

# SAFETY NOTICE 01/2022

## BACKGROUND

The ground handling and loading of aircraft is a key element of the overall aviation safety. ICAO Standards in Annex 6 require that the Authority's safety oversight include the ground handling arrangements of its air operator during initial certification and during the on-going validation of those operators' continued conformance under the SMS. This safety notice was developed to bring attention to the aircraft operators' responsibilities and practices that are subject to evaluations and inspections by CAAF inspectors.

## DEFINITIONS

- i. 'Aircraft' means a machine that can derive support in the atmosphere from the reactions of the air other than the reactions of the air against the earth's surface
- ii. 'Baggage' means suitcases and bags containing personal belongings packed for travelling also known as luggage.
- iii. 'Cargo' means any property carried in an aircraft other than mail, stores and accompanied or mishandled baggage
- iv. 'Cargo handling' term used to describe the methods of accepting, weighing, preparing, securing and transporting cargo on the ground, loading and unloading of an aircraft and the discharging of cargo from an air terminal area.
- v. 'Ground Handling'- range of services provided to facilitate an aircraft flight or aircraft ground repositioning, preparation for and upon conclusion of a flight which will include both customer service and ramp service functions.
- vi. 'Ground Operations Manual'- standardizes ground handling processes and procedures to reduce the complexity between working with multiple airlines, airports and ground service providers.
- vii. 'Takeoff Distance Required' – is the length of runway, plus distance in flight along the ground to allow the aircraft to reach 50ft of altitude.
- viii. 'Training' - A learning process that involves the acquisition of knowledge, sharpening of skills, concepts, rules, or changing of attitudes and behaviours to enhance the performance of operators.
- ix. Unit Load Device (ULD) Any type of aircraft container or, aircraft pallet, which is used to load baggage, cargo, and mail on wide-body aircraft and specific narrow-body aircraft. It allows a large quantity of cargo to be bundled into a single unit. A ULD interfaces directly with an aircraft restraint system.

## LOADING OF AIRCRAFT

1. The attention of all operators, aircrew and airline traffic personnel is drawn to the requirements of Regulation 41 of the Air Navigation Regulations, 1981 concerning the loading of aircraft.
  - 1.1 The ultimate responsibility for ensuring that an aircraft is loaded correctly and that the load is so distributed and secured that it may safely be carried on the intended flight, rests with the pilot in command of the aircraft (Regulation 31(2)(d)). In addition, in the case of an aircraft being loaded for a flight for the purpose of public transport, Regulation 41 requires that this be conducted under the supervision of a person (who may also be the pilot in command) who has been furnished with written instructions as to the distribution and securing of the load to ensure safe carriage and compliance with any conditions that may be in force in that regard. Operators have already been reminded of the requirement for the written instructions and provided with guidance as to its contents.

# SAFETY NOTICE 01/2022

- 1.2 The regulation also details the requirements relating to the preparation and contents of aircraft load sheets and provides for the use of standard weights of passengers and baggage under certain circumstances.
- 1.3 All concerned are reminded that standard weights SHALL NOT be used in the case of aircraft of which the maximum total weight authorised is 18,000kg or below or which has a total seating capacity of under 30 persons.
- 1.4 Under these circumstances the weight of passengers/crew and baggage recorded on the load sheet shall be the actual weight of each person or piece of baggage and for this purpose every person or piece of baggage shall be separately weighed.
2. The importance of accuracy in load sheet preparation is stressed. In the case of some smaller aircraft presently in use in Fiji, an increase of 100kg in the weight could result in as much as a 5% increase in the landing or take-off distance required – a critical factor at smaller airports.
  - 2.1 Where items of cargo and baggage are carried in the passenger compartment of aircraft, loading and aircraft crew must be aware of the inherent danger of unsecured loads. Such loads should not obstruct the normal and emergency exits for the crew and passengers or access to emergency equipment.
  - 2.2 Appropriate restraints should be installed and these should be capable of withstanding the inertia forces in the event of an emergency situation developing.
  - 2.3 Operators should ensure that floor areas on which baggage or cargo is carried are structurally capable of accommodating the weight, and that these are suitably placarded and promulgated in the appropriate manual or instructions.
  - 2.4 Any hand baggage carried on board by passengers should be restricted in weight, shape or dimensions as may be safely carried in the passenger compartment.
  - 2.5 Unless covered overhead lockers are provided, heavy hand baggage should be placed under the seat.
  - 2.6 Operators should make available to passengers or company personnel supervising the embarkation of passengers, the dimensions of the underseat space applicable to each type of aircraft.
  - 2.7 Cargo and baggage may be secured to a vacant seat provided that the resulting forces applied will not be greater than would be applicable by an adult passenger and the size and dimensions are such that no obstruction or danger would result in an emergency situation.
3. The attention of the pilot in command of an aircraft engaged on a flight for the public transport of passengers is also drawn to Regulation 35(e), in particular to the requirement to ensure that during any take-off or landing each person on board occupies an approved seat with a separate safety belt or harness properly secured about that person except that in the case of a person under two years of age he/she may be held by an adult occupying a seat.

## GROUND OPERATIONS

4. A description of the structure and related responsibilities and responsibilities for ground handling functions must be included in the Part A of the Company Operations Manual for AOC Holders including the names of each nominated postholder responsible for flight operations, the maintenance system, crew training and ground operations.
  - 4.1 A description of their function and responsibilities, including their responsibilities for SMS and their duties and responsibilities associated with ground handling functions, including ramp operations and passenger services

# SAFETY NOTICE 01/2022

4.2 The SMS must cover all aspects of Ground Handling processes, including;

- a. subcontracting policies,
- b. aircraft handling processes,
- c. procedures and practices for all ground handling operations.

5.0 Functions of Ground Handling

For the purpose of this notice, “ground handling” will include the facilities, equipment, personnel, policies and procedures for—

- 1) Ticketing of passengers and baggage;
- 2) Acceptance and processing of cargo, including dangerous goods
- 3) Cleaning the aircraft interior
- 4) Servicing of restroom supplies
- 5) Servicing of galley supplies
- 6) Servicing of blankets, pillows and magazines
- 7) Servicing of the aircraft;
- 8) Fueling of the aircraft;
- 9) Loading of the baggage and cargo, including dangerous goods;
- 10) Computation and provision of mass and balance data;
- 11) Computation and provision of performance data;
- 12) Correction or deferring of maintenance irregularities;
- 13) Provision of flight planning information;
- 14) Provision of operational flight plan;
- 15) Security screening of passengers and carry-on baggage;
- 16) Enplaning the passengers and their carry-on baggage;
- 17) Marshalling, towing or assisting the aircraft in departing the gate;
- 18) De-icing of the aircraft;(if applicable)
- 19) Preparation of parking area for arrival of the aircraft
- 20) Marshalling and parking of the aircraft after landing;
- 21) Deplaning the passengers and their carry-on baggage;
- 22) Off-loading of cargo and baggage;
- 23) Provision of the baggage to the deplaned passengers;
- 24) Security for the aircraft while parked;
- 25) Communications as necessary associated with flight handling, departure and arrival;
- 26) Retention of required records associated with flight handling, departure and arrival;
- 27) Implementation of emergency procedures associated with an incident or accident; and
- 28) Auditing of service providers to ensure that associated policies and procedures are being implemented by qualified persons.