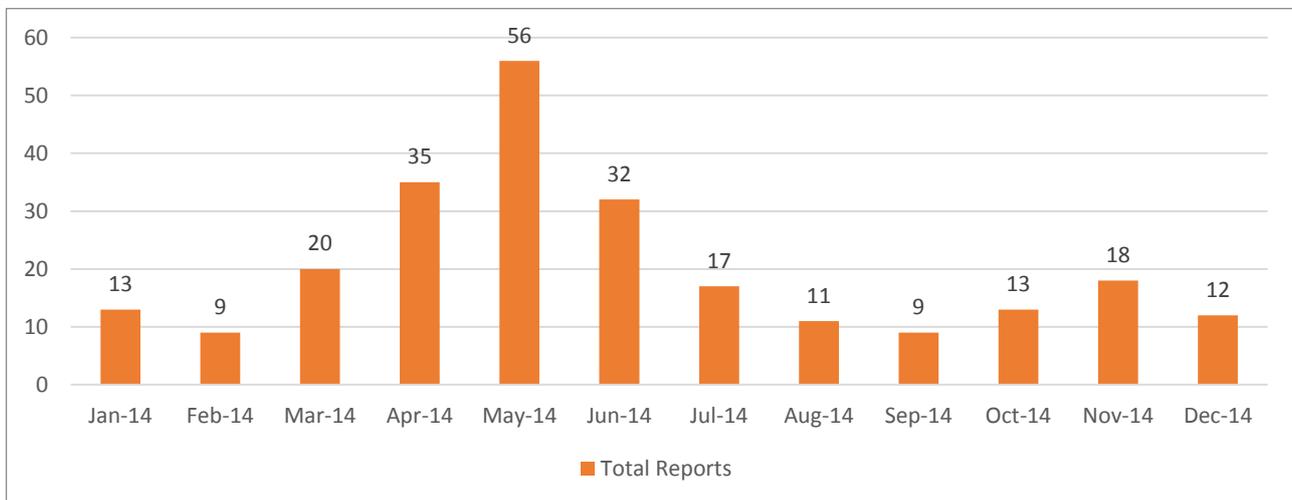


CHIRP CC FEEDBACK

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REPORTING THEMES FOR 2014



Last year, CHIRP received almost 250 cabin crew reports from cabin crew across the UK. A high number of these reports were de-identified with the individual reporters consent and sent to either the operator or the CAA – in some cases both, for comment and/or investigation. The report topics were wide ranging, covering subjects from fatigue and rest to unserviceable items on aircraft. In all cases, the reporters were encouraged to complete incident and safety report forms with their companies to ensure that the companies were advised of possible safety issues that may need to be investigated.

CHIRP works independently from UK operators and the CAA so it is vital that any safety concerns are also recorded with the operator as well as CHIRP. We are only able to pass on the individual concerns of reporters if they grant their permission. Without this permission, the report can only be closed in the CHIRP system and will go no further. If reporters feel they cannot advise the company of their concerns directly or give CHIRP the permission to do so on their behalf, they can still [submit an MOR](#) (mandatory occurrence report) via the MOR scheme operated by the CAA. The objective of the MOR Scheme is to contribute to the improvement of flight safety by ensuring that relevant information on safety is reported, collected, stored, protected and disseminated. The sole objective of occurrence reporting is the prevention of accidents and incidents and not to attribute blame or liability. Any occurrence which endangers or which, if not corrected, would endanger an aircraft, its occupants or any other person should be reported by MOR. Accidents and serious incidents should also be reported to the AAIB as described above. More information on this can be found in [CAP 382 – The Mandatory Occurrence Scheme](#). As you may have noticed, there are various reporting systems available. This aims to ensure that a reporters concerns can be raised in all possible circumstances which maximises the opportunities to improve safety in aviation.

Other subjects detailed in reports have been;

- PEDs and headphones allowed at critical stages of flight
- Excessive hand baggage and its stowage in non-approved stowages
- Seatbelts too large to secure children
- Manual requirements from operators and CAA
- Increasing complacency with security checks
- Exit row briefings
- Fatigue, minimum rest between duties and rosters

www.chirp.co.uk

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

reports@chirp.co.uk

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To raise the awareness of the types of reports submitted through CHIRP, reports have recently been submitted to operators advising of the subjects detailed throughout 2014.

IF IN DOUBT 'CHECK WITH MEL'!

CHIRP regularly receives reports from cabin crew querying defects on aircraft and the time or sector limits for corrective maintenance. In many cases the reporters are unsure whether a defect is one where the aircraft can depart before the problem is rectified.

The time limits for rectification are detailed in the aircraft specific MEL (minimum equipment list) copies of which are kept on each aircraft. Each defect will have a specified maintenance time limit and should be rectified within the given limit time from the date that it has been recorded in the aircraft tech log. Engineering and maintenance staff will be made aware of any faults/defects by the flight crew and the issue will then be rectified either during routine or scheduled maintenance.

