

CHIRP CC FEEDBACK

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EDITORIAL

WINTER OPERATIONS

Winter is not far away and it will not be long before we see snow and ice. As a result, we wanted to use this opportunity to cover some key areas to ensure a season of safe flying.

Ramp – Stay within marked walkways when walking on the ramp. Don't be tempted to take short cuts across untreated areas.

Steps – Take care when using external steps. Assess the level of contamination and if the steps don't look safe then report this immediately to the ground staff. Avoid carrying too many bags and always hold onto the handrail.

Entrance Areas – Once onboard, the floor area just inside the doors can be very slippery due to de-icing fluid being walked into the cabin from the tarmac. Some operators have adopted the use of mats to mitigate the risk of slips. Avoid sprinkling sugar (and other products) onto the floor as this can erode the floor surface making the situation worse.

Footwear – Think about what you have on your feet. Uniform guidelines must be adhered to but your safety is also important. It is recommended that you wear shoes with grip on the sole. Consult your company as to what is acceptable to wear when outside the aircraft in adverse weather conditions.

Report Everything – If you, a colleague or a passenger sees something that doesn't look right then report it immediately. It may be innocent but it could be something much more serious.

The overall message is to stay safe. Look after yourself, your colleagues and your passengers.

WINTER OPERATIONS

Report Text: Upon boarding the aircraft the flight crew were already on board. The First Officer had just completed the walk round. Due to the weather I asked if we required de-icing; the reply was "No".

I then checked the surface of the wings from the window and noted large patches of frost on each wing. One large patch at the end on each wing approx 2ft x 2ft and one on each wing above the under carriage strut. I pointed this out to the Captain who then confirmed that de-icing was required.

CHIRP Comment: The reporter was quite correct to raise their concern with the Captain; the presence of any frost

or other contaminant should be reported to the flight crew immediately.

It is very important that cabin crew remain vigilant in relation to any visible ice accumulation.

MINIMUM DOOR COVER

Report Text: Due to a technical issue an aircraft change was required. The plan was to send cabin crew from the current aircraft to the new aircraft to carry out the security checks and then board the passengers via buses onto the new aircraft. Once the last bus had left the 'old' aircraft, the other cabin crew and both pilots would come to the 'new' aircraft. The SCCM would remain on board and the next most senior cabin crew member was asked to go with two other cabin crew members to get this started. The question of whether an SCCM should be present on the aircraft when passengers were on board arose, especially as no pilots would arrive until the end of boarding, and the cabin crew were told to get on with it so as to avoid any further delay.

Pax were boarded without the SEP checks being done or the cabin or galleys being security checked due to time pressure and too few cabin crew. At one point over 215 pax were on board, only 3 cabin crew and no pilots.

CHIRP Comment: EU-OPS permits a reduction in the number of cabin crew member normally required in accordance with OPS 1.990 when an aircraft is at a parking space under certain conditions. The requirements are set out in OPS 1.311 and are as follows:

When the aeroplane is on the ground at a parking place, the number of cabin crew present in the passenger cabin may be reduced below the number determined by OPS 1.990. The minimum number of cabin crew required in these circumstances shall be one per pair of floor-level emergency exits on each passenger deck, or one for every 50, or fraction of 50, passengers present on board, whichever is greater, provided that:

1. the operator has established a procedure for the evacuation of passengers with this reduced number of cabin crew that has been accepted by the Authority as providing equivalent safety; and
2. no refuelling/defuelling is taking place; and
3. the senior cabin crew member has performed the pre-boarding safety briefing to the Cabin Crew; and
4. the senior cabin crew member is present in the passenger cabin; and
5. the pre-boarding cabin checks have been completed.

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As the number of crew members quoted in the report did not appear to comply with the requirements, the matter was referred to both the operator and the CAA; a satisfactory outcome was achieved between both parties.

USE OF SMARTPHONES

Report Text: Passenger used his Blackberry on taxi onto stand into AAA (US). I asked him to refrain from using it and switch it off, only to be told "Your rules don't apply in the USA".

Passengers do not listen to PAs about mobiles... and also do not realise the dangers of using them.

CHIRP Comment: The passenger in this report was incorrect in his assumption that he was not required to comply with the cabin crew member's instructions. Regardless of the aircraft's position or destination, the rules of the State where the aircraft is registered apply. The UK Air Navigation Order states "each and every passenger must obey all lawful commands which the commander may give for the purpose of securing the aircraft and all persons and all property carried on it."

There appears to be a common misperception amongst passengers that devices such as smartphones, tablets and e-books do not *need* to be switched OFF if set to a *Flight Safe Mode*; but this is not the case. These items can be used during the flight in flight safe mode but they must still be switched OFF for taxi, take off and landing. Whilst some operator announcements do reflect this requirement, it is not always understood by passengers.

