



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 II, DATED 1st May 2008

EFFECTIVE: .././2013

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

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Air transportation today has become 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 no frill concept have also brought the common man with average income group to travel by air.

1.2 Whereas persons with disabilities and reduced mobility like everyone else are increasingly given the opportunity 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, airport operators, ground handling agencies, etc.

1.3 This CAR lays down regulations for carriage of persons with disabilities and reduced mobility by air in order to protect them against any form of discrimination and to ensure that they receive all possible assistance during their travel.

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 Section 5(ab) of Aircraft Act 1934, Rule 133 A of the Aircraft Rules, 1937 and Ministry of Civil Aviation letter No. AV. 13030/72/2012-DT dated 6th March, 2013 for information, guidance and compliance by the concerned agencies.

2. APPLICABILITY

The provisions contained in this CAR shall be applicable to the following:

- a) All Indian operators engaged in scheduled and non-scheduled air transport services both domestic and international for carriage of passengers
- b) All airport operators.

3. DEFINITIONS

3.1 **Person with disability** means any individual who has a *physical or mental impairment* that, on a permanent or temporary basis, substantially limits one or more *major life activities*, has a *record of such impairment*, or is regarded as having such impairment.

Note: (a) **Physical or mental impairment** means:

- (1) any physiological disorder or condition, cosmetic disfigurement, or anatomical loss affecting one or more of the following body systems: neurological, musculoskeletal, special sense organs, respiratory including speech organs, cardio-vascular, reproductive, digestive, genito-urinary, hemic and lymphatic, skin, and endocrine; or
- (2) any mental or psychological disorder, such as mental retardation, organic brain syndrome, emotional or mental illness, and specific learning disabilities.

The term **physical or mental impairment** includes, but is not limited to, such diseases and conditions as orthopedic, visual, speech, and hearing impairments; cerebral palsy, epilepsy, muscular dystrophy, multiple sclerosis, cancer, heart disease, diabetes, mental retardation, emotional illness, drug addiction, and alcoholism.

- (b) **Major life activities** means functions such as caring for one's self, performing manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning, and working.
- (c) Has a **record of such impairment** means has a history of, or has been classified, or misclassified, as having a mental or physical impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities.

3.2 A **person with reduced mobility** (PRM) 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.

3.3 **Incapacitated passengers** are those with physical or mental disability or with a medical condition, who require individual attention or assistance on embarking/ deplaning, during flight and during ground handling which is normally not extended to other passengers.

4. REQUIREMENTS

4.1 Airline Specific

4.1.1 No airline shall refuse to carry persons with disability or 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, inform the airline of their requirement(s). The airlines shall incorporate appropriate provisions on their website so that while making bookings, passengers with disability have the option to select the required facilities, which he/she will require during the journey.

4.1.2 Airlines including their agents shall make available in accessible format, on their website, the safety rules that apply to the carriage of persons with disability or reduced mobility as well as any restrictions on their carriage or on the mobility equipment due to the size of aircraft.

4.1.3 Airlines including their travel agents shall not discriminate the persons with disability or reduced mobility in providing access for internet ticketing, special/discounted fares, time limit for holding the bookings, reservations on telephone, etc.

4.1.4 To facilitate the carriage of persons with disability or reduced mobility, airlines shall obtain necessary information about the specific requirements of such persons at the time of ticketing/online booking process or through the call centres. Once the ticket is confirmed no further enquires shall be made.

4.1.5 It shall be the responsibility of the persons with disability or reduced mobility to notify their needs at least 48 hours before the scheduled time of departure so that the

airline makes necessary arrangements, which may include but not limited to the following:

- a) nature and level of special assistance required while embarking, disembarking and during in-flight;
- b) mobility equipment and disability aids that need to be carried by the airline either in cabin and/or aircraft hold;
- c) requirement of escort.

Note: The above is not an exhaustive list. During the process of booking, the airlines should gather all the relevant information without requiring the passenger to provide additional information later.

