the aircraft doors. Again, as mentioned above, an assertive SCCM who delays closing the aircraft door until they are satisfied that the situation in the cabin is safe for the aircraft to push-back may resolve similar future occurrences to those experienced in this report.

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#### ROYAL AERONAUTICAL SOCIETY CONFERENCES

The RAeS will be holding two conferences on 28 and 29 April 2010 at British Airways, Waterside (LHR), Middlesex:

**28 April 2010** - Emergency Response and Human Factors in Safety Management Systems

**29 April 2010** - Human Factors in Aviation

For further information on these events, see the *Upcoming Conferences* notices at:






[www.raes-hfg.com/forum/forum.asp?FORUM\\_ID=13](http://www.raes-hfg.com/forum/forum.asp?FORUM_ID=13)

or e-mail: [emergencyresp@raes-hfg.com](mailto:emergencyresp@raes-hfg.com)

# CHIRP

## CABIN CREW REPORT FORM

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

Name: 	 Indicates Mandatory Fields	<p>1. Your personal details are required only to enable us to contact you for further details about any part of your report. Please do not submit anonymous reports.</p> <p>2. On closing, this Report Form will be returned to you.</p> <p><b>NO RECORD OF YOUR NAME AND ADDRESS WILL BE KEPT</b></p> <p>3. <b>CHIRP</b> is a reporting programme for safety-related issues. We regret we are unable to accept reports that relate to industrial relations issues.</p>
Address: 		
Post Code 	Tel:	
e-mail: 		

**It is CHIRP policy to acknowledge a report on receipt and then to provide a comprehensive closing response, if required. If you do not require a closing response please tick the box:**

No. I do not require a response from **CHIRP**

**PLEASE COMPLETE RELEVANT INFORMATION ABOUT THE EVENT/SITUATION**

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

**DESCRIPTION OF EVENT**

Your narrative will be reviewed by a member of the **CHIRP** staff who will remove all information such as dates/locations/names that might identify you. Bear in mind the following topics when preparing your narrative:

Chain of events • Communication • Decision Making • Equipment • Situational Awareness • Weather • Task Allocation • Teamwork • Training


continue on a separate piece of paper, if necessary

 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 • 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](http://www.chirp.co.uk)