Some defects require operational or procedural changes to be made while operating the aircraft within the defect's time limit. In such cases, the changes should be discussed either during the pre-flight briefing or before passenger boarding, so all cabin crew members are made aware of the situation and the alternate procedure agreed between the commander and the SCCM.

UNSERVICEABLE FLIGHT DECK DOOR PAD

Report Text: I was informed that the flight deck door keypad entry system was inoperative just after we pushed back. After take-off I went to check it and noted it had a sticker attached with a job number written on. I questioned the SCCM what would happen in the case of a double pilot incapacitation, for example in the event of fumes, fire or illness. How would we gain entry to the flight deck to assist if neither pilot was conscious to be able to open the door or was able to reach the door? The SCCM had not considered this and asked the flight crew. The flight crew agreed they too had not considered this scenario.

I understand this is not a 'no go' item and I'm aware that this scenario is extremely unlikely, however it is not impossible. My concern is that the aircraft is apparently allowed to complete a number of sectors before this problem is fixed, or so I was told. The flight crew also told me the engineers had signed it off as fixed even though it wasn't. I have since learnt that the aircraft came out of engineering the day before after having been there for several days.

In addition, upon take-off, the no smoking signs failed. This aircraft had multiple cabin defects in addition to these main defects including beverage makers that flooded the rear galley on take-off and landing, an interphone that only worked intermittently and none of the rear ovens working. None of these items were as serious as the flight deck door keypad failure.

Lessons Learned: I'm unsure what I can do other than to raise my concerns. I am seeing more and more 'shortcuts' with engineering issues and short term fixes. It concerns me greatly.

CHIRP Comment: As covered in the editorial above, all unserviceable items and their timings for rectification are stated in the company and aircraft specific MEL. If a crew member is unsure about the rectification process at any time, they can ask the operating flight crew to show them where it is stated in the manual and to check that the fault has been correctly recorded in the aircraft tech log. If an item becomes unserviceable during a flight, the SCCM should be informed who can correctly record this fault and advise the flight crew. All members of the crew should be aware of the specific fault and what procedures have been put in place for that flight.

As the reporter has stated, concerns should be recorded with the company via internal reporting processes so that reports can be trended and investigated if deemed necessary. It has been noted that this aircraft had a number of cabin defects, however they may have different time limits for rectification and have been entered into the cabin defect and tech logs at different times, meaning that they would not all necessarily be corrected at the same time. When the aircraft was under maintenance, additional defects could have been found and then entered into the defects log for rectification at a later date due to availability of parts.

POTENTIAL DISRUPTIVE PASSENGER

Report Text: During boarding I noticed that a passenger seemed very drunk and unstable on their legs. They could not find the overhead bin and struggled to stow their hand baggage. I approached them and asked if they had been drinking and they replied that they had. I then informed the Captain, who only wanted to know where the passenger was seated. When I advised that they were sat at the front of the aircraft, the Captain looked surprised. I can only assume that this was because loyalty scheme members are usually seated at the front of the aircraft and the Captain found that it could become potentially challenging to offload the passenger. However this passenger was not a member of the loyalty scheme.

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A conversation followed where the Captain asked me if the passenger was disturbing any other passengers and when I said no, it seems that it was deemed acceptable to carry the passenger. The Captain only came out of the flight deck briefly to have a discreet look at the passenger and decided to carry them without asking any of the cabin crew how we felt. I felt unsafe doing so.

Lessons Learned: Better support from the Captain in applying CAA rules.

CHIRP Comment: Unruly or violent passengers can pose a threat to the aircraft, crew and other passengers. It can also be very expensive if the aircraft has to divert mid-flight. The flight crew will look to the cabin crew to advise them of passengers that may be intoxicated and become disruptive during flight. Ultimately it is the flight crew's decision whether to accept someone for travel however if the cabin crew disagree with the Commander's decision, they should be assertive in saying so. The passenger's membership of the loyalty scheme should not be considered, it should be whether the person is deemed a threat to safety. A discussion between the cabin and flight crew would have resulted in all crew members being fully aware of the situation with an appropriate decision made with regards to the passenger being offloaded or being accepted for travel.

MINIMUM CREW DURING GROUND OPERATIONS

Report Text: My operator has indicated that EASA regulations state that minimum crew have to stay onboard whenever passengers are onboard. This includes passengers waiting for wheelchairs and paramedics. The Commander overruled and sent the crew home leaving myself and him onboard.

Lessons Learned: The ambulance took so long to arrive that the Captain left with my agreement as he had an early report the following day leaving me alone to operate doors for highlift.

