



GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR GENERAL OF CIVIL AVIATION
TECHNICAL CENTRE, OPP SAFDURJUNG AIRPORT, NEW DELHI

CIVIL AVIATION REQUIREMENTS
SECTION 3 – AIR TRANSPORT
SERIES ‘M’ PART I

ISSUE 2, DATED 1st May 2008

EFFECTIVE: 1st May 2008

Subject: **Carriage by Air of Persons with Disability and/ or Persons with Reduced Mobility.**

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Air transportation today has been made easier than ever. The Government policies on ‘Open Sky’ allowed the growth of airlines and also nonscheduled operators in the country. The new ideas of Low Cost and Low Frill concept have also brought the common man with average income group to travel by air.
- 1.2 Whereas persons with disabilities and persons with reduced mobility like everyone else are increasingly given the possibility to travel by air, there lies a need to standardize the conditions for travel of such persons so as to facilitate their acceptance and handling of their carriage by the airlines and other operators.
- 1.3 This CAR establishes regulations for the protection of and provision of assistance to disabled persons and persons with reduced mobility traveling by air in order to protect them against any form of discrimination and to ensure that they receive all possible assistance with due respect and dignity.
- 1.4 For the purpose of this CAR, the Incapacitated Persons or Persons with Disability/ Reduced Mobility are considered the same.
- 1.5 This CAR is issued under the provisions of Rule 133 A of the Aircraft Rules, 1937 for information, guidance and compliance by the concerned agencies.

2. APPLICABILITY

All operators engaged in scheduled and non-scheduled air transport services both domestic and international, engaged in carriage of passengers, and shall comply with the requirements of this CAR.

3. DEFINITIONS

- 3.1 'Disabled person' or 'person with reduced mobility' means any person whose mobility when using transport is reduced due to any physical disability (sensory or locomotor, permanent or temporary), intellectual disability or impairment, or any other cause of disability, or age, and whose situation needs appropriate attention and the adaptation to his or her particular needs of the service made available to all passengers. (Ref. EU Journal L204/1 dt. 26 July, 2006)
- 3.2 A person with reduced mobility (PRM) is understood to mean any person whose mobility is reduced due to any physical disability (sensory or locomotory), an intellectual impairment, age, or any other cause of disability when using transport and whose situation needs special attention and the adaptation to the person's needs of the services made available to all passengers. (Ref. IATA working document, dated 11 May, 2001)
- 3.3 Incapacitated Passengers shall be defined as those with a medical condition, who require individual attention or assistance on enplaning / deplaning, during flight and during ground handling which is normally not extended to other passengers. This requirement will become apparent from special requests made by the passengers and/or their family or by a medical authority as approved by the Government.

4. REQUIREMENTS

- 4.1 No airline shall refuse to carry persons with disability or persons with reduced mobility and their assistive aids/devices, escorts and guide dogs including their presence in the cabin, provided such persons or their representatives, at the time of booking and /or check-in for travel, inform the airlines of their requirement. The airlines shall incorporate appropriate provisions in the online form for booking tickets so that all the required facilities are made available to the passengers with disabilities at the time of check-in.
- 4.2 The airline shall formulate a detailed procedure for carriage of disabled persons or persons with reduced mobility and publish the same on their website.
- 4.3 Airlines should develop emergency evacuation procedures and training of their staff for handling persons with disabilities and include the same in their safety manuals. The training programme shall include detailed procedures of handling, evacuation and develop awareness towards disabled passengers, persons with medical conditions, elderly persons, infants, pregnant women etc.