SMOKE HOOD PAST ITS EXPIRY DATE

Report Text: Whilst carrying out our pre-flight equipment checks for our return sector to the UK, it became apparent that the smoke hood in my area was 10 weeks out of date and the seal on the grey box containing the smoke hood had been broken. In accordance with SOPs this was notified to the SCCM who alerted an engineer. The engineer confirmed that the item was out of date and after consulting the Minimum Equipment List (MEL) we were informed that we should have one for each crew member, but as they did not have a spare downroute it would be replaced when we got back to the UK.

I did not have confidence in the smoke hood's serviceability and asked the SCCM if we should reduce the crew complement by one, I was advised that there was no need and in the event of a smoke filled cabin I should sit in a spare passenger seat and protect myself. The Captain advised me that if there was a fire I was to call another crew member to come with their smoke hood and I should vacate the area ASAP and if the situation escalated to a smoke filled cabin/evacuation I should carry out my duties as normal, use the out of date smoke hood and hope for the best that it worked.

I felt that my safety and that of the passengers near this main door was being compromised. Had I needed to use the smoke hood and it didn't work I may not have been fit/able to open the exit, evacuate/rescue passengers, obtain necessary equipment etc.

Neither the SCCM nor the Captain communicated this with the rest of the crew to make them aware of the situation and/or changes to procedure in the event of a fire.

I think there are various things that could have been done on the day:

1. The expired smoke hood with a broken seal at this main door should have been swapped with the one at a non-critical location.
2. The flight should have 'officially' operated with one less crew member and the 'spare' crew member seated in a spare passenger seat near a main exit.
3. All crew should have been informed of the situation and of any subsequent changes to procedures.
4. In the event that smoke hoods had to be used, the expired one should have been planned to be used as a last resort only and should not have been relied on at a main door by an operating crew member.

CHIRP Comment: This report was raised with the operator concerned and a comprehensive investigation was carried out.

The operator confirmed that when an aircraft passed through the hangar the Engineering checks included an inspection of smoke hoods to check for damage, security and expiry. If an item was close to the expiry date this was recorded in the Tech Log, along with the date, to enable the item to be changed prior to that date. In the case reported the smoke hood in question had not been recorded in the Tech Log as nearing expiry and as a result had not been changed.

In a case where an engineer was advised that a smoke hood was out of date the company procedure at UK locations was normally to remove the item from the aircraft. However it was permissible, particularly if the aircraft was downroute, for the item to be left in its stowage, placarded as unserviceable and the cabin crew member in that area made aware of the fact.

The Minimum Equipment List (MEL) for the aircraft type in this report states that there should be sufficient serviceable smoke hoods carried for the minimum crew complement. When operating with more than the minimum crew complement (as in this case) the MEL permits the aircraft to depart with an unserviceable item.

The operator accepted that the smoke hood on this flight should have been repositioned by the Engineer or placarded as unserviceable, either of which would have avoided any confusion. As a result of this report the operator is reviewing the relevant Engineering processes and procedures.

NOISY DOORS OBSCURING THE PA

Report Text: The cabin crew were informed by the flight crew before boarding the aircraft that there was a known problem at D##, as a result of which there would be an increase in noise during the final phase of the flight. At the time of the report the issue had existed for at least 3 weeks.

On final approach, very shortly after the landing gear was extended, there was an extremely loud vibrating sound at D## that was also audible at the door

opposite. It is fair to say that the noise was louder than the engines during take-off. The sound persisted until the aircraft had slowed down to taxi speed after landing.

The PA volume can at times be fairly quiet on this aircraft type. My main concern is that, if an emergency situation arose, leading to the flight crew making an announcement to brace, it would be more than likely drowned out by the noise possibly delaying the crew members' realisation of an emergency situation and in turn delaying them to take up the brace position and shout the appropriate commands.

CHIRP Comment: CHIRP raised the matter with the operator's Engineering Department. The company advised that several doors on this particular aircraft had become noisy during descent. A number of adjustments had been carried out and the door seals had been replaced. The possible causes of the reported noise when the undercarriage was lowered (a leaking pneumatic duct on an air driven pump (ADP) or excessive vibration in the vicinity of the door) had been investigated; this had included a detailed inspection of the ADP ducts for possible damage, leaks, loose clamps etc, and an operational check of the ADP for any unusual noise and vibrations. The matter was to be further investigated during scheduled maintenance.

In the circumstances described above an alternative procedure for alerting passengers and other crew members should have been considered by the operator.

TURBULENCE

Report Text: On this flight (duration 40 mins) the weather was turbulent.