Response from the reporter: I have not reported this matter internally as I wanted to find out first if it is ok for the Commander to overrule an EASA regulation which only came into effect recently. The Commander let the other crew members go as they had operated a long duty day and also offered to stay in my place, I stayed because I was not sure of the safety implications, then as it was going to take a long time for an ambulance to arrive we agreed that the Commander leave as they had an early report the next day. They were trying to do a nice thing for the crew. There was no engineer present at the aircraft, I did not operate the high lift for the wheelchair passenger as this was manned but I had to open and shut the door several times in order to facilitate the high lift bringing a stretcher. I am unaware if the Captain notified the scheduling department or management, I however spoke to a manager just to inform them that we had a medical emergency on board.

CHIRP Comment: The report was passed the CAA for comment who advised that whenever passengers are embarking, onboard or disembarking in the absence of flight crew the operator should have established procedures in the operations manual to ensure that qualified persons are onboard for the management of passengers and ensure one person is qualified to apply these procedures including establishing coordination between the aircraft and aerodrome services in case of ground emergency or urgent need.

The number of cabin crew required during ground operations with passengers onboard will be specified in the operations manual. This may be either the minimum number of cabin crew required for the aeroplane type. Alternatively an operator may have established alternative procedures to ensure an equivalent level of safety. The reduced cabin crew for ground operations must include a senior cabin crew member and at least one cabin crew member is required for every 50 passengers onboard, or fraction of passengers on the same deck. For aircraft requiring more than one cabin crew member this shall be increased to include one cabin crew member per pair of floor level exits. Flight and cabin crew are expected to apply the established procedures of the operator as these have been established to meet applicable EASA Air Operations Regulations.

INFANT SEATBELTS BEING USED FOR CHILDREN OVER THE AGE OF 2

Report Text: Crew are still giving out infant belts for use on children over the age of two. I have asked the company to clarify this again with crew but again it is not being addressed. I know the rules and that 0-2 year olds have a seatbelt and any children over the age of two must have their own seat. This seems to have been lost in translation amongst crew again.

CHIRP Comment: The load sheet states how many infants are checked in on any flight and all infants must be seated and secured either on an adults lap or in an approved infant car-type seat secured to a passenger seat for taxi, take-off and landing. An infant restraint device or supplementary loop belt should be handed to the guardian by a cabin crew member on boarding or after the safety demonstration. No child, i.e. over the age of two should be restrained using these devices as they have been allocated their own seat. In some cases, it may be hard to determine how old a child is and it may be necessary to ask the guardian for clarification. Company SOPs for the use of these devices are included in initial and recurrent training and should be adhered to at all times.

GROUND ENGINEERS NOT SHOWING AIRSIDE IDs

Report Text: We were disembarking the passengers onto busses. I was on my own at the door whilst waiting for another bus for the passengers when two engineers came up the steps, both with their IDs not visible. When I asked them to show me their IDs they showed them but one engineer told me that I should read my procedures as they no longer needed to show their IDs. I told him that I would ask for an ID even if they were CAA inspectors, he told me knew what he was talking about and walked off. He later apologised to the SCCM. I recently completed my SEP course and I understand that everybody need to display their IDs.

Lessons Learned - Displaying of IDs need to be reviewed by our company engineering staff.

CHIRP Comment: CHIRP has received a number reports in the last few months regarding staff members' refusal to show airside security passes when asked. Airside ID passes must be worn at chest height either with a lanyard or airport approved armband. Most engineering and ground handling staff will hold their ID in an armband to ensure that it does not fall into moving parts when working on the ramp or aircraft. If worn on a lanyard around the neck, it should be tucked in if working on the aircraft, but should then be re-displayed on completion. When airside, they must be visible at all times and all pass holders are expected to challenge anyone who is not displaying an ID pass. The CAA and the airport who have issued the ID have the right to revoke security access if they deem it necessary. The reporter should be commended for their actions as they have acted correctly.

This report was referred to the operator for comment who confirmed that all employees must present their identity pass at the request of and to the following persons;

- Any employee of the company
- Company security staff
- Security agents appointed by the company
- Any agent working for the company
- Security staff controlling company premises
- Police officers, HM Customs and Excise officers, Immigration officers or any person employed by an airport company on security duty within an airport area

Reports received by CHIRP are accepted in good faith. While every effort is made to ensure the accuracy of editorials, analyses and comments published in FEEDBACK, please remember that CHIRP does not possess any executive authority.

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Contact Us

Stephanie Colbourne Administration Manager

Circulation/Administration

Cabin Crew Reports

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

Freephone (UK only): 0800 772 3243 or Telephone: +44 (0) 1252 378947

E-mail: reports@chirp.co.uk

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If you would like to receive a copy of Cabin Crew FEEDBACK via email, please contact us at mail@chirp.co.uk advising us of your name, occupation and preferred email address.