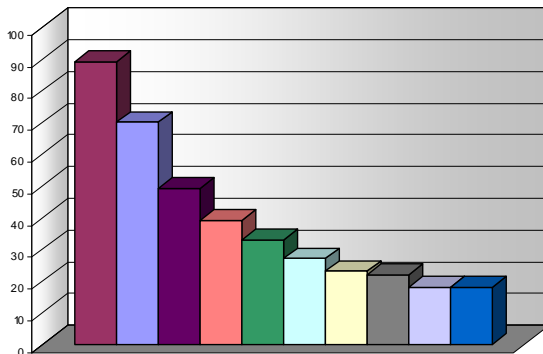


# CHIRP FEEDBACK

Issue No: 38

Winter 2010

## Most Frequent Cabin Crew Issues Received 12 Months Ending August 2010



- Works Council Referral**  
(Ts&Cs/Industrial Relations - 84, Health & Safety - 4, Relevance/Design - 1)
- Duty**  
(Rosters/Rostering - 23, Length - 19, Rest - 13, Discretion - 8, Crewing - 4, Disruption - 3)
- Communications - Internal**  
(Team/Shift/Watch - 37, Managers - 12)
- Company Policies**  
(Operational - 21, Safety Reporting/Culture - 15, Disciplinary - 2, Respons/Accountabilities Unclear - 1)
- Procedures**  
(Application/Use of - by Others - 22, Knowledge of - 5, Incorrect/Conflicting - 2, Inadequate - 2, Application/Use of - by Reporter - 2)
- Team Working**  
(Insufficient Team Work - 19, Working in Conflict 7, Lack of Leadership/Assertiveness - 1)
- Training**  
(Inadequate Staff Training - 19, Inadequate Spec/Reqs - 2, Relevance/Design - 2)
- Aircraft Technical**  
(Cabin Equipment Deficiencies - 20, Design - 1, Airworthiness - 1)
- Regulation/Law**  
(Knowledge of - 13, Compliance with - 5)
- Security**  
(Ground - 13, In Flight - 5)

## EDITORIAL

### SITUATIONAL AWARENESS

CHIRP has been made aware of several incidents where an aircraft has landed without the cabin being secured and cabin crew still standing/not secured in their seats. Poor situational awareness could have been a factor, as could a lack of communication between the cabin and flight crew, or between cabin crew members. No matter what the reasons were, not being secured has serious safety implications; if an incident was to occur during the final approach or landing this could result in a cabin crew member being incapacitated which could hinder a passenger evacuation. It could also result in an emergency exit not having a trained cabin crew member available to either open or block that exit.

It is appreciated that passengers expect a certain level of service and, by the very nature of the profession, most cabin crew are only too willing to assist with a passenger service request, not to mention some operators encouraging their cabin crew to promote sales. Notwithstanding this, cabin crew must adhere to their company's safety procedures when preparing for landing and ensure the cabin, galleys and passengers are secure; this will enable cabin crew to mentally focus on their safety duties when seated for landing.

In aircraft types with auto generated signals, an over reliance on these can sometimes cause confusion; for example relying on seat belt/exit signs to illuminate at the usual time, which might be later than expected or not occur at all. The key is remaining situationally aware.

How many times have you 'pushed the boundaries' and managed to strap-in to your seat at the last possible moment? Or thought that 'just this once' won't matter; it does and could result in you becoming injured and put the lives of others at risk.

If you are placed in a situation where you feel that there is insufficient time for the cabin to be cleared and secured for landing then you must inform the flight crew, via the SCCM that additional time might be required.

Some company SOPs require a 'sterile' environment in the flight deck in the descent; this requires both pilots to listen to ATC. So, if you haven't received a 'seated for landing' or '## minutes to landing' call from the flight crew, it is possible that you might not receive one. Hence always maintain a personal awareness of the time to landing and your responsibilities.

As we always say here at CHIRP: **communication is essential along with adherence to SOPs.**

Finally, Happy New Year and be safe in 2011.

### INCORRECT BAR BOX LOADING

**Report Text:** On boarding the aircraft we were informed by the caterers that they could not load any bar boxes in the hold as there was no securing bar to hold them in place. The catering supervisor decided to place a bar box behind the last row of seats and three further bar boxes into stowage areas which had doors on them. I informed them that this could not be done as it was against company safety rules; the response was "the crew last week were happy to do it"... We informed the SCCM who was content that the caterers load the aircraft in this way.

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

FREEPOST RSKS-KSCA-SSAT, The CHIRP Charitable Trust, 26 Hercules Way, Farnborough GU14 6UU

Freefone: 0800 214645

[confidential@chirp.co.uk](mailto:confidential@chirp.co.uk)

When the Captain boarded the aircraft we advised him/her of our concerns and they agreed to ask the caterers to offload the boxes. The catering supervisor refused and stated that they could not be removed once they had been loaded. Eventually we managed to stop the bar box from being loaded behind the last row of seats.