Note: Although advance information of 48hrs. or prior, will enable airlines to plan and ensure hassle free carriage of persons with disability or reduced mobility, for cases of emergency travel of persons with disability or reduced mobility, airlines shall make all reasonable efforts to provide best possible assistance.

4.1.6 No airline shall refuse to engage in interline transactions for carriage of persons with disability or reduced mobility. However, such carriage shall be governed by the applicable provisions of the interline carrier/state.

Note: This requirement does not require airlines to create interline agreements solely for this purpose.

4.1.7 Once persons with disability or reduced mobility report at the airport with valid booking and intention to travel, the airline shall provide assistance to meet their particular needs and ensure their seamless travel from the departure terminal of the departing airport upto the aircraft and at the end of the journey from the aircraft to the arrival terminal exit, without any additional expenses.

4.1.8 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, they shall be permitted to use it provided the wheelchair conforms to specifications as laid down by Disabled Persons Transport Advisory Committee (DPTAC), UK. Such wheelchair shall be capable of manoeuvring through various areas of the airport, security hold and upto the aircraft, whereupon it may be stowed at an appropriate place in the aircraft. At the time of disembarking, the passenger's wheelchair should be returned to enable transfer from the seat directly into his/her own wheelchair.

Note 1: In the event a passenger's wheelchair is damaged, temporary substitute shall be provided on request.

Note 2: Although the basic responsibility for providing wheelchairs in the terminal building is that of the airport operator, the airlines may provide extra wheelchairs for the convenience of their passengers in the terminal building.

Note 3: Acceptance of automated wheelchairs/assistive devices using batteries shall be subject to the application of relevant regulations concerning dangerous goods.

4.1.9 For embarkation/disembarkation and in-flight use, airlines shall have provision of onboard aisle wheelchairs for persons with disability or reduced mobility not carried on stretchers, wherever possible subject to limitations of aircraft. The onboard aisle wheelchair shall conform to specifications as laid down by Disabled Persons Transport Advisory Committee (DPTAC), UK.

4.1.10 No airline shall refuse to carry passengers in a stretcher or incubator when they are accompanied by an escort, provided such a person is capable of attending to the passenger's medical needs during embarking, disembarking, in-flight and emergency evacuation subject to conditions in Paras 4.1.11, 4.1.26 and 4.1.27.

4.1.11 Upon advance request, and with charge(s) as applicable, airlines shall make provisions for carriage of stretchers and associated equipment for passengers who cannot use the standard airline seat in a sitting/reclining position for the class of service desired. Such a request shall be made at least 48 hours prior to the scheduled departure of the flight.

4.1.12 To ensure safety of aircraft operations, the maximum number of persons with disability or reduced mobility permitted to travel in a single flight shall not be more than the maximum number of cabin crew except when such passengers are accompanied by trained escorts.

Note: Emergency evacuation requirements states that it must be conducted with exterior ambient light levels of no greater than 0.3 foot-candles prior to the activation of the airplane emergency lighting system. The source(s) of the initial exterior ambient light level may remain active or illuminated during the actual demonstration. There must, however, be no increase in the exterior ambient light level except for that due to activation of the airplane emergency lighting system.

A representative passenger load of persons in **normal health** must be used as follows:

- a) At least 40 percent of the passenger load must be female.
- b) At least 35 percent of the passenger load must be over 50 years of age.
- c) At least 15 percent of the passenger load must be female and over 50 years of age.
- d) Three life-size dolls, not included as part of the total passenger load, must be carried by passengers to simulate live infants 2 years old or younger.
- e) Crewmembers, maintenance engineers, and training personnel, who maintain or operate the airplane in the normal course of their duties, may not be used as passengers.

The emergency evacuation under the above conditions shall be completed within 90 seconds.

4.1.13 Airlines shall not allocate those seats to persons with disability or reduced mobility where their presence would impede the crew in performing their duties, obstruct access to emergency equipment or impede the emergency evacuation path of the aircraft.

