



CIVIL AVIATION REGULATIONS

PASSENGER WELFARE PROGRAM

CAR PWP

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FOREWORD

1. Travel by air is commonly accepted as a commodity and no longer considered a luxury. Nevertheless, passenger expectations remain high with respect to facilitation, comfort and timeliness of flights.
2. In 2010, the ICAO Assembly adopted Resolution A37-20 on ICAO's continuing policy in the air transport field, which includes notably a new clause stating that "consumer interests should be given due regard in the development of policy on regulation of international air transport."
3. ICAO has developed guidance material on consumer interests in areas such as conditions of carriage, fare guarantee, baggage, tariff disclosure and denied boarding. This guidance is contained in the *Policy and Guidance Material on the Regulation of International Air Transport* (Doc 9587). Guidance material for users of air transport was also published in the *Manual on the Regulation of International Air Transport* (Doc 9626, Appendix 5) in order to assist States in publishing or encouraging the publication of booklets intended to inform air passengers and shippers of their rights and obligations. It should be noted that issues relating to passengers with reduced mobility are addressed in the context of the ICAO Facilitation Programme and Doc 9984, *Manual on Access to Air Transport by Persons with Disabilities*.
4. The Implementing Requirements (IR) in this document have been established pursuant to Civil Aviation Law Article 4, which mandates the GCAA to establish the policy for, and exercise supervision of commercial air transport in the light of present and future requirements of the UAE national economy, defined under UAE Federal Act No. 20 (1991), Civil Aviation Law.
5. Acceptable Means of Compliance (AMC): The AMC serves as a means by which the GCAA Civil Aviation Regulations can be met. However, regulated entities may decide to demonstrate compliance with the requirements using other means by proposing alternative means of compliance acceptable to the GCAA.
6. Guidance Material (GM): is non-binding explanatory and interpretation material on how to achieve the requirements of the CARs and the AMCs. It contains information, including examples, to assist the user in the interpretation and application of the GCAA Regulation, and the AMCs.



7. All elements (i.e. IRs, AMC, and GM) are colour-coded and can be identified according to the illustration below.

Implementing Requirements

Acceptable Means of Compliance

Guidance Material

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RECORD OF ISSUES, AMENDMENTS AND APPLICABILITY

Issue. No	Date of Issue:	Date of Applicability:	Changes
01	26 th January 2022	01 st November 2022	Initial issue based on NPA 2021-02 and associated CRD
02	25 th December 2024	01 st January 2025	Foreword-item 1: Rephrased.
			Foreword-item 2: Removed.
			Foreword-item 7: Added colour-codes for IR, AMC and GM.
			PWP.A 001: Minor editing for clarity.
			GM1 to PWP.A 003: Added to further clarify applicability.
			PWP.A 005: Added the following terms and definitions for clarity- 'air carrier', 'scheduled time', and 'volunteer'. Removed the term- 'emergency exercise' which was no longer relevant- Removed 'compensation' from the definition of the term-'Cancellation' Removed 'an animal' from the definition of Welfare for clarity.
			PWP.B 001 (g and h): Requirement to notify the GCAA of activation of the Passenger Welfare Program amended to record keeping requirement.
			AMC1 PWP.B 001 (a): Minor editorial changes.
			AMC2 PWP.B 001 (a): Removed the requirement for periodic testing.
			AMC PWP.B 001 (c): Removed the requirement to establish documented Service Level Agreements with relevant authorities responsible for immigration and border control.
			AMC PWP.B 001 (g): Added the minimum details of the activation records to be maintained.
			PWP.B.003 (c): Minor editorial changes for clarity.
			PWP.B.004 (c): Minor editorial changes for clarity.
			PWP.B.006 (a)(4): Added 'if available' for further clarity.

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SUBPART A: GENERAL

SUBPART A: GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

PWP.A.001 General

Air travel is a complex consumer service, bringing together multiple stakeholders, including airports, airlines, travel agents, ground handlers, air traffic controllers, security and immigration, caterers, surface transport and maintenance service providers. Most of the time, these organizations interface seamlessly, providing a hassle-free experience to the vast majority passengers who fly in and out of the United Arab Emirates every year. However, complexity also means that when things go wrong, the impact on passengers can be particularly severe.

PWP.A.002 Aim

This regulation aims to:

- (a) provide a high level of protection of passengers by establishing common rules on care and assistance to passengers in the event of denied boarding, cancellation, delay and diversion of flights.
- (b) establish regulations and policies required to implement effective coordination and control of the efforts to provide a passenger welfare program.
- (c) require that commercial air transport operators flying to/from and diverting to airports located in the United Arab Emirates implement a passenger welfare program, which can be part of their airport Business Continuity Plan, and ensure that the program is implemented, supervised and audited as necessary;
- (d) require that UAE airport operators implement a passenger welfare program, which can be part of their airport Business Continuity Plan, in coordination with commercial air transport operators and responsible UAE authorities
- (e) require commercial air transport operators to have documented agreements with airports and contracted ground handling companies in which they operate, so as to facilitate the provision of passenger welfare as required.

GM to PWP.A.002 (a) Aim

On condition that the passengers have a confirmed reservation on the flight concerned and, present themselves for check-in at the time indicated in advance; this regulation establishes obligations of the commercial air transport operator if:

- (a) passengers are denied boarding against their will, except when the passenger does not comply fully with the carrier's contract of carriage or tariff provisions regarding ticketing, reconfirmation, check-in, and acceptability for transportation;
- (b) their flight is delayed;
- (c) their flight is cancelled; and
- (d) their flight is diverted.

PWP.A.003 Applicability

This regulation applies to:

- (a) Commercial Air Transport Operators operating from and to airports located in the United Arab Emirates (UAE),
- (b) Commercial Air Transport Operators diverting to airports located in the UAE, and
- (c) UAE Airport Operators.

Compliance with this regulation does not exempt Commercial Air Transport Operators from compliance with other international regulations that may be applicable to them.

GM1 to PWP.A.003 Applicability

This regulation applies to flight disruptions including denied boarding, cancellation, delay and diversions at airports located in the UAE.

Disruptions at airports other than the UAE will be subject to local regulations.

GM2 to PWP.A.003 Applicability

This regulation does not apply to passengers travelling:

- (a) free of charge or
- (b) at a reduced fare not available directly or indirectly to the public.

The operator should however accommodate such passengers' needs in accordance with this regulation as far as practicable.

PWP.A.004 Oversight

The GCAA shall be responsible for the continuous oversight over the Airport and Commercial Air Transport Operator's Passenger Welfare Program.

PWP.A.005 Terminology

Air Carrier – means an air transport undertaking with a valid operating licence.

Airport Operator – means a person, organization or enterprise engaged in the operation of an airport.

Arrival Time – means the time a specific flight is due to arrive/arrives at the destination airport in accordance with the schedule of flights announced by the air carrier or according to the agreed time and date in case of chartered air transport.

Cancellation – means the non-operation of a flight which was previously planned and on which at least one place was reserved. For the purpose of this requirement; a passenger shall be eligible for welfare if the flight is cancelled within 48 hours from the scheduled time of departure (STD).

Care – means the provision of what is necessary for the health, welfare and protection of a passenger such as, refreshments, meals, hotel accommodation, transport between the airport and place of accommodation, and appropriate means of communication, etc.