During the flight I found that the three bar boxes that the caterers had tried to stow in areas with no doors had been loaded into the cupboards with only one red securing clip, these cupboards have a max load of 7kg. Also there was no safety clip within the area and the boxes could move around as the cupboards are a lot bigger than the boxes. On landing one of the bar boxes moved and hit the back of the door; I heard the lock latch on the door unclip itself from the force of the box hitting the door.

Who would approve the loading of bar boxes in this way?

**CHIRP** Comment: All items onboard an aircraft must be secured in an approved stowage and not anywhere that fits. The decision by the caterer to stow items behind the last row of seats was incorrect and not in accordance with regulatory and company procedures.

If you find yourself in a similar situation to that of the reporter, bring your concerns to the attention of the Captain (via the SCCM) in the first instance to seek their assistance. If, however, you are unsuccessful, raise your concerns with the Captain directly as he/she has the overall responsibility for the safety of the aircraft, crew and passengers.

It is also worth raising the matter with your company, via an internal company report, to make them aware of any catering items that have been incorrectly loaded. This will permit your company to monitor any trends and non-compliances and, if necessary, raise any specific issues with the catering company directly for remedial action.

Finally, galley stowages are placarded with specific instructions as to what should (and should not) be stowed inside. Such instructions include maximum weights and type and number of carts or boxes that can be adequately stowed and restrained. Adherence to these placarded instructions is mandatory, not optional.

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### SAFETY LATCHES OR BRAKES ...

**Report Text:** In one of our galleys the door can be closed without the safety latches being down. The trolley inside this stowage can and will move out during taxi, take-off, turbulence and any other time on its own. This is very dangerous especially during take-off and landing when this trolley could come out of its stowage and block exits or even hurt anyone at the most "dangerous point" of the flight. This has happened on a number of occasions and has been reported by crew; the company does not appear to take these reports seriously.

Cabin crew must do a visible check in the galleys to make sure all the red safety latches are down before take-off and landing and during turbulence. However, in this new galley this can be missed because the latches are hidden behind a door that holds the trolley. Crew appear to only check if doors are closed, as these doors should only close if the safety latches are down but I

have noticed this is NOT the case and gives a wrong indication of safety/security.

**CHIRP** Comment: This report was discussed by the CHIRP Cabin Crew Advisory Board who were concerned to note that the report did not mention the application of cart brakes and an apparent reliance on the use of door safety latches.

All carts should be stowed (in accordance with placarded instructions) with their brakes applied, retaining latches down and the door (if fitted) closed and latched. Whilst latches are stressed to withstand forces that may be incurred should a heavy landing, or similar, be experienced, these should not be used in isolation. Any shortcuts when stowing carts could result in a safety related incident which could cause injury to cabin crew or passengers; the importance of securing the galley correctly must never be underestimated.

This report was forwarded to the operator's Quality Department who advised that "the carts are retained by the turn catches fitted approximately half way down the bays and should be used in the same way that the catches are used across our standard fleets. Crew are expected to ensure that trolleys are secured and in this instance they have to open a door to confirm this - this is not a requirement that is unique to this particular galley. All our galley designs have been approved by the approved regulatory body".

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### CABIN CREW SEATING POSITIONS

**Report Text:** The SCCM decided that they would like to sit on another jumpseat in another part of the cabin for landing and let another crew member sit in their seat! This was against our SOPs.

**CHIRP** Comment: Cabin crew seating positions are determined by the company and are detailed in the Operations Manual. Unless the seat is faulty, has been recorded in the Cabin Defects and/or Tech Log and alternative procedures established and communicated to the flight and cabin crew, seating locations together with associated responsibilities must be complied with.

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### PRESSURE TO DEPART

(1)

**Report Text:** I usually work at the rear of the aircraft. When I arrive at an aircraft for the flight it is one of my responsibilities to security check the rear galley. The majority of the time this summer as soon as an aircraft has arrived from its last rotation the crew getting on to operate another rotation have already been there and have got on while the aircraft is being serviced, cleaned and re-catered.

It is not unusual for the SCCM to be pestered to hurry the security checks to get passengers on and achieve an on-time departure and, if this is the case, the rear galley has still been in the process of being catered so is therefore unable to be security checked until the caterers have left the aircraft; usually half of the passengers have been boarded during this time.

I understand that an hour turnaround for a narrow body aircraft is more than ample but I feel as though I am

rushing my security checks once the caterers have got off and the majority of the time it is not being done to the required standard as I am concentrating on boarding passengers, making regular boarding PAs and dealing with passenger requests/questions during the boarding process.

I feel that the ground agents are putting extreme pressure on SCCMs to board passengers to ensure that they do not get the blame if the aircraft fails to depart on time, this in turn is putting the SCCM under pressure and they are signing the security search form to say that this activity has taken place when in fact the majority of the time it hasn't because we still have caterers on catering the rear of the aircraft.

