



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
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Subject: **Handling of Unruly / Disruptive Passengers in Aircraft.**

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Unlawful/disruptive behaviour on board the aircraft may interfere with the performance of duties of the crew members or hamper the ability of the crew members to perform those duties or jeopardize the safety of the aircraft/persons/property on board/good order & discipline on board, cause discomfort to other passengers & crew members and may invite penal action in accordance with applicable regulations. In such a situation, passengers are expected to abide by law of the land and utilise the means and resources for grievance redressal as specified by the Government.
- 1.2 Even if the passenger feels that the redressal system has limitations, unlawful/disruptive action is certainly not a solution. It may also be noted that an aircraft or the airport (terminal and the airside) are not a place for sloganeering, or for protests of any kind. It is imperative that all stake holders, the airline, the airport operator and the travelling public take cognizance and prioritize safety, security and hassle-free travel for all passengers. For this reason, a “ No / Zero Tolerance Policy” has been adopted to ensure the safety of the aircraft/persons/property and to maintain good order & discipline on board an aircraft.
- 1.3 Unruly behaviour on-board aircraft has been declared as an offence and is a punishable act. Although unruly passengers represent only a miniscule proportion of passengers as a whole, even one unruly passenger can jeopardise safety on board. Unruly passengers affect all personnel involved in the process connected with a flight operation, ultimately affecting the operation of the flight itself.

1.4 This CAR is issued under the provisions of Rule 22, Rule 23 , Rule 29 and Rule 133A of the Aircraft Rules, 1937.

2. APPLICABILITY

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

- a) All Indian operators engaged in scheduled air transport services, both domestic and international, for carriage of passengers.
- b) All airport operators within Indian Territory.
- e) —All passengers during the period of air travel to/from India.-

3. DEFINITIONS

3.1 *Unruly passenger* - A passenger who fails to respect the rules of conduct at an airport or on board an aircraft or to follow the instructions of the airport staff or crew members and thereby disturbs the good order and discipline at an airport or on board the aircraft.

3.2 *Disembarkation* means leaving an aircraft after a landing, except by crew or passengers continuing on the next stage of the same through-flight.

3.3 *Embarkation* means boarding an aircraft for the purpose of commencing a flight, except by such crew or passengers as have embarked on a previous stage of the same through-flight.

4. REQUIREMENTS FOR DEALING WITH UNRULY PASSENGERS

4.1 Every reasonable effort to protect passengers and personnel against any offence by unruly passengers shall be made.

4.2 Conditions of carriage shall include statutory warning specifying acts which have been declared unlawful/disruptive under the provisions of the Aircraft Rules, 1937.

4.3 Airline shall establish Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) including the role of ground staff, flight crew, airline airport manager and airline central operational control to deal with unruly passengers while at airport or on-board the aircraft. The SOP shall be communicated throughout the organization and especially to all employees who are in direct contact with passengers, both on the ground and on the aircraft.

4.4 Passengers who are likely to be unruly must be carefully monitored, and if deemed to pose a threat to the safety and security of the flight, fellow passengers or staff while on board aircraft, should be refused embarkation or off-loaded.

4.5 All airlines shall establish mechanism to detect and report unruly passenger behaviour at check-in, in the lounges, at the boarding gate or any other place in the terminal building or at the airside in order to prevent such passengers from boarding. Such cases shall be reported immediately with law enforcement agency at the aerodrome.

- 4.6 Unruly behaviour could be the result of an event of unsatisfactory service/condition or effect of a series of such events that build up. Airline staff should observe early signs of potential unruly behaviour. Airlines shall focus and act on these early signs, rather than dealing exclusively with escalated events. At no stage, the airline staff/crew member shall show discourteous behaviour during redressal of genuine passenger rights.
- 4.7 During the flight, crew members must attempt to defuse a critical situation until it becomes clear that there is no way to resolve it through verbal communication and written notice to passenger. Applying restraining devices should be used when all conciliatory approaches have been exhausted.
- 4.8 Passengers shall be made aware through display of regulations relating to 'Unruly passenger' at prominent locations in the airport terminal building. Any act, which is considered offence on the ground and invites penal action as per law, is also an offence if committed on-board aircraft.
- 4.9 The passenger may also be made aware of DGCA regulations on 'unruly passengers' that in case his/her behaviour falls into one of the following categories, he/she is likely to be breaking the law and could be arrested on arrival at destination, or at any other airport where the aircraft commander may choose to land. However, these clauses are indicative and not exhaustive:
- a) Consumption of, or being under the influence of, alcoholic beverages or drugs, resulting in unruly behaviour.
 - b) Smoking or use of electronic smoking devices on board the aircraft
 - c) Failure to obey the instructions of the pilot-in-command
 - d) Acting in an unruly manner by:
 - i) use of any threatening or abusive language towards a member of the crew or other passengers;
 - ii) physically assaulting/threatening, behaving in a disorderly or abusive manner towards crew members or other passengers;
 - iii) Interfering with or obstructing the performance of the duties of a crew member.
 - iv) Engaging in acts of sloganeering/protest
 - e) Endangering the safety of an aircraft and persons therein
 - f) Tampering with the aircraft parts or equipment, for e.g. the unauthorized use of life jackets or tampering of the doors / emergency exits.
 - g) Other type of riotous behavior (for example kicking and banging heads on other passengers, continuous kicking seat backs or tray tables etc.)
- 4.10 Airlines shall categorize all such cases of unruly behaviour on-board the aircraft as indicated in Para 4.9 to this CAR into following categories:

