

Advisory Circular

CARRIAGE OF SERVICE ANIMALS IN THE PASSENGER CABIN

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GENERAL

Advisory Circulars (ACs) are issued by the Director-General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) from time to time to provide practical guidance or certainty in respect of the statutory requirements for aviation safety. ACs contain information about standards, practices and procedures acceptable to CAAS. An AC may be used, in accordance with section 3C of the Air Navigation Act (Cap. 6) (ANA), to demonstrate compliance with a statutory requirement. The revision number of the AC is indicated in parenthesis in the suffix of the AC number.

PURPOSE

This AC provides guidance to demonstrate compliance with, and information related to, the carriage of service animals such as guide dogs and assistance dogs in the aircraft passenger cabin.

APPLICABILITY

This AC is applicable for the AOC holder operating in accordance with ANR-121.

RELATED REGULATIONS

This AC relates specifically to Regulation 9, 17 and 18 of ANR-121.

RELATED ADVISORY CIRCULARS

Nil.

CANCELLATION

This AC supersedes AC AOC-35.

EFFECTIVE DATE

This AC is effective from 1 October 2018.

OTHER REFERENCES

- ICAO Annex 9 (Thirteenth Edition July 2011) Facilitation
- ICAO Guidance Document 9984 Manual on Access to Air Transport by Persons with Disabilities
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (New York - 13 December 2006) - Treaty Series No. 10 (2010)
- Flight Safety Foundation, Cabin Crew Safety, Vol 40, No. 2, March-April 2005 - Guidelines Enable Service Animals to Travel Safely at a Passenger's Seat
- The Guide Dog Association of Singapore website information

1 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Persons with disabilities¹ make up a significant and growing percentage of the world's population and constitute the world's largest minorities according to The World Health Organization (WHO). The aviation industry like all other transport modes, needs to recognize and accommodate this growing passenger segment and under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, specifically the general principles of "Article 3 (b) non-discrimination, (c) Full and effective participation and inclusion in society; (e) equal opportunity and (f) Accessibility", persons of disabilities must be provided equivalent access to any modes of transport including air travel. The Singapore Government signed the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities (UNCRPD) on 30 November 2012 in New York.
- 1.2 Increasingly, many people who are assisted by service animals travel on an aircraft. The service animals² referred to in this AC are those that have been trained and qualified by an internationally accredited organisation or person for travel with a passenger with disabilities on a flight. The main basis that service animals may be allowed for travel in the passenger cabin is that the service animals have undergone and passed high standards of training, stringent behavioural, health and welfare checks.
- 1.3 Guide/seeing-eye dogs and assistance dogs are the most commonly known service animals. Other examples of service animals include:
- (a) "Lap-held" service animals (such as small dogs and monkeys used by a person with mobility impairments) are service animals that need to be in a person's lap to perform a service for that person.
 - (b) Trained miniature horses.

2 CARRIAGE OF SERVICE ANIMALS

- 2.1 The AOC holder should develop a company policy to guide staff involved in the processing, management and acceptance of a person with disability travelling with a service animal. The policy, processes and procedures are to be documented in the relevant operations manuals and submitted to CAAS for approval.
- 2.2 When formulating the policy and procedures for the carriage of service animals, the AOC holder may refer to the referenced documents and should consider:
- (a) the safety of the passenger with disability, other passengers and crew for all phases of flight, taking into account the animal's size as well as weight and

¹ ICAO Annex 9 - Definition of Person with disabilities. - Any person whose mobility is reduced due to a physical incapacity (sensory or locomotor), an intellectual deficiency, age, illness or any other cause of disability when using transport and whose situation needs special attention and the adaptation to the person's needs of the services made available to all passengers.

² A service animal is one that has been specifically trained to provide assistance or guide an individual with reduce mobility e.g. a person with visual impairment, alert people with a hearing impairment, pull a wheelchair, carry and pick up articles for persons with mobility impairments and assist persons with mobility impairments with their balance etc. Service animals may also be referred to as assistance animals, assist animals, support animals, or helper animals depending on the country and the animal's function. Dogs are the most common service animals, assisting people in many different ways. Other animals such as monkeys, birds and miniature horses have also been documented and considered as service animals.

whether the animal's presence could impact the health and safety of others, or cause significant disruption in the management of the cabin and passengers;

- (b) restrictions at destination airports;
 - (c) the number of passengers with disability accompanied by service animals and other passengers with reduced mobility (PRMs) allowed per flight so as to ensure cabin crew are able to manage the cabin safely;
 - (d) criteria for accepting a PRM with a service animal;
 - (e) procedures to check that the passenger with disability who is accompanied by a service animal has satisfied the various requirements, such as quarantine; and
 - (f) training of crew to manage passengers with disability and the service animal.
- 2.3 The AOC holder must also ensure that their policy on carriage of service animal is in compliance with current regulatory requirements in particular ANR-121 that AOC holder is to ensure unimpeded egress to evacuation routes and seats located at emergency exit rows are allocated to passengers competent to operate the emergency exits. PRMs, which include passengers with disabilities, should be assigned seating as appropriate to fulfil such requirements. The cabin crew should also provide appropriate briefings to the PRMs.
- 2.4 The AOC holder should inform the travelling public about their policy for the carriage of service animals. The conditions of travel should be made known to the travelling public to allow adequate planning with regard to the necessary arrangements such as itinerary involving other carriers as different carriers may have different policies and different countries have different requirements. These include information on the travel and health documents required, e.g. certification that the animal is trained, an identification (ID) card with a certificate, a license, or valid health and rabies vaccination certificates, etc.
- 2.5 Additional guidance specifically for the carriage of guide/seeing-eye or assistance dogs is provided in paragraph 3.