4.1.14 Where a person with disability or reduced mobility is assisted by an escort, the airline shall make all reasonable efforts to give such a person seat next to the persons with disability or reduced mobility.

4.1.15 If passengers for any reason have to be offloaded, highest possible priority for transportation shall be given to persons with disability or reduced mobility, including their escorts, if any.

4.1.16 Airlines shall develop procedures for carriage of guide dogs, if required in cabin, for the assistance of persons with disability or reduced mobility. The guide dogs may be permitted in the cabin subject to the condition that they are properly trained, remain on floor at the passenger's feet, properly harnessed and vaccinated. Passengers carrying guide dogs shall be required to produce a written proof to the airlines that their guide dog has been trained from appropriate institution, vaccinated and medicated.

4.1.17 Airlines should develop emergency evacuation procedures and handling of persons with disability or reduced mobility and include the same in their Safety and Emergency Procedures (SEP) Manual.

4.1.18 The presence of all categories of incapacitated passengers and persons with disability or reduced mobility along with their escorts, if any, and any special arrangements made/required for them while on board, shall always be referred to the captain/cabin crew in-charge.

4.1.19 It shall be the responsibility of the cabin crew in-charge to brief persons with disability or reduced mobility including their escorts, if any, before take-off on the emergency procedures, cabin layout and specialized equipment on board the aircraft to cater for their needs. Blind passengers shall be briefed verbally. Braille brochures may be provided as a back-up of such briefing. Instructions in large print may also be made available for persons with low vision.

4.1.20 Airlines should provide safety briefing and procedure for emergency evacuation in respect of person with disability or reduced mobility in the form of passenger briefing card, individualized verbal briefing, video display (in aircraft with Inflight Entertainment System), etc.

4.1.21 When overnight accommodation is offered by the airline during in-transit off-loading due to unforeseen circumstances, persons with disability or reduced mobility shall be allocated accommodation suitable to their needs as far as practicable.

4.1.22 Airlines shall ensure that persons with disability or reduced mobility are boarded separately (normally prior to all other passengers) as well as disembarked separately (normally after all other passengers have left the cabin) in order to facilitate the procedure of embarkation and disembarkation and to provide the necessary assistance to them.

4.1.23 Airlines shall make suitable arrangements for assisting persons with disability or reduced mobility for their quick clearance and baggage delivery. For the purpose of this paragraph, their checked-in baggage should be given 'Special Tags' to ensure early identification and assistance by the airline ground staff.

4.1.24 Airlines should do their utmost to ascertain that any such special equipment of persons with disability or reduced mobility is properly identified and tagged, and is always transported with the passenger concerned in the same aircraft.

4.1.25 Airlines shall not insist on medical certificate or special forms from persons with disability or reduced mobility who wish to travel without an escort and only require special assistance at an airport for embarking/disembarking and a reasonable accommodation in flight.

4.1.26 Airlines may require medical certificate only when they have 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;
- e) who is travelling in a stretcher or incubator;
- f) who needs medical oxygen during the flight.

Note: Persons with disability or reduced mobility should keep all the required forms for assistance ready in advance, to avoid flight delays. Such Forms and information shall be made available by airlines on their website.

4.1.27 Passengers having any of the conditions mentioned in Para 4.1.26 (a) through (f) shall produce medical certificate from a qualified registered medical doctor stating that:

- a) the passenger is capable of completing the flight safely without requiring extraordinary medical assistance during the flight;
- b) disease or infection would not under the present condition be communicable to other passengers during the normal course of flight;
- c) precautions that would have to be observed to prevent the transmission of disease or infection to other persons in the normal course of flight;

4.1.28 In case the passenger has a connecting flight with another airline, the medical certificate shall be accepted by the first airline at the first point of check-in and the information transmitted to the connecting airline so that the passenger is not required to furnish the same again.

