

# **CHIRP**

# **CABIN CREW FEEDBACK**

**Issue No: 54**

**December 2014**



## **WINTER OPERATIONS**

With the winter season now upon us, it is an excellent time to highlight some important points to remember when operating flights in cold and damp weather.

1. When setting off for work, make sure you are dressed appropriately for the current climate in the UK but have also packed for the weather expected if/when staying downroute. It's better to be over prepared than under prepared!
2. Some flights may be operated from stands that do not have an air bridge. When boarding flights using moveable stairs, always take care when you, other crew and passengers are using them. Assess the condition of the stairs and if you do not feel that they are safe to use, report the condition to the Commander and the ground staff. It is always wise to hold the handrail for support in case the stairs are unstable.
3. When the weather is cold, wet or icy the galley floors can become contaminated with ice, snow and de-icing fluid very quickly. Whoever is present at the front of the aircraft when passengers are boarding should monitor the area to avoid any slips or falls. If the area is too wet or contaminated for you to clean yourself, report this to the Commander and/or the ground staff who can arrange for the cleaning staff to rectify. Some operators provide absorbent mats in these situations, if they are provided, they should be checked before passenger boarding to ensure that they are positioned to avoid any trips or falls.
4. Flight crew will complete a walk-round before passenger boarding and this is when they will assess whether the aircraft needs de-icing before take-off. If any crew member sees any ice or frost on the flight control and aerodynamic surfaces, this must be reported to the Commander immediately so that they can reassess the situation.
5. Finally, if you, a colleague or a passenger sees something that doesn't look right then you must report it immediately. It is better to speak up at the time rather than after the event has occurred.

### **THE FOLLOWING REPORT HAS ALSO BEEN PRINTED IN AIR TRANSPORT FEEDBACK ISSUE 113**

#### **VISIBLE ICE ON AIRCRAFT WING BEFORE TAKE-OFF**

**Report Text:** The rough condition of the runway had damaged a tyre on landing to the extent that it had lost pressure to the point where it was not permissible to just pump it up, the wheel had to be replaced so we had a delay on the ground. We were getting close to going out of hours by the time all that was fixed but still had time to play with. As we were ready to go a crew member phoned me and said they could see ice on both wings. I called the flight crew immediately and reported this. The Captain said that they were aware and had been monitoring it and that it was just water. I went to look and saw an almost identical patch of what I would call something between ice and frost on both wings. I called the flight crew to tell them. The Captain came back to me, not shouting but firmly saying they were happy with it and were going.

Later the crew member who had been guarding the open door while we were on the ground said to me that the flight crew had not been outside for an hour before we left, also I did not think they could see the wings from the cockpit

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so I am concerned (if what the crew member said is accurate) that the flight crew were in fact not aware of the state of the wing.

The flight was manic and I did not speak to the flight crew about this, they disembarked before me without saying anything.

**CHIRP Comment:** This is a disappointing and disturbing report. The Cabin Crew may have wrongly identified the deposit on the wing. Correctly identifying whether it is frost, or dew from a distance is difficult for anyone. The flight crew may have resolved this by either having information to assure themselves that it was not ice, e.g. air temperature well above zero, or have had it physically checked by a ground crew member, without the Cabin Crew being aware of it, but this should have been communicated to the cabin crew member.

By not speaking to the Cabin Crew prior to departure to clarify why the decision to depart was made, the Captain possibly and unintentionally caused concern and potential distraction and may have inhibited communication during that flight and any subsequent ones.

We don't know why the Flight Crew left the aircraft without further discussion with the Cabin Crew but by not debriefing them on events that concerned them, the Flight Crew have potentially affected CRM, both now and in the future, not to mention some professional discourtesy.

It is to be hoped that the Cabin Crew concerned will not be dissuaded from reporting ice on the wings or other concerns in future, as a failure to do so has led to tragedy in the past.

As a reminder to all Cabin Crew; ASRs can be completed by any crew member if it is believed a safety issue has not been correctly resolved.

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### SITUATIONAL AWARENESS DURING BOARDING

**Report Text:** Whilst boarding, passenger catering was being loaded in the rear galley. I was standing at the galley side of the toilet doors. A female passenger came to me to ask where to place her bag, I stayed where I was and pointed to the locker space. As I was doing so, I glimpsed a toddler rushing past the toilets and I grabbed him as he stepped into the galley and pushed him back into cabin. I said to the lady that the child must stay in the cabin as the door was open but she looked blankly at me as she didn't speak English and the child was not hers! The parents were seated further down the aircraft with the toddler on their lap. They did not know he had run to the back of the aircraft as they were organising themselves. The caterers were just finishing and I closed the door. I informed the SCCM of the incident and informed the Captain when I got a chance on turnaround; he thanked me for catching the toddler as he realised how serious it could have been. I said I would be completing a safety report.

