

CHIRP CC FEEDBACK

Issue No: 44

3/2012

ADMINISTRATION/CABIN CREW PROGRAMME MANAGER APPOINTMENT

We are pleased to advise that Miss Stephanie Colbourne has joined the CHIRP team in the role of Administration/Cabin Crew Programme Manager.

Stephanie previously held a flight training administration position with a UK airline and will progressively assume responsibility for managing the Cabin Crew Programme.

EDITORIAL

We receive a significant number of reports from cabin crew members which raise specific issues relating to their particular company's operations, training and administration.

We encourage reporters to report such issues directly to their company and, where possible, provide the contact details of an individual within their company, who is able to advise them on the most appropriate way of bringing the matter to the company's attention.

Most companies welcome positive suggestions for safety improvements and reports of possible shortcomings, as these are important in the monitoring of trends and in reducing potential risks within a company's Safety Management System.

Regrettably, in spite of our assurances some reporters remain reluctant to report directly. In some cases, it is apparent that an organisation's perception of its company culture is not shared by some employees. In other cases, the experience of colleagues, who have reported the same or similar issues directly, leads individuals to conclude that their report will not be received favourably. In many cases these perceptions are not correct.

We have included two reports below that are typical; both detail safety observations that the reporters were unwilling to raise directly.

(1) CABIN LIGHTING SETTINGS

This report was submitted after several other cabin crew members had raised their concerns directly to the company.

Report Text: Despite the requirement for cabin lights to be dimmed for landing during the hours of darkness, my company has a cabin service standard which requires the lighting to be set to "Low" for landing.

On this particular aircraft "Low" is a higher setting than "Night"- which means that although the cabin sidewall

lights are switched off, the main ceiling overhead fluorescent lights remain fully on. This has the effect of leaving the whole cabin in bright light. Most SCCMs dim all cabin lighting fully, or set the lights to the "Night" setting.

During the pre-flight briefing for this particular flight the SCCM reiterated that crew members should leave the lighting set to the "Low" cabin setting. When the crew objected that they felt this to be unsafe, the SCCM explained that the company had emphasised that crew must adhere to the service standard at all times.

After landing at our destination I was very concerned while taxiing to observe that, due to the bright cabin lighting, all I could see out of the door window from my crew seat at Door # was the reflection of myself and the cabin interior. How would I (or any of my fellow crew) be able to safely and with any certainty check for outside hazards before opening the door in the event of an evacuation? The passengers seated in the exit row opposite my crew seat actually asked why we hadn't dimmed the cabin lights, to which I replied that they were actually adjusted to the "Low" setting (not informing them that this was not actually the lowest setting available).

I brought my concerns to the attention of the SCCM who commented that they felt that the bright lighting in the cabin for night-time landing was "ridiculous" and that the "Low" setting urgently needed adjusting; all the other crew agreed. We spoke to the Captain who also expressed concern that a cabin service standard should take precedence over safety, informing us that he/she would address the issue with his/her Manager as a matter of urgency.

Lessons Learned: Hopefully the "Low" lighting setting on this aircraft type can be adjusted to dim the overhead cabin lighting effectively, or the company Service Standard can be modified to indicate "Night" as the correct setting for night-time landings. It is important that the company checks the cabin lighting levels during the hours of darkness just to see how bright the "Low" setting actually is, as the current bright lighting levels really could impede a night-time evacuation.

CHIRP Comment: The reporter's concern has been represented to the company and also discussed by the CHIRP Cabin Crew Advisory Board, the membership of which includes a representative of the Cabin Safety Department CAA (SRG).

www.chirp.co.uk

FREEPOST RSKS-KSCA-SSAT, CHIRP, 26 Hercules Way, Farnborough GU14 6UU (UK only)

confidential@chirp.co.uk

Freefone (UK only): 0800 214645 or +44 (0) 1252 378947

(2) TRAINING REQUIREMENTS FOR SECURING CABIN FOR TAKE-OFF AND LANDING

Since finishing my cabin crew training I have witnessed inconsistencies of crew knowledge of how to secure the cabin for take-off and landing. Some examples are:

On my supernumerary flight, when asked by the SCCM on all the factors involved in a secure cabin, I had to genuinely think about it and forgot about arm rests, whereas I should have been able to reel them off instantly.

On various other flights, I noticed that bags were missed (left in the wrong places) and in premium cabins, many crew members appeared to be unsure on how to properly secure these cabins, mainly regarding small items like phones and bottles of water, and blankets. A passenger watching a film on their iPad (with earphones in), was seen but ignored.

I recall that during training how to secure a cabin was not mentioned in detail; it was just expected that everyone knew. How to secure the economy cabin is written on the Safety Card, but there is no documentation which is specifically tailored to premium cabins.