4.1.29 Airlines may seek information from persons with disability or reduced mobility in the IATA Medical Information Form (MEDIF) or Incapacitated Passengers Handling Advice (INCAD) at the time of booking, which will be used for the purpose of providing them special assistance and/or medical clearance thereby ensuring their smooth travel.

Note: MEDIF and INCAD are standard forms used by many airlines to organise any assistance or equipment required by the persons with disability or reduced mobility during travel and to decide whether they are fit to fly. The INCAD is typically completed by the passenger or his/her representative and the MEDIF is completed by the doctor. Both the MEDIF and INCAD forms only last for one journey (origin to destination)

4.1.30 Airlines may also issue Frequent Travellers Medical Card (FREMEC) to those passengers with chronic, but stable medical conditions, and those with additional needs, for their future travel. FREMEC issued by airline shall be accepted by the other airlines also to avoid necessity of obtaining medical clearance for each journey and determines the passenger's special handling requirements.

4.1.31 Airlines shall keep a record of FREMEC of persons with disability or reduced mobility in their reservations system for easy reference and their future travel.

4.1.32 Airlines shall ensure that all the medical information collected from persons with disability or reduced mobility in this manner is kept strictly confidential.

4.1.33 In case of change of aircraft type with the same or another airline, airlines shall endeavour to provide similar facilities to persons with disability or reduced mobility, subject to compliance of regulatory provisions.

4.1.34 Airlines shall ensure that aircraft coming newly into service or after major refurbishment shall be fitted with special equipment to cater for the needs of persons with disability or reduced mobility commensurate with the size of aircraft.

4.1.35 Before refusing carriage to any person on the basis of disability, the airline shall specify in writing the basis of such refusal indicating its opinion that transportation of such persons would or might be inimical to the safety of flight.

4.2 Airport Operator Specific

4.2.1 Airport operator shall display signages throughout the airport including terminal building in a clear and unambiguous manner as per international standards. The points of arrival and departure shall be clearly indicated with basic information about airport in accessible format.

4.2.2 Signages for all spaces in the terminal building reserved for persons with disability or reduced mobility should be clearly indicated to discourage the use by other passengers.

4.2.3 Airport operator shall endeavour to ensure that parking spaces are reserved and located in the close proximity to the terminal building for persons with disability or reduced mobility.

4.2.4 Airport operator shall provide ramps at least at the main entrance/exit to the terminal building for easy access by persons with disability or reduced mobility.

4.2.5 Airport operator shall ensure that all points of access open to the public are accessible to persons with disability or reduced mobility.

4.2.6 All areas and services in the terminal building that are open to the public shall be accessible to persons with disability or reduced mobility.

4.2.7 All equipment provided for use by general public such as telephones, internet service, etc. should also be accessible to persons with disability or reduced mobility including those with sensory impairments.

4.2.8 Flight information system should be positioned in such a way to ensure its readability by people in wheelchair and those with visual impairment. Provision of audible announcements should be made for people who are not able to use visual displays such as blind and with learning disability.

4.2.9 Airport operator shall ensure that persons with disability or reduced mobility are transported within the airport in the same condition, comfort and safety as those available for other passengers.

4.2.10 The airport operator shall ensure that the facilities at the airport are accessible to persons with disability or reduced mobility during their transit through the airport.

4.2.11 Airport operator shall provide ambulance facility for the passenger on arrival and departure at the airport upon advance request by the passenger/representative/airline.

4.2.12 Airport operator shall make appropriate provision for ambulift at the airport to enable persons with disability or reduced mobility to embark/disembark the aircraft without inconvenience. Such provision may be made in coordination with Ground Handling Agencies (GHAs), if required.

Note: Though the existing practice and responsibility of providing ambulifts may vary at various airports, it will rest with the airport operator, who must ensure compliance in coordination with the airlines, GHAs, etc.

4.3 Training Requirements

4.3.1 All airlines and airport operators shall conduct training program for their staff engaged in passenger handling for sensitization and developing awareness for assisting persons with disability or reduced mobility and to ensure that the staff is well briefed on their legal responsibilities.