I have raised the matter with various SCCMs but they seem too frightened to make an aircraft late due to security searches not being done; the majority appear content to put OTP ahead of safety and security. I would like to point out that should an aircraft fail to depart on time and the delay goes down to cabin crew not being ready to accept passengers for whatever reason a full investigation is usually completed. The operating SCCM is then asked for an explanation and should a good enough explanation not be available this will then go on their file; this is why SCCMs are so 'hell bent' on boarding passengers even when security searches have not been completed correctly.

**CHIRP Comment:** This report was raised with the operator who advised that no company reports had been received on this matter.

If you should find yourself in a similar situation to the reporter or are concerned regarding pressure to complete your security checks, you should report your concerns to your company to make them aware of these time pressures and to enable your company to monitor reports and identify any trends. A significant number of reports will encourage your company to look into the issue in more detail and, if necessary, review their procedures.

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## (2)

**Report Text:** The boarding commenced late and the SCCM spoke with the ground staff regarding the amount and size of cabin baggage being brought on to the aircraft; this was an aircraft type where the overhead lockers are less than ideal.

As the last passengers boarded they and the crew were struggling to stow the bags safely in the designated stowage areas; there was no space left in the overhead lockers. It is worth noting that despite these bags fitting into the hand baggage gauges at the gate they did not physically fit in the overhead lockers (above certain seats), therefore the decision was made to offload these bags.

Unfortunately the holds were all closed and had been for at least 20 minutes, which then meant that the bags wouldn't have got onto our UK-bound flight that day.

With the help of the ground staff the crew set about moving cabin baggage around to try and accommodate these bags; this took about 10 mins.

There was a huge amount of pressure on the SCCM to close the main aircraft door to achieve an on time departure. The SCCM remained assertive under this pressure and kept the main aircraft door open throughout as they didn't want crew or passengers standing with heavy bags or trying to stow them while the aircraft was being pushed back or moving under its own power. This would, in turn, have interfered with the safety briefing and also the cabin would not have been secure.

The ground staff did suggest that if the bags couldn't be stowed in the correct place they should be stowed in the toilets for take off and landing. Although still under pressure to do this the SCCM refused for the following reasons:

- 1) The toilets are not a designated stowage for hand baggage
- 2) Where would the bags be stowed securely during the flight where they would be safe should the aircraft encounter turbulence and also not present a trip hazard if left in galley areas?

My concern is while ensuring the aircraft cabin is safe to depart with all bags stowed in the correct stowage before the aircraft departs these delays are attributed to "Cabin crew special requests". This is not the case.

My company puts safety above all else; however the undue pressure that the ground staff put on the SCCM and the crew to depart with unsafely stowed cabin baggage makes it appear that gate staff are more interested in the on time departure of the aircraft regardless of whether it is safe or not.

**CHIRP Comment:** This report shows the importance of proactive cabin management and what can be achieved by an assertive SCCM not bowing to pressure to close the aircraft doors until all hand luggage was safely stowed.

The SCCM acted correctly and did not stow the excess cabin baggage in the toilets as suggested by the ground staff. As mentioned in the previous report, the best course of action is to report such incidents to your company to make them aware of the pressure being applied and to monitor any trends/airport locations where these problems occur. This will permit the relevant ground operations to be reviewed, if necessary.

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## USE OF MOBILE PHONES

**Report Text:** On taxiing to the runway, the SCCM was texting; it was only when I gave them a look of shock that they switched it off.

**CHIRP Comment:** Whilst most companies have procedures in place as to when cabin crew mobile phones are to be switched off, the use of any portable electronic device whilst the engines are running is forbidden. AIC 1/2004 refers and can be found at: [www.nats-uk.ead-it.com/aip/current/aic/EG\\_Circ\\_2004\\_P\\_001.en.pdf](http://www.nats-uk.ead-it.com/aip/current/aic/EG_Circ_2004_P_001.en.pdf)

Cabin crew should ensure that passengers adhere to requirements regarding the use of mobile phones, but must also remember that the same requirements also apply to them.

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# CHIRP

## CABIN CREW REPORT FORM

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

Name: <input type="checkbox"/> Indicates Mandatory Fields	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. 2. On closing, this Report Form will be returned to you. <b>NO RECORD OF YOUR NAME AND ADDRESS WILL BE KEPT</b> 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.
Address: <input type="checkbox"/>	
Post Code <input type="checkbox"/> Tel: <input type="checkbox"/>	
e-mail: <input type="checkbox"/>	

<b>It is <i>CHIRP</i> 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:</b>	No. I do not require a response from <b>CHIRP</b> <input type="checkbox"/>
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**PLEASE COMPLETE RELEVANT INFORMATION ABOUT THE EVENT/SITUATION**

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

**FREEPOST RSKS-KSCA-SSAT • The CHIRP Charitable Trust • 26 Hercules Way • Farnborough • GU14 6UU • UK** (no stamp required if posted in the UK)

Confidential Tel: +44 (0) 1252 378947 or **Freefone** (UK only) 0800 214645 and Confidential Fax: +44 (0) 1252 378940

Report forms are also available on the **CHIRP** website: [www.chirp.co.uk](http://www.chirp.co.uk)