



GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

**OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR GENERAL OF CIVIL AVIATION**

TECHNICAL CENTRE, OPPOSITE SAFDARJUNG AIRPORT, NEW DELHI

**CIVIL AVIATION REQUIREMENTS**

**SECTION 3 - AIR TRANSPORT**

**SERIES 'M' , PART – I, ISSUE 2**

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**Subject: Carriage of Physically Challenged Passengers by Air**

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 non-scheduled operators in the country. The new ideas of Low Cost and Low Frill concept have also brought the average income group of passenger to travel by air. Whereas incapacitated passengers 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.

1.2 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

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

3. PHYSICALLY CHALLENGED PASSENGERS

3.1 Physically Challenged Passenger means a passenger with physical or mental disability or incapacitation; or with a medical condition,

which requires individual attention or assistance for enplaning / deplaning, during flight and during ground handling, which is normally not extended to other passengers. (This requirement becomes apparent from special requests made by the passengers and / or their family or by a medical authority, or from obvious abnormal physical or mental conditions observed and reported by airline personnel or industry-associated persons (travel agents, etc.)

#### 4. REQUIREMENTS

- 4.1 No airline should refuse to carry physically challenged/incapacitated persons or persons with disabilities;
  - 4.1.1 if such carriage, because of the person's physical or medical conditions determined on the basis of established facts, does not pose a threat to the safety of other passengers and their property, the aircraft or the crew provided such person submits himself to the specific conditions of carriage required by the airline's published regulations.
  - 4.1.2 whose conduct, status, mental or physical condition is determined by the airline to be such, as to render them incapable of assisting in their evacuation of the aircraft.
- 4.2 No airline may refuse to engage in interline transactions for carriage of incapacitated persons or persons with disabilities, or to commence/continue interline transportation of incapacitated persons, if such carriage does not pose a threat to the safety of operation by rendering emergency evacuation difficult.
- 4.3 No airline should refuse to carry persons traveling in a stretcher or incubator, persons with severe mobility impairment, persons with severe hearing and vision impairment if they are accompanied by an able bodied escort who will be responsible for them and their needs on enplaning and deplaning during flight, and during emergency evacuation.
- 4.4 An airline shall display at a conspicuous location, a placard informing passengers where persons with disabilities may contact for special assistance.
- 4.5 All airlines shall run program for their staff engaged in passenger handling e.g. cabin crew / commercial 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.

- 4.6 An airline shall not limit the numbers or types of incapacitated passengers on their flights except where required for operational reasons. The procedure for such limit shall be documented.

## 5. MEDICAL CLEARANCE

- 5.1 No Medical clearance or special forms shall be required for such physically challenged / incapacitated passengers or passengers with disabilities who only require special assistance at the airport for assistance in embarking / disembarking.
- 5.2 A medical clearance by the airline may be required only when the airline has received information that the passenger
  - 5.2.1 suffers from any disease, which is believed to be actively contagious and communicable;
  - 5.2.2 who because of certain diseases, or incapacitation may have or develop an unusual behavior or physical condition, which could have an adverse effect on the comfort of other passengers and/or crew members;
  - 5.2.3 can be considered to be a potential hazard to the safety of the flight;
  - 5.2.4 would require medical attention and / or special equipment to maintain their health during the flights;
  - 5.2.5 there exists a possibility of medical condition aggravated during or because of the flight;
  - 5.2.6 such passengers shall be subject to prior clearance for air travel by the medical departments / advisors of all carrying airlines, on the basis of information in respect of their physical and / or mental condition, obtained by the airline in contact with the passenger through its medical department/advisor directly or through a licensed physician familiar with the condition of the passenger. In order to obtain such clearance, medical information must be provided and transmitted when seats are requested on the flight of another airline. Additionally, when an airline

receiving a request for travel has reasonable grounds for doubt about the passenger's incapacitation, such airline shall require medical information for clearance purposes;

5.2.7 an airline shall not deny transportation to physically challenged passengers with incapacitation or disabilities, if they meet the published requirements of the carrying airline;

5.2.8 before refusing carriage of 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 passengers.

**Note:-**

i) The airline shall enter for each incapacitated passenger the information sheet requiring special assistance.

ii) The airline shall establish a procedure for expeditious clearance by their medical departments, where required, to avoid delays causing inconvenience to passengers.

iii) The airline shall ensure that at time of check-in airline staff is alerted and shall verify that all provisions required by the passenger have been made available.

## 6. AVAILABILITY OF WHEELCHAIRS AND / OR OTHER ASSISTIVE DEVICES

### 6.1 Wheelchairs

6.1.1 Airlines shall ensure that at all stations, for boarding / disembarking purposes, before departure, during intermediate stops and on arrival wheel chairs are available and that advance arrangements made with other concerned agencies where necessary to ensure that movement of incapacitated passengers within the airport is not restricted.

6.1.2 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, wheupon 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

6.2.1 Upon request, 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 Other Assistive Devices

6.3.1 To board/disembark physically challenged, immobile or incapacitated passengers not traveling on stretchers, airlines shall have available narrow wheelchair-type devices, without armrests, preferably foldable type that can be moved about in the passenger cabin.

6.3.2 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 PHYSICALLY CHALLENGED / INCAPACITATED PASSENGERS

### 7.1 Boarding

7.1.1 The presence of all categories of incapacitated passengers, their escorts and any special arrangements made for them while on board, shall always be referred to the captain / senior cabin crew member.

7.1.2 Incapacitated passengers and their escorts shall be offered pre-boarding facilities.

7.1.3 If passengers for any reason have to be offloaded, the highest possible priority for transportation shall be given to incapacitated passengers, and to their escorts.

### 7.2 Seating

7.2.1 Incapacitated passengers including the blind shall not be restricted to any particular cabin or seating areas, except when it is done for safety of passengers.

### 7.3 Briefing

7.3.1 Before take off, certain types of 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 rest with each airline's cabin crew.

Blind passengers may be briefed verbally, and Braille brochures may back up such briefing.

### 7.4 Off loading

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

### 7.5 Loading of incapacitated passenger's special equipment

7.5.1 Special equipment required by incapacitated passengers 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. Any such item 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.

### 7.6 Transit stations

7.6.1 Incapacitated passengers 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 or destination

7.7.1 Upon request, the airline shall make arrangements for assisting incapacitated passengers in baggage delivery

and getting out of the airport, even when they are accompanied by an escort.

7.7.2 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. However, the passenger may, at his option, use an airline/ airport wheelchair.

7.8 Downline notice

7.8.1 The airline checking in the incapacitated passenger (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.

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