- 4.4 All airlines and airport management shall run program for their staff engaged in passenger handling e.g. cabin crew / commercial staff including floor walkers and counter staff etc. for sensitization and developing awareness for assisting passengers with disabilities. The training program shall be conducted at the time of initial training and a refresher shall be conducted every 3 years on the subject. Only such persons who have current course shall be assigned to handling disabled persons. The training program should interalia, include assisting disabled persons in filling up travel documents as may be required while providing assistance in flight.
- 4.5 No airline shall refuse to engage in interline transactions for carriage of disabled persons or persons with reduced mobility or to commence/continue interline transportation of such persons.
- Note: This requirement does not require airlines to create interline agreements solely for this purpose.
- 4.6 Many persons with disabilities do not require constant assistance for their activities. Therefore, if the passenger declares independence in feeding, communication with reasonable accommodation, toileting and personal needs, the airlines shall not insist for the presence of an escort.
- 4.7 No airline shall refuse to carry persons traveling in a stretcher or incubator when they are accompanied by an escort who will be responsible for them and their needs of embarking, disembarking, during flight, and during emergency evacuation. The required number of seats for such travel must be reserved in advance at applicable fares.
- 4.8 All airlines shall provide necessary assistance to persons with disabilities/ impairment who wish to travel alone without an escort.
- 4.9 Persons with disabilities not holding any certificate shall also be provided necessary assistance as well as the aids such as wheel chairs, ambulifts etc. In such cases during ticketing/ check-in the individuals' degree of disability and his need for assistance may be confirmed. Airlines shall not refuse carriage in such cases.
- 4.10 (a) Airport operator shall display International symbol of Disability within the visible proximity of the main entrance of the arrival/departure terminal, informing that they may contact the concerned airline operator for special assistance. Special assistance to be provided by Airport operator/ security agencies to the visually impaired in locating concerned airline operator counter/ office. Airport operator shall provide dedicated reserved parking space, toilets with independent entrance with proper signage and barrier free access to all areas in the terminal building.
- (b) Once a passenger has bought a ticket for travel, it is obligatory on part of the airline that he reaches the aircraft from the departure lounge, and at the end of the journey from the aircraft to the arrival lounge exit, without incurring any further expenditure.
- 4.11 Sufficient directional signage should be placed inside the airport regarding the availability of assistance for disabled person or person with reduced mobility.

- 4.12 Airlines shall not limit the number or types of incapacitated passengers on their flights other than for specific reason for orderly evacuation from the aircraft exits and due to physical limitations such as size of the aircraft.
- 4.13 Airlines shall provide assistance to meet the particular needs of the persons with disabilities and persons with reduced mobility, from the departing airport terminal to the destination airport terminal.
- 4.14 Persons with disabilities and persons with reduced mobility have equal choice of seat allocation as others, subject to safety requirements and physical limitations of the aircraft - like seats near the emergency exits and seats with more leg-room.

5. MEDICAL CLEARANCE

- 5.1 No Medical clearance or special forms shall be insisted from persons with disabilities or persons with reduced mobility who only require special assistance at the airport for assistance in embarking/ disembarking and a reasonable accommodation in flight, who otherwise do not require any additional assistance.
- 5.2 A medical clearance by the airline may be required only when the airline has received information that the passenger
- a) suffers from any disease, which is believed to be actively contagious and communicable;
 - b) who, because of certain diseases, or incapacitation may have or develop an adverse physical condition which could have an adverse effect during flight and on safety and emergency evacuation procedures;
 - c) would require medical attention and / or special equipment to maintain their health during the flights;
 - d) there exists a possibility of medical condition aggravated during or because of the flight;

Note: Persons with specific disabilities should plan to have all required forms for assistance ready in advance, to avoid flight delays. Forms and information will be made available on each airline's website.

- 5.3 Any passenger having any of the conditions mentioned in 5.2 (a) through 5.2 (d) be subjected to prior clearance for air travel by the medical departments/advisors of the carrying airlines. In case the passenger has a connecting flight with another airline, this medical clearance should be accepted at the first point of check-in and the information transmitted by the first Airlines to the connecting airlines so that the passenger is not required to furnish the same again and again.
- 5.4 Before refusing carriage of any such passengers, the airlines shall refer to their medical departments/ advisors for advise/ clarification in accordance with

a procedure, which shall be documented by the airlines. For such clearance the airline may seek the necessary medical information from the passenger(s) concerned or their representatives. Any forms for such information to be provided to the passengers by the airline staff will be made available on the airline's website.

- 5.5 The airline shall enter for each person with disabilities or person with reduced mobility or incapacitated passenger the information sheet requiring special assistance.