We cater frequently whilst passengers are boarding with ground equipment in place and with 3 crew we have either 1 at each end and 1 at o/w exits or 1 at the rear and 2 at the front whilst boarding. If any problems arise or anyone distracts you even if you are in the vicinity of the door, a situation such as this is an accident waiting to happen. Pre-boards are always elderly (with more than one on most occasions) and families with children/infants. They are the ones most likely to require additional help and need it whilst the catering is being loaded. Only 1 crew member is 'free to assist' who isn't allocated 'a pair of doors' whilst boarding. If the caterers had finished a moment earlier, my back would have been to the galley and as the catering truck has to move back slightly to enable the door to be closed the inquisitive toddler could have been right up behind me and out of the door. Luckily for the company, the toddler and me, the caterers finished later rather than sooner and my reflexes are sharp!

Lessons Learned: Crew are taught to remain at open doors on turnaround but be especially vigilant by looking behind you before going to close the door after the caterers have finished just in case you have someone right behind you. If catering has to be done whilst passengers are boarding with 3 crew, I suggest that it be made practice that instead of 1 assisting the SCCM at front with boarding as most SCCM ask crew to do, it should be compulsory for the 2 crew to stay at rear until the door is closed and then 1 can move into the cabin to assist.

**CHIRP Comment:** Cabin crew are primarily on board an aircraft for the safety and welfare of the passengers and it is very important that they remain alert at all times during the boarding process, especially when the aircraft doors are open for catering to be loaded. Ultimately, it is the parent's responsibility to be aware of where their child is; however, it is likely that they become distracted when securing their hand luggage and the child can wander off. Thanks to the reporter's quick thinking a potential accident was averted.

All operators are required to establish procedures for boarding with the rear aircraft doors open and these procedures would need to be run through the SMS (Safety Management System) programme. The operator also needs to establish whether they are happy that all safety and company requirements can be met. This type of incident should be reported internally through the company reporting processes to ensure that if not already considered in the risk assessment for boarding passengers whilst the aircraft is being catered, that it is added and if necessary appropriate mitigations are put in place, such as suggested by the reporter. Whilst the frequency of events like this is low the severity of the implications could be very high.

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### ALLOCATED SEATS FOR FAMILIES

**Report Text:** At my company, we have been doing online check-in for passengers for around 4 to 5 months now. We keep getting families that are not seated together. We had a notice advising that children under the age of 14

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years must be seated with an adult. The notice confirmed this was an EU regulation and must happen over the passengers who have paid for seats together.

I keep finding that we are still getting cases where children are not seated with an adult and when you speak to the passengers as they board about this, they are saying the check-in and the gate staff have said the cabin crew will sort the seating allocation out.

On my flight yesterday I was not happy with this as the passengers that had been split up were 2 adults and 4 children, of which one child had learning difficulties. Check-in and gate staff did not do anything about it, when I asked why I was told as they had checked in online it was their own fault.

My understanding is that as a company we have a duty of care to the passengers, no matter how they have booked their seats.

**CHIRP Comment:** This report was referred to the operator who confirmed that they have an on-line check in process which is new to the company. All crew have been advised to report any such incidents so that any issues can be measured and trended – this is very important for operators to be able to rectify problems. The ground operations team had been working extremely hard to put extra measures in place to avoid the seating issues having to be rectified by the crew.

These problems had been discussed with the regulator who were aware that there were ‘teething problems’ with the new process and that the operator is monitoring the problem.

The operator confirmed that all crew have been kept updated throughout the work completed to rectify the issues reported but crew should continue to report such issues through the company reporting channels. The operator has recognised that the crew members are frustrated so the information regarding seating allocations has been sent out on several occasions. This issue will continue to be monitored with any further issues will be addressed at the source.

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Registered in England No: 3253764

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

Name: <input style="width: 90%;" type="text"/> <span style="float: right;">▲ Indicates Mandatory Fields</span>	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. CHIRP is a reporting programme for safety-related issues. We regret we are unable to accept reports that relate to industrial relations issues.
Address: <input style="width: 90%;" type="text"/>	
Post Code: <input style="width: 40%;" type="text"/> Tel: <input style="width: 40%;" type="text"/>	
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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 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
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:
<b>EXPERIENCE/QUALIFICATION</b> TOTAL YEARS      YEARS WITH CURRENT AIRLINE	<b>THE AIRCRAFT</b> TYPE/SERIES NUMBER OF CABIN CREW NUMBER OF PAX ON BOARD NUMBER OF EXITS	<b>FLIGHT PHASE</b> 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>CURRENT AIRCRAFT TYPES QUALIFIED ON:</b> 1.      2.      3.	<b>WEATHER (IF RELEVANT)</b> TURBULENCE <input type="checkbox"/> THUNDERSTORM <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:	<b>TYPE OF OPERATION</b> SCHEDULED <input type="checkbox"/> CHARTER <input type="checkbox"/> CORPORATE <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:
<b>PASSENGER(S)/INJURY(IES)</b> PASSENGER(S) INVOLVED?    YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> INJURY TO PASSENGER <input type="checkbox"/> INJURY TO CREW	<b>REPORT TOPIC / MY REPORT RELATES TO:</b>	<b>MY MAIN POINTS ARE:</b> A: B: C:
<b>THE COMPANY</b> NAME OF COMPANY:		

**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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