The Captain switched seat belt signs off after we levelled off. We commenced service and the turbulence increased, the crew member at the rear requested the seat belt signs to be put on and the Captain refused. The SCCM also spoke to the Captain who maintained it would improve and that "it was his/her decision". It was very difficult to complete the service.

On the return leg the turbulence increased. Eventually the Captain switched on the seat belt sign and the SCCM made an announcement to suspend cabin service. Shortly afterwards the turbulence worsened - this was described by the flight crew as moderate.

My concern is that the Captain did not take any notice of my concerns or the crew member at the rear.

CHIRP Comment: EU-OPS 1.1000 (b) states "The senior cabin crew member shall have responsibility to the commander for the conduct and coordination of normal and emergency procedure(s) specified in the Operations Manual. During turbulence, in the absence of any instructions from the flight crew, the senior cabin crew member shall be entitled to discontinue non-safety related duties and advise the flight crew of the level of turbulence being experienced and the need for the fasten seat belt signs to be switched on."

In this instance, as the SCCMs report to the Captain was unfortunately ignored, the SCCM should have discontinued the service until it was felt that it was once again safe to continue with it.

EXTREMELY COLD CABIN

Report Text: First flight of the day and at the briefing we were told the aircraft had no APU. This is a regular occurrence in our company. We reached the aircraft and the outside temp was -5°C. This was the aircraft's first flight of the day, so it had been parked throughout the night.

On boarding the aircraft we found the cabin temperature was lower than outside and no form of heating was available, as we only had use of a GPU. It was still like this when pax boarded and until we pushed back and engines were fully started (we could then get heating).

Pax were complaining about the cold telling us they could "see their breath" which was true. Plus there were children onboard.

By the time we got airborne, we had been on the aircraft for at least one hour, is this reasonable? Or in fact safe?

We are not provided with winter uniform, (i.e female cabin crew members are not provided with trousers), and our coat is only a 'mac'.

Are we expected to work in this environment again this winter? No APU seems to be a more common situation than having one available!

CHIRP Comment: The topic of high/low temperatures in aircraft cabins has been raised on a number of occasions. Reporters often cite the lack of availability or use of an APU or ground air conditioning system and question whether it is safe to work in the resulting cabin environment. There is a commonly-held misconception that working in very cold or very hot conditions is not permissible. Whilst clearly not desirable, there are no regulations relating to maximum/minimum cabin temperatures.

Many airports have environmental policies which often include restrictions on the use of APUs during ground operations due to airfield noise/environmental constraints. Non-compliance may result in a financial penalty or other sanction. Thus, it is sometimes the case that the APU is serviceable but its use is not permitted. If this should be the case and the cabin temperature is unusually hot or cold, notify the Captain to ascertain whether the airport authority permits the use of the APU in exceptional circumstances.

EUROPEAN CABIN SAFETY CONFERENCE 1-3 NOVEMBER 2011 - FRANKFURT

The inaugural *European Cabin Safety Conference* is being organised by L/D_{MAX} Aviation Safety Group, this is specifically for cabin crew, training and safety departments of all major and regional airlines that fly within the Europe.

The conference will be held at the Marriott Frankfurt, topics include health and medical issues, training, current in-flight topics and safety and security.

Further information can be found at: www.ldmaxaviation.com including details of special rates for cabin crew and group discounts.

PLEASE NOTE THIS CONFERENCE HAS NO ASSOCIATION WITH CHIRP

CHIRP

CABIN CREW REPORT FORM

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

Name: <input style="width:90%;" type="text"/> ▲ 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. NO RECORD OF YOUR NAME AND ADDRESS WILL BE KEPT 3. CHIRP is a reporting programme for safety-related issues. <u>We regret we are unable to accept reports that relate to industrial relations issues.</u>
Address: <input style="width:90%;" type="text"/>	
Post Code: <input style="width:40%;" type="text"/> Tel: <input style="width:40%;" type="text"/>	
e-mail: <input style="width:90%;" type="text"/>	

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 <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"/>	DATE OF INCIDENT	BOARDING <input type="checkbox"/> INFLIGHT SERVICE <input type="checkbox"/>
SUPERNUMERARY <input type="checkbox"/>	TIME LOCAL/GMT	DISSEMBARKING <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:
OTHER:	AIRCRAFT LOCATION	FLIGHT PHASE
EXPERIENCE/QUALIFICATION	THE AIRCRAFT	PRE-DEPARTURE <input type="checkbox"/> TAXI <input type="checkbox"/>
TOTAL YEARS <input type="text"/> YEARS WITH CURRENT AIRLINE <input type="text"/>	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:
1. <input type="text"/> 2. <input type="text"/> 3. <input type="text"/>	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:
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: <input style="width:90%;" type="text"/>	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 TO:

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