Note 1 – The airline shall establish a procedure for expeditious clearance by their medical departments, where required, to avoid delays causing inconvenience to passengers. Airlines shall provide necessary forms and procedures on their websites and through their callcentres/ agencies to make the process simple. The passengers should pre-clear themselves with the airline in advance.

Note 2 – The airline shall ensure that at time of check-in airline staff is alerted and shall verify that all needs required by such passenger in advance in the relevant forms have been made available.

Note 3 – The procedures involving medical clearances shall be documented and published in each airline's websites.

6. Availability of Wheelchairs and / or Other Assistive Devices

All assistive aids shall be provided without any extra cost to the passengers.

- 6.1 Wheelchairs

- a) Airlines shall ensure that at all stations, for boarding / disembarking purposes, before departure, during intermediate stops and on arrival wheel chairs are available without any extra charge and that advance arrangements made with other concerned agencies like Airport Management where necessary to ensure that movement of persons with disabilities and persons with reduced mobility within the airport is not restricted.
- b) Passengers who intend to check-in with their own wheelchair shall be given the option of using a station/airport wheelchair. If the passengers prefer to use their own wheelchair within the airport, they shall be permitted to use it up to the aircraft, whereupon it may be stowed at an appropriate place in the aircraft. At the time of disembarking, the passenger's wheel chair should be returned to him to enable him to transfer himself from the aisle seat directly into his own wheel chair.

6.2 Stretchers

Upon advance request, and with a charge for such material as may be levied, the airlines shall make stretchers and associated equipment, e.g. blankets, pillows, sheets, nursing materials and privacy curtains, available for passengers who cannot use the standard airline seat in a sitting or reclining position for the class of service desired.

6.3 Ambulifts at airport

Every airport operator shall make appropriate provision including ambulifts to enable disabled passengers or passengers with reduced mobility to embark/disembark the aircraft without inconvenience. Such provision may be made in coordination with airline operators, if required.

6.4 Other Assistive Devices

- a) Airlines shall ensure availability of low floor accessible buses at the airports to enable easy boarding and alighting by passengers.
- b) To board/disembark the disabled persons, immobile or incapacitated passengers not traveling on stretchers, airlines shall have available narrow aisle chairs (wheelchair-type devices), without armrests, preferably foldable type that can be moved about in the passenger cabin, before 31.7.2009.
- c) Airport Management Authorities shall provide ramps at least at the main entrance/ exit to the terminal building for easy access.
- d) Upon request the airlines shall endeavour to have available on board a special wheel chair capable of carrying a handicapped passenger to enable them to use lavatory facilities, or as a boarding /disembarkation vehicle where these are not available.

7. Boarding, Seating and Briefing

7.1 Boarding

- a) The presence of all categories of incapacitated passengers and persons with disabilities or reduced mobility with their escorts and any special arrangements made for them while on board, shall always be referred to the captain / senior cabin crew member.
- b) Incapacitated passengers and persons with disabilities or reduced mobility and their escorts shall be offered pre-boarding facilities.
- c) If passengers for any reason have to be offloaded, the highest possible priority for transportation shall be given to persons with disability or persons with reduced mobility, and to their escorts.

- d) The checked-in baggage of the persons with disability or with reduced mobility should be given 'Priority Tags' to ensure early identification and assistance by the airline ground staff.

7.2 Seating

- a) Incapacitated passengers and persons with disabilities or reduced mobility including blind shall not be restricted to any particular cabin or seating areas, except when it is done for safety of passengers and avoid interference with evacuations or due to physical limitations of the aircraft.
- b) Airlines shall have to maintain procedures for carriage of Guide/ Service Dogs if required in cabin for the assistance of persons with disabilities or persons with reduced mobility.

7.3 Briefing

- a) Before take off, persons with certain types of disabilities or persons with reduced mobility, incapacitated passengers and their escorts may be individually briefed on emergency procedures, cabin layout and specialized equipment supplied by the airline. The responsibility for such special briefing shall rests with airline's senior cabin crew on the flight.
- b) Blind passengers may be briefed verbally, and Braille brochures where available may back up such briefing. Instructions in large print may be made available for persons with low vision.