Lessons Learned: My observations have led me to the conclusion that securing the cabin needs to be allocated more time during training; it should even have its own module, and include role-play. It is such a vital factor in ensuring both passengers' and crew members' safety. There should also be no inconsistency in relation to knowledge, especially when it comes to SCCMs.

Can I suggest that posters of seats from each cabin, detailing every single thing involved in creating a fully-secure cabin are displayed within Crew Report areas? This would reaffirm, before every trip, to every single crew member, exactly what they need to do to ensure their safety and that of our passengers, get rid of any inconsistencies, and improve our safety culture.

CHIRP Comment: The reporter's comments have been passed to the operator for information. How to secure a cabin is a required item in the operator's training manual.

INCORRECT SAFETY DEMONSTRATION

Report Text: I was travelling as a passenger on this flight.

After push back the crew screened the pre-flight safety demonstration video but not the correct version for the aircraft we were flying on.

None of the operating crew seemed to notice; when this was pointed out to one of them the response was "Oh don't worry...they're all the same really."

CHIRP Comment: It is important to check that the video is correct either before it is played or by monitoring the start of the safety demonstration. In this case, the safety demonstration video screened did contain significant differences from the actual aircraft; as a minimum these should have been briefed to passengers in a supplementary PA/manual briefing to avoid confusion in the event of a subsequent emergency.

'SELF HELP' EXIT ROWS

Report Text: I am a cabin crew member and was travelling as a passenger on this [non-company] flight; I was surprised to see that with a passenger load that was close to full, the overwing exit rows were kept completely empty throughout all phases of flight. I offered to sit there during boarding; I said they could have a trained and willing ABP to assist in the event of an emergency. I was told that they keep these areas free and was informed, when I asked why, because I hadn't paid extra.

I understand the thought behind this but I expected the cabin crew to move someone there once boarding had finished; however, on both this and a subsequent flight not one person was seated in the 'self help' exit rows. It doesn't seem right that emergency exits might have a delay in being opened in the event of an emergency as no one is sitting adjacent to them.

I'm interested in how this practice is allowed, as at my company we are told that if the passenger load exceeds a certain number, these seat rows have to be occupied.

CHIRP Comment: The UK CAA has confirmed that their guidance material states that passenger seats immediately adjacent to 'self help' exits should be occupied by an able bodied and briefed passenger.

This report did not involve a UK operator; however, it is understood that the relevant National Aviation Authority has recently issued similar guidance to that above.

FOREIGN LANGUAGE PRE-FLIGHT SAFETY BRIEFINGS

Report Text: I recently operated a route on which the majority of the passengers were non-English speakers.

I discovered that the safety video was in English and did not have subtitles. During refuelling on the ground at both our departure airport (UK) and our destination (Eastern Europe) I had to ask the passengers to make sure their seat belts were unfastened - they ignored me!

There were no announcements for this and no announcements pre take-off, prior to landing and after landing either. Many passengers stood up immediately after landing.

My main concern is the lack of subtitles for the safety video before take off.

CHIRP Comment: There is no requirement under EU-OPS to provide safety instructions in different languages; the pictorials on safety cards and in the video are intended to be internationally recognisable and sufficient to brief those who don't understand English. However, from a safety management perspective it is desirable either to make additional announcements in the relevant foreign language or add text/subtitles to briefing cards/videos when a large proportion of the passengers carried do not speak/understand English.

This report was passed to the operator concerned for information.

CABIN CREW FTL TRAINING

Report Text: I commenced a three- sector duty reporting at 07.30 BST - AAA (UK)-BBB (Europe)-AAA-BBB. Due to bad weather, this duty was extended to 12hrs; off duty

at 19.30 BST in BBB. We got to our hotel downroute around 20.15 BST. Our pick up time was 05.45 BST. Therefore, we had 9hr.30mins rest in the hotel. Discretion was not sought by the Captain and the SCCM seemed to think this was OK.

Lessons Learned: If our duty time was exceeded, then we as cabin crew need to learn to speak up more forcibly on the day. We are made aware of our company FTL scheme during training (and most of us struggle to get our heads around that), but little attention is paid to legal hours. We currently have many people new to flying and no-one to check with. I do think more time should be spent on this topic with crew during training.

CHIRP Comment: The following is based on the provisions of CAP 371 - The Avoidance of Fatigue in Aircrews Guide to Requirements:

1. The maximum Flight Duty Period for a cabin crew member undertaking a three-sector day for which the report time was 07:30 would be 11hr 30mins (Section B; Para 13.3 Table A) plus one additional hour for cabin crew i.e. 12hr 30mins (Section B; Para 24.2.a).
2. The minimum rest period on completion of the duty would be the length of the duty minus one hour or a minimum of eleven hours.
3. The rest period is calculated from the end of the duty period (typically 30mins after chocks) to the report time for the next Flight Duty Period (if a hotel is less than one hour total travelling time from/to the airport, no extra allowance is made for travel to/from the hotel).
4. Notwithstanding the minimum rest period as calculated above, a room allocated to a crew member must be available for occupation for a minimum of ten hours. (Section B: Para 17.2.1).
5. An Aircraft Commander's discretion to reduce a rest period does not include reducing the time below 10 hours at accommodation. (Section B; Para 19.1)

On the basis of the information in this report, if the operator's Approved FTL scheme does not contain agreed exemptions from CAP 371, the time at accommodation was less than the minimum required.