4.3.2 The contents and duration of the training program shall be in accordance with the guidelines issued by the Department of Disability Affairs, Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment.

Note: The training may include but not limited to the following:

- a) Barriers faced by persons with disability or reduced mobility, including attitude, environment and organisation, and suggestions for removing such barriers.
- b) Information on the range of disabilities, including hidden or less visible disabilities.
- c) Skills needed for assisting disabled or reduced mobility passengers.
- d) Communication and interpersonal skills for interacting with disabled people.
- e) Health and safety information.
- f) General awareness about relevant regulations.

4.3.3 The operators shall ensure that all its employees are imparted disability-related basic training and refresher training at appropriate interval.

Note: Disability related training provides practical overview and is relevant in particular to those providing assistance to disabled people. It increases understanding of the whole range of impairments so that personnel are aware of how to interact with disabled and to tackle negative perceptions and attitudes towards disabled people.

4.3.4 In addition to basic training, operators should provide specific training for personnel who may be required to provide direct assistance to disabled persons and persons with reduced mobility.

4.3.5 Operators shall ensure that adequate training is provided to all its service providers, ground handling agencies and sub-contractors responsible for providing assistance services.

4.3.6 It shall be the responsibility of airport operator to ensure that security staff positioned at airport undergoes disability-related training.

4.3.7 Airlines shall ensure that cabin crew safety and emergency procedures training is combined with disability awareness training for assisting persons with disability or reduced mobility in the cabin environment.

4.4 General Requirements

4.4.1 Operators shall formulate a detailed procedure for carriage of persons with disability or reduced mobility and publish the same on their website. Operators including the travel agents shall ensure that web content conforms to the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) so as to make it more accessible to persons with disabilities. Operators shall display disability policy and guidance for disabled passengers on the main page of their website.

4.4.2 Operator shall develop in-house document on handling persons with disability or reduced mobility, which should be used for strict compliance by all employees. Such a document and the proof of its compliance shall be made available to DGCA and other enforcement agencies. Such document/manual should be readily available for reference of all personnel required in handling such persons.

4.4.3 Operator shall document their responsibility with regard to the travel of persons with disability or reduced mobility, and make it available on their website.

4.4.4 All assistive aids shall be provided without any extra cost to the persons with disability or reduced mobility.

4.4.5 Operators, both the airlines and airport, shall ensure availability of low floor accessible buses at the airports to enable easy boarding and alighting of passengers.

4.4.6 In case of transfer between airlines and terminals, the airlines and airport operators shall ensure smooth and hassle free transportation of persons with disability or reduced mobility.

4.4.7 Incapacitated passengers and persons with disability or reduced mobility requiring special assistance or protection from disturbance, including 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.

4.4.8 Where wheelchairs or other mobility equipment or assistive devices are lost or damaged whilst being handled at the airport or transported on board aircraft, the passenger to whom the equipment belongs shall be compensated by the entity responsible for such loss or damage.

4.4.9 As a part of Annual Surveillance Programme (ASP), DGCA shall conduct surveillance of the operators to ensure compliance of the CAR.

4.5 Passenger Grievance Redressal

4.5.1 A person with disability or reduced mobility, who considers that provisions of this CAR have been infringed, may bring the matter to the attention of the airlines, airport operator, as the case may be.

4.5.2 The operator shall ensure speedy and proper redressal of these complaints.

4.5.3 Operator shall appoint a Nodal officer and Appellate Authority to settle the grievances in a stipulated time frame. In this regard, the operators shall conspicuously display the details of Nodal Officer and Appellate Authority on their respective website.

4.5.4 The internal grievance mechanism of operators shall be transparent with a provision of online complaint handling. All complaints registered shall be issued a unique reference number.

4.5.5 If the concerned operator fails to fulfill their obligations, the person with disability or reduced mobility may complain to the statutory bodies set up under relevant applicable laws.

(Arun Mishra)
Director General of Civil Aviation