- a) Level 1: Unruly behaviour (physical gestures, verbal harassment, unruly inebriation etc.)
- b) Level 2: Physically abusive behaviour (pushing, kicking, hitting, grabbing or inappropriate touching or sexual harassment etc.)
- c) Level 3: Life-threatening behaviour (damage to aircraft operating systems, physical violence such as choking, eye gouging, murderous assault etc.)
- d) Level 4: Attempted or actual breach of the flight crew compartment.

4.11 Pilot-in-command shall quickly assess if the cabin crew can control the unruly passenger and accordingly relay this information to the airline's central control on the ground.

4.12 If a seriousness of the situation so warrants, airline's central control shall, in consultation with pilot-in-command, identify the alternate aerodrome for landing of aircraft as quickly as possible. Security agencies, duty manager at alternate aerodrome and ground staff shall be informed for appropriate action at landing.

4.13 Upon landing of the aircraft, airline representative shall lodge complaint with the concerned law enforcement agency at aerodrome, to whom, the unruly passenger shall be handed over. The crew shall not be required to be present for filing of a complaint.

4.14 In the event of any unruly or disruptive behaviour occurring within the airport premises, BCAS / CISF may take appropriate actions, in coordination with concerned airport and airlines.

5. TRAINING

5.1 Flight crew, cabin crew, airline ground staff and airport staff should be properly trained and be in knowledge of procedures to deal with unruly / disruptive passengers.

5.2 The training should provide knowledge on how to detect, defuse and prevent critical situations, about the causes of various types of disruptive behaviour and ways to handle critical situations along with reporting thereto.

5.3 The training modules so designed must include duties of such operating personnel, ground staff, cabin crew and flight crew dealing with conflict and its aftermath, ways/means to mitigate the situations that occur due to long waiting lines, flight being overbooked, delays & diversion/cancellation and lack of information.

5.4 In an endeavour to defuse a volatile situation, airline shall establish a

mechanism to continuously observe and analyse incidents of disruptive behaviour in order to impart relevant training to frontline staff to help them manage rude and aggressive passengers and prevent such occurrences.

6. REPORTING AND HANDLING OF UNRULY PASSENGERS ON BOARD THE AIRCRAFT

- 6.1 Whenever an airline receives a complaint of unruly behaviour from the pilot-in-command, the incident may, except as provided under Para 8.1 this CAR, be referred by the airlines to an Independent Committee. This Independent Committee shall be constituted by the airline and consists of the following:
- a) Retired District & Session Judge as Chairman.
 - b) A representative from a different scheduled Airline as Member.
 - c) Representative from a passengers association or consumer association or retired officer of Consumer Dispute Redressal Forum as Member.
- 6.2 The Independent Committee shall decide the matter within a period of Forty Five (45) days along with category level of the unruly passenger as indicated in Para 4.10 of this CAR. The Independent Committee shall also decide the duration for which the unruly passenger will be banned from flying in accordance with provisions of Para 9.1 of this CAR.
- 6.3 Pending decision of the Independent Committee, the concerned airline may ban such unruly passenger from flying, but such period may not exceed a period of Forty Five (45) days.
- 6.4 The Independent Committee shall give the final decision in Forty Five (45) days by giving the reasons in writing. The decision of the Independent Committee shall be binding on the airline concerned. In case the Independent Committee fails to take a decision in Forty Five (45) days, the passenger will be free to fly.
- 6.5 The airlines shall maintain a database of all unruly passengers (after decision by the Independent Committee) and inform the same to DGCA/other airlines. This shall form a No-Fly List which will be maintained by DGCA and contain the following information:
- a) Full name of the Passenger
 - b) Contact details viz. phone number, email address, postal address etc. (as indicated at the time of booking the ticket)
 - c) Details of identification document, viz., Aadhar card, passport etc.
 - d) Date of occurrence and details of the incident
 - e) Sector
 - f) Flight Number
 - g) Seat number
 - h) Category Level (as per para 4.10 of this CAR)
 - i) Date from which the ban is imposed
 - j) Period of imposition of ban

Note: Information given at Para 6.5 (a) to (j) shall be shared with the airlines. However, it shall not be made public.