It is perhaps understandable that many cabin crew members fail to understand the complexities of FTLs during their initial training. It is a required element of SCCM training and some operators also include it in cabin crew recurrent training.

LEVEL 2 DUTY VARIATIONS

Report Text: I have a couple of questions around one issue. Up until now several Eastern Mediterranean flights have had Level 2 protection requiring a rest day (RD) to be rostered the day after the duty. The airline has just changed its internal rules regarding this and as a result some of these flights (pilot night-stops) are no longer classed as Level 2 for the cabin crew. The company previously planned that all flights which operate within 30 mins of the maximum Flight Duty Period should have Level 2 protection. This has been changed to only those flights within 15 mins of their maximum FDP except that, if pilots have Level 2 protection then cabin crew also get it automatically.

This has created a bizarre situation where the first (day) flights to AAA have RD protection because the pilots are

Level 2 (due to them operating both sectors). However the 2nd (late night) AAA schedule (and more tiring for cabin crew) no longer have RD protection because the pilots don't do both sectors; they night-stop in AAA. Only the cabin crew do the round trip and are therefore no longer get Level 2. As you can imagine this is creating bad feeling between the pilot and cabin crew communities, also because these flights are 2nd rotation they are most prone to delays so the planning doesn't seem to be sensible or logical by the airline. There is only 15/20 mins built into the planning now before cabin crew are required to operate into discretion and one of the issues which is creating bad feeling is the fact that the Commander may exercise discretion on behalf of the cabin crew despite the fact that they (the pilots) are not actually doing the same round trip duty. Normally commander's discretion is understood because the pilots will be doing the same duty but in this case they are not. That doesn't seem right or fair?

CRM has deteriorated as the company appears to encourage a 'them and us' environment. Although Commanders should speak to the cabin crew and take into account individual circumstances they rarely do these days. More often than not it is the Crewing Department who use commander's discretion on the day, telling crew "they can do it; it's legal". I personally think that the difference between the two duty lengths being operated by the pilots and cabin crew make it unfair for commander's discretion to be used by the airline on the day; certainly prior to leaving the UK.

It's created a great deal of discussion at our airline both from a workload perspective and also a CRM one and I would welcome the CAA's views.

CHIRP Comment: From the CAA's perspective an operator is only required to use a Level 1/Level 2 Variation when the scheduled Flight Duty Period (FDP) exceeds the normal maximum FDP. Some operators elect to apply a variation to routes that do not require it to provide a buffer for their operation.

The CAA advises that it is quite common for flight and cabin crew to be on different trip patterns and therefore on different FDPs.

As regards commander's discretion, the Aircraft Commander is trained in his responsibilities and has the responsibility for assessing all members of the crew for the safety of the flight when considering the use of discretion. In cases such as this where the Aircraft Commander joins a flight, it is important that the SCCM ensures that the Commander is aware of all cabin crew members' prior duty. The CAA does not permit a company to exercise discretion on behalf of the Aircraft Commander.

The CAA reviews the use of discretion as part of its oversight responsibilities. In a case where a schedule requires discretion to be used on a regular basis (whether it is used for the flight crew and/or the cabin crew) the CAA would expect an operator to adjust the schedules or apply an appropriate FTL variation. Thus, it is important that any discretion exercised on behalf of cabin crew members is formally reported by the Aircraft Commander.

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"/>
---	---

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 AIRCRAFT LOCATION	BOARDING <input type="checkbox"/> INFLIGHT SERVICE <input type="checkbox"/> DISEMBARKING <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:
EXPERIENCE/QUALIFICATION TOTAL YEARS YEARS WITH CURRENT AIRLINE CURRENT AIRCRAFT TYPES QUALIFIED ON: 1. 2. 3.	THE AIRCRAFT TYPE/SERIES NUMBER OF CABIN CREW NUMBER OF PAX ON BOARD NUMBER OF EXITS	FLIGHT PHASE 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:
PASSENGER(S)/INJURY(IES) PASSENGER(S) INVOLVED? YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> INJURY TO PASSENGER <input type="checkbox"/> INJURY TO CREW	WEATHER (IF RELEVANT) TURBULENCE <input type="checkbox"/> THUNDERSTORM <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:	TYPE OF OPERATION SCHEDULED <input type="checkbox"/> CHARTER <input type="checkbox"/> CORPORATE <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:
THE COMPANY NAME OF COMPANY:	REPORT TOPIC / MY REPORT RELATES TO:	MY MAIN POINTS ARE: 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