

FILE NO. 11-690/93-AI(2)

EFFECTIVE : 1ST JANUARY '1994

Subject: Exit Row Seating.

1. APPLICABILITY:

This part of the Civil Aviation Requirement is issued under Section 5A of Aircraft Act 1934 and Rule 133A of the aircraft Rules 1937 to set out the requirements to be followed by the operators for exit row seating. The requirements laid down in this CAR are applicable to aircraft with 10 or more passenger seats.

2. BACKGROUND:

Mishaps in commercial aviation are extremely rare, but when they occur, survivability is a function of many aspects relating amongst others to the design and construction of the aircraft and its interior and the operating procedures followed by airlines. Some of these aspects, in isolation, may seem small, but all are necessary elements to the safety of aircraft operations.

A critical prerequisite to survivability in many accidents/incidents is the fastest possible evacuation of the aircraft. Essential to this objective is the fastest possible opening of emergency exit doors/windows, followed by quickest possible movement of passengers through the exits.

In aircraft accidents in which decelerative forces do not result in massive cabin destruction, survival is determined largely by the ability of the uninjured passenger to make his or her way from a seat to an exit within time limits imposed by the thermo toxic environment. It is crucial that people evacuate quickly before heat, flames, toxic fumes, or an explosion kill or injure them. Seconds can mean the difference between life and death in the aftermath of a crash inasmuch as evacuation might be terminated abruptly by an explosion at any point.

This CAR is therefore aimed to help quickest evacuation of aircraft in the event of an accident or incident.

3. DEFINITIONS:

Exit Seat means:

Each seat having direct access to an exit i.e. a seat from which a passenger can proceed directly to the exit without entering an aisle or passing around an obstruction.

4. REQUIREMENTS:

- 4.1 Each operator shall determine to the extent necessary to perform the applicable functions of this CAR, the suitability of each person it permits to occupy an exit seat.

- 4.2 Each operator shall designate the exit seats for each passenger seating configuration in its fleet in accordance with the definitions in this CAR and make it a part of the procedures laid down in the Operations Manual.
- 4.3 Each Operator should seat a person in the exit seat who would be able to perform the applicable functions listed in this CAR.
- 4.3.1 The person allotted the exit seat should not be invalid.
- 4.3.2 The person should not be less than 15 years of age and should have the capacity to perform the applicable functions listed in paragraph 4.6 of this CAR without the assistance of another person.
- 4.3.3 The person should be able to reach and understand instructions related to emergency evacuation provided by the operator in printed, handwritten or graphic form or the ability to understand oral crew Commands.
- 4.4 Each passenger shall comply with instructions given by a crew member or other authorized of the operator implementing exit seating restrictions established in accordance with this section.
- 4.5 Each operator shall include on passenger information cards, presented in the language in which briefings and oral announcements are made by the crew, at each exit seat affected by this CAR, information that in the event of an emergency in which a crew member is not available to assist, a passenger occupying an exit seat may use, if called upon, to perform the following functions:
- 1) Locate the emergency exit;
  - 2) Recognize the emergency exit opening mechanism;
  - 3) Comprehend the instructions for operating the emergency exit;
  - 4) Operate the emergency exit;
  - 5) Follow oral directions and hand signals given by a crew member.
  - 6) Stow or secure the emergency exit door so that it will not impede use of the exit;
  - 7) Pass expeditiously through the emergency exit; and
  - 8) Assess, select, and follow a safe path away from the emergency exit.
- 4.6 Each operator shall include in its passenger briefings a request that a passenger identify himself or herself to allow reseating if he or she
- i) Cannot meet the selection criteria set forth in this CAR.
  - ii) Has a nondiscernible condition that will prevent him or her from performing the applicable functions listed in this CAR.
  - iii) May suffer bodily harm as the result of performing one or more of those functions; or
  - iv) Does not wish to perform those functions.

An operator shall not require the passenger to disclose his or her reason for needing reseating.

- 4.7 Each operator shall make available for inspection by the public at all passenger loading gates and ticket counters at each airport where it conducts passenger operations, written procedures established for making determinations in regard to exit row seating.
- 4.8 Before taxi or pushback crew member should verify that no exit seat is occupied by a person who may be unable to perform the applicable functions listed in this CAR.
- 4.9 Each operator shall include in its passenger briefings a reference to the passenger information cards, required by paragraph 4.6, the criteria set forth in paragraph 4 of this CAR.
- 4.10 Each operator shall ensure that the passenger occupying the exit row seat is properly briefed by the cabin crew regarding the emergency exit procedures. Wherever applicable, the weight of the emergency exit shall also be specified.
5. In the event an operator determines in accordance with this CAR that it is likely that a passenger assigned to an exit seat would be unable to perform the functions listed in paragraph 4.6 of this CAR, or a passenger requests a non-exit seat, the operator will expeditiously relocate the passenger to a non-exit seat.
6. In order to comply with this part of the CAR operators shall establish procedures in their Operations Manual regarding -
  - i) The criteria listed in paragraph 4 of this part of the CAR.
  - ii) The functions listed in paragraph 4.6 of this part of the CAR.
  - iii) The requirements for airport information, passenger information cards, crew member verification of appropriate seating in exit, passenger briefings and seat assignments as set forth in this part of the CAR.
  - iv) How to resolve disputes arising from implementation of this part, including identification of the operator employee on the airport to whom complaints should be addressed for resolution; and
7. In order to avoid any problem of re-seating in the aircraft after boarding, the exit row seats should be allotted to passengers who can perform the functions described in the CAR and willingness of passenger is obtained before allotting exit seat to him/her at the time of check-in.

Sd/-

(H. S. Khola)

Director General of Civil Aviation