- 6.6 Upon receipt of such intimation, following the decision of the Independent Committee, other airlines also impose a flying ban on the unruly passenger for the period specified by the Independent Committee.
- 6.7 Irrespective of whether the matter is referred for consideration by an Independent committee, Information of all such incidents / occurrences / events of unruly behaviour / disruptive passenger shall be brought to the notice of the DGCA as per Cabin Safety Circular 01 of 2025 “ Reporting Procedure For Passenger Misconduct / Passenger Rage / Unruly Behaviour” (as amended time to time).
- 6.8 Instances of passengers posing a threat to flight safety, or the security of fellow passengers or operating crew shall be reported to:
- a) Airline security official
 - b) SHO of airport police station
 - c) CISF
 - d) BCAS
 - e) Airport operator.

7. NATIONAL SECURITY

The Ministry of Home Affairs may provide to DGCA and to the airlines, a list of individuals identified as national security threats for inclusion in the No-Fly List under Para 6.5 of this CAR. Such cases will not be covered by appeal provisions as provided under Para 10 of this CAR. Further, National Security threats list provided by Ministry of Home Affairs shall be shared with the airlines. However, this list will not be a part of published No Fly List. Separately, law enforcement agencies may take action in accordance with applicable law under their jurisdiction.

8. DISRUPTIVE PASSENGER

- 8.1 Notwithstanding anything contained in Paragraph 6.1 of this CAR, an airline may directly impose a flying ban for a disruptive passenger for a period not exceeding thirty days (30) days without referring the matter to the Independent Committee, where the passenger is found to have committed any of the following disruptive acts on board an aircraft:
- a) Smoking on board the aircraft.
 - b) Consumption of alcohol
 - I. Onboard a domestic flight
 - II. Onboard an international flight, except when such alcohol is served by the cabin crew.
 - c) Misuse of an emergency exit or unauthorized use of life-saving

equipment, including life jackets.

- d) Engaging in protests or sloganeering,
- e) Unruly conduct arising from intoxication.
- f) Any other disorderly or disruptive behaviour, including but not limited to screaming, causing annoyance to other passengers, or kicking or banging seat backs or tray tables.

8.2 The airline shall maintain a database of disruptive passengers containing the particulars specified in Para 6.5(a) to (j) and shall intimate the DGCA regarding the imposition of a flying ban. However, such disruptive passenger shall not be placed in the 'No Fly List' by DGCA.

9. GENERAL

9.1 For any person, who is placed in the No-Fly List other than at para 8.1, airlines shall ban him/her from taking flights to/from/within India for a duration as indicated below:

- a) Level 1 upto three months
- b) Level 2 upto six months
- c) Level 3 & 4 for a minimum period of 2 years or more without limit
- d) Persons covered under Para 7 Barred till such time that the person is perceived to be - national security risk by the Ministry of Home Affairs

9.2 Sale of tickets inadvertently to such person(s) shall not confer a right upon them to fly. This shall be in addition to any action that may be taken against them under the appropriate law.

9.3 For every subsequent offence, the person will be banned for twice the period of previous ban as indicated in the Para 9.1 of this CAR.

9.4 The passenger included in the No-Fly List and passenger banned from flying due to disruptive behaviour, shall be communicated by the airline concerned along with the reason thereof and the duration of the ban.

9.5 The airline shall formulate and implement a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for the handling of such passengers and for reporting the incidents to the DGCA, and shall circulate the same among all concerned stakeholders.

10. Appeal

- 10.1 Aggrieved persons who are placed in 'No Fly List' (other than those covered under para 7 of this CAR), on receipt of communication of ban from the airline, may appeal within sixty (60) days from the date of issue of the order, to an Appellate Committee constituted by the Ministry of Civil Aviation, consisting of the following:
- a) Retired Judge of a High Court as Chairman.
 - b) Representative from a passenger's association or consumer association or retired officer of Consumer Dispute Redressal Forum as Member.
 - c) Representative of the airlines of the rank not below the rank of Vice- President or equivalent as Member.
- 10.2 Any person aggrieved by being classified as a disruptive passenger and have been imposed flying ban, on receipt of communication from the airline, may appeal within fifteen (15) days from the date of imposition of ban, to the independent committee as referred in para 6.1.
- 10.3 The decision of the Appellate Committee shall be final. Any further appeal shall lie in a High Court.

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