



GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
DIRECTOR GENERAL OF CIVIL AVIATION

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GENERAL ADVISORY CIRCULAR

Subject: Employment Of Services Of Aviation Medicine Specialist By All Operators

1. INTRODUCTION:

1.1 Ensuring and promoting Flight Safety is the responsibility of the operator. It is the responsibility of the all operators in civil aviation to carry out effective maintenance and monitoring of health of their aircrew. They also need to ensure timely and effective medical attendance, specialist consultation and periodic medical review of all their crew and implementation of all existing policies promulgated by the DGCA. Additionally, all crew (flight crew and cabin crew) need to be indoctrinated on aspects of aviation medicine as it affects the crew themselves as well as the passengers. Training on Human Factors, CRM and First Aid for all personnel involved in aviation is of utmost importance so that their approaches in routine and emergency situations are synchronized towards ensuring flight safety. Aviation Medicine specialists are doctors possessing post-graduate degree in the speciality. They are especially trained in the physical, physiological and psychological aspects of aviation stresses and their mitigation. Due to their specialized knowledge they can contribute, with a sound scientific basis, towards the human interface of flight as well as ground operations. These specialist doctors can well be utilized to comprehensively enhance flight safety in all civil air operations in India.

1.2 Definitions

Crew Member means a person assigned by an operator to duty on an aircraft during a flight duty period.

Flight crew member means a licensed crewmember charged with duties essential to the operation of an aircraft during a flight duty period.

Cabin crew member means a crewmember other than a flight crew member.

Aviation Medicine Specialist means a doctor who has undergone a post-graduate training in Aviation Medicine.

1.3 This Advisory Circular lays down the necessity of employing the professional expertise of an Aviation Medicine specialist by all operators.

2. APPLICABILITY

The contents of his Advisory Circular are pertinent for all Indian operators engaged in scheduled air transport services for carriage of passengers, mail or cargo. These guidelines are equally relevant to the Non-Scheduled/ Air Taxi operators, State Government Aircraft operations and private category aircraft operations as explained in succeeding paragraphs.

3. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE AVIATION MEDICINE SPECIALIST

The DGCA has issued guidelines, directives and policies on medical matters pertaining to the Flight Safety. The Aviation Medicine specialist, owing to the nature of training received, would be best suited in an advisory role to the operators and also in a supervisory role to ensure the implementation of all such policies. Additionally, the Aviation Medicine specialist could contribute towards the following areas of work in the airline industry :-

3.1 Periodic medical review (Class I renewal medical examination) of all flight crew. The assessment of the medical fitness of aircrew on a regular basis to ascertain continued medical fitness to fly and to take aeromedical decisions about such fitness after seemingly minor disabilities or disease would be the prime task of such a specialist. The incumbent would also ensure that investigations advised by IAF/ other civil Class I Medical Examination Centres have been carried out and recommendations of the Medical Assessor have been complied with. Supervision of Cabin Crew medical examination could also be done by the specialist.

3.2 Monitoring of aircrew with medical conditions and restrictions imposed by Medical Assessor. The aircrew who develop medical conditions/ disease necessitating a periodic follow up, investigations/ specialist opinion and advise on long term consequences. These can be best provided by the Aviation Medicine specialist with his understanding of the interplay between the human, aviation stresses and disease process.

3.3 Fatigue and fatigue countermeasures among Flight and Cabin Crew. The Aviation Medicine specialist can indoctrinate crew on these aspects and also supervise the implementation of policies in this regard. Additionally, the specialist can liaise with persons responsible for crew scheduling and operations of the

airlines to ensure that the policy is followed in letter and spirit. Dr Naseem Zaidi Committee report on FDTL has also brought out that scheduled operators should employ Aviation Medicine specialists for addressing these aspects.

3.4 Aviation Medicine, Human Factors and CRM training for Flight Crew. The Aviation Medicine specialist, owing to his training, should be utilized for imparting initial and continuity training on aspects of aviation medicine important to the flight crew. This includes training on aeromedical problems due to high altitude including hypoxia, cabin pressurization and its associated aspects, sudden loss of cabin pressurization, human information processing and cognitive errors, perceptual errors during approach and landing as well as during night flying and bad weather, spatial disorientation, effects of long haul flights including circadian desynchronization, escape and survival. Such training would help the crew appreciate these aspects better and enhance flight safety.

3.5 Aviation Medicine, Human Factors, CRM and First Aid training for Cabin Crew. The aspects of first aid and CRM as contained in CAR Section 7 Series M Part I can be dealt with by the Aviation Medicine specialist based on their awareness of stresses unique to aviation. An understanding of aspects of Aviation Medicine is of paramount importance in being able to effectively comprehend and conduct training in these areas.

3.6 Assessment of fitness to travel by Civil Airlines. The assessment of medical fitness to travel by civil airlines is a specialized field where decision needs to take into account the medical condition of the patient, the effect of aviation stress on the medical condition, the availability of trained personnel and specialist equipment on board, diversions and facility at destination. The Aviation Medicine specialist is best suited to carry out this exercise.

3.7 First Aid Kits (FAK), Medical Kits (MK), Automatic External Defibrillator (AED) and Universal Precaution Kit (UPK). Aspects pertaining to carriage of these have been covered in the CAR Section 2 Series X Part III. The correct provisioning of the contents of the kits, training of crew on their use and periodic monitoring is of utmost importance. The Aviation Medicine specialist is best suited to carry out this task.

3.8 Breathlyser Test. The procedure for conduct of breathlyser test for aircrew and cabin-crew for alcohol consumption is contained in CAR Section 5 Series F Part III. The testing procedure and actions to be taken upon finding a crew positive are contained in this CAR. Effective monitoring of implementation of these provisions require a person adept at the conduct of the test and its implications. The Aviation Medicine specialist is best suited to supervise this task.

3.9 Cabin Crew Medical Examination. The cabin crew form an vital link in ensuring flight safety and attending to medical emergencies as first responders. Their initial and periodic medical examination to ensure an optimal level of fitness is an important aspect. This can be supervised by the Aviation Medicine specialist.

4. EMPLOYMENT OF SERVICES OF AVIATION MEDICINE SPECIALIST

4.1 Scheduled Operators (passengers, mail and cargo). The employment of Aviation Medicine specialists at the Head Office and at all large stations where 10 or more flight crew are stationed is recommended.

4.2 Non-Scheduled/ Air Taxi operators, State Government Aircraft operators and private category aircraft operators. The employment of Aviation Medicine specialist by Non-Scheduled/ Air Taxi operators, State Government Aircraft operators and private category aircraft operators is desirable. This could be achieved by employing the services of an Aviation Medicine specialist on a full time/ part- time consultant basis.

4.3 Airport Medical setups. The employment of Aviation Medicine specialist by Airport Medical setups at large airports is desirable. This could be achieved by employing the services of an Aviation Medicine specialist on a full time/ part-time consultant basis.



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