3 GUIDANCE FOR THE CARRIAGE OF GUIDE/SEEING-EYE OR ASSISTANCE DOGS ON FLIGHTS

3.1 General Acceptance Criteria

Criteria described here are only some examples of acceptance criteria.

- (a) The passenger with disability needs the guide/seeing-eye dog or assistance dog to provide assistance for the day-to-day needs of the passenger with disability and therefore the dog has to travel with the passenger.
- (b) The passenger with disability has accepted full responsibility for the handling, care and supervision of the guide/seeing-eye dog or assistance dog, and will provide appropriate equipment for the safety and comfort of the dog, including:
 - (i) A moisture mat for the dog to lie on and a muzzle on hand in case it is required.

- (ii) A suitable harness for the guide/seeing-eye dog or assistance dog so as to provide an effective level of restraint during take-off, landing and turbulence.

3.2 On Board Seating Restriction

The AOC holder may assign seats to passengers with disability traveling with guide/seeing-eye dog or assistance dog with the following considerations:

- (a) The size and configuration of the aeroplane. The passenger with disability and his guide/seeing-eye dog or assistance dog should not be seated on the upper deck unless the provisions of evacuation devices of the upper deck main primary emergency exits are similar in structure and operation as those provided in the main deck primary emergency exits.
- (b) The passenger with disability and his guide/seeing-eye dog or assistance dog should not occupy seats that would cause them to impede access to required emergency safety equipment and become an impediment in an emergency evacuation.

3.3 Pre-flight and In-Flight

- (a) The cabin crew and relevant ground staff should be well-versed with the considerations related to the importance of correct seat allocation e.g. seats should have more legroom or foot space so that the guide/seeing-eye dog or assistance dog would not have to remain in a “tight curl” for any significant period of time or extend or protrude into the aisle with the possibility of being injured by crew and passenger movement as well as that of the service carts. The harness used for the guide/seeing-eye dog or assistance dog should be appropriate to minimise the harness becoming a tripping hazard or lead to entanglement around the seat structure thus endangering the service animal as well as the passenger travelling with it.
- (b) All crew members should be aware and to be cautioned against relocating any passenger travelling with a service animal to other seats other than the allocated seat in flight as circumstances prior to descent e.g. turbulence, inflight emergency etc. may prevent the passenger and his service animal from safely returning to his original allocated seat for landing.
- (c) Cabin crew should provide safety briefings and information on safety equipment features to every passenger with disability travelling with a guide/seeing-eye dog or assistance dog before departure.
- (d) All crew members and relevant ground staff should be made aware that if a guide/seeing-eye dog or assistance dog barks, growls or whines it could be alerting people to its owner’s medical condition.
- (e) All crew members and relevant ground staff should understand that the guide/seeing-eye dog or assistance dog is ‘on duty’, and should not be petted or spoken to by anyone except the assisted passenger.

3.4 Landing and Post-Flight

- (a) The passenger of disability should be briefed by the cabin crew about landing and post flight processes in advance.

- (b) The cabin crew should accord all assistance with regard to cabin baggage as needed but should leave the management of the guide/seeing-eye dog or assistance dog to the passenger with disability.
- (c) The AOC holder should ensure the management of the passenger with disability travelling with guide/seeing-eye dog or assistance dog is safely and correctly handed over to the appropriate ground personnel in charge.

3.5 Emergency Evacuation

- (a) When it comes to emergencies, the cabin crew should provide a special emergency briefing if time permits and instruct the passenger with disability to hold his guide/seeing-eye dog or assistance dog in his lap when evacuating via an escape slide.
- (b) During an evacuation, if the passenger with disability travelling with guide/seeing-eye dog or assistance dog become separated and/or has evacuated the aircraft, then the dog should be led to the top of the slide and pushed down the slide, with the help of other crew and passengers. Alternatively, if a crew member or an able-bodied passenger is willing, it is best to place the dog on a person's lap, it helps prevent claws, teeth, harness or collar from tearing the slide, and this keeps the dog under control as it would also be stressed by and fearful of the circumstances.

4 CONCLUSION

- 4.1 The AOC holder should take the content of this AC into account when developing his policy, processes and procedures related to the carriage of service animals in particular the guide/seeing-eye dog or assistance dog.

5 CONTACT INFORMATION

- 5.1 Should you have any queries relating to this subject, please contact CAAS at CAAS_AFO_Infocenter@caas.gov.sg.