7.4 In-Transit off-loading

When overnight accommodation is offered such as when disabled persons are offloaded or when airlines are forced to have an overnight halt, airlines must endeavour to ensure that wheel chair users are allocated accommodation that is suitable to their needs.

7.5 Loading of special equipment of persons with disabilities or reduced mobility.

Special equipment required by incapacitated passengers and persons with disabilities or reduced mobility in connection with their trip, if not carried in the passenger cabin, shall be loaded in the baggage holds where it is easily accessible for timely return to the passenger at the time of disembarkations. All such items must be properly identified and tagged, must always travel with the passenger, and shall be loaded in such a way as to be readily and immediately available at transfer and destination points.

Note: Passengers with assistive aids and devices may be allowed to take the same as a hand baggage as these devices are delicate and prone to breakage.

7.6 Transit stations

Incapacitated passengers and persons with disabilities or reduced mobility requiring special assistance or protection from disturbance, and their escorts, shall be permitted to stay on board during transit stops, if they so desire, subject to the observance of applicable safety and security norms.

7.7 Disembarkation at point of transfer and/or destination

- a) Upon request, the airline shall make arrangements for assisting persons with disabilities or persons with reduced mobility and incapacitated passengers in baggage delivery and getting out of the airport, even when they are accompanied by an escort. The checked in baggage with 'Priority Tags' should be kept in a safe place by the ground staff till the passenger arrives.
- b) Wheelchairs and other assistive devices checked-in shall, within the shortest possible time, be delivered as close as possible to the door of the aircraft.

7.8 Transmission of Information / Down line notice

The airline checking in the incapacitated passenger and persons with disabilities or reduced mobility (or any person delegated by such airline) shall be responsible for advising its ground staff at transit stations and at the airport of disembarkation about the presence of incapacitated passengers and the location of wheelchairs and assistive devices on board and about the need to arrange for special assistance.

8. PROVISION OF AMBULANCES

8.1 The Aerodrome operator shall provide ambulance facility for the passenger on arrival and departure at/from the airport, to such passengers on stretchers, upon advance request by the passengers or their representative or by the airline.

8.2 Incapacitated passengers arriving at the airport in hospital/ outside ambulance may be given an option of either taking the ambulance up to the aircraft boarding point or use the airport ambulance for going to the aircraft. In the former case the airport management shall provide escort to direct the ambulance driver through designated areas for vehicle driving.

9. ASSISTANCE ON THE PLANE

9.1 All airlines should assist a passenger with disability or reduced mobility to get to the toilet and to provide essential safety information.

9.2 Airlines shall provide accommodation for passenger with disability or reduced mobility which may require extra leg space without any extra charge.

- 9.3 Airline should ensure proper storage and handling of mobility equipment or any such assistive devices used by the persons with disability or reduced mobility. In case of lost or damage to such equipment the airlines shall be liable for provide suitable compensation.
- 9.4 Airlines should provide necessary procedure for emergency evacuation in respect of person with disability or reduced mobility in the form of passenger briefing card or individualized verbal briefing.
- 9.5 All information required by the airlines to facilitate carriage of the disable person or person with reduced mobility must be gathered by the airline during the online booking process or through the call centres. Airlines shall obtain all the information about the specific requirements of the persons with disabilities at the time of ticketing. Once the ticket is confirmed no further enquires shall be made.
- 9.6 The following information should help the airline to make arrangements:
- a) the nature and level of special assistance required when embarking, disembarking and in-flight assistance required;
 - b) mobility equipment and disability aids that need to be carried by the airline either in cabin and / or aircraft hold;
 - c) whether the passenger will be accompanied with an escort.

Note: The above is not an exhaustive list and during online booking, the airlines should gather all such information without requiring the passenger to provide additional information later.

10. Complaint Procedure

- 10.1 A disabled person or person with reduced mobility who considers that this regulation has been infringed may bring the matter to the attention of the managing body of airlines, airport or other concerned authorities, as the case may be.
- 10.2 The managing body of the airlines and the airport shall ensure speedy and proper redressal of these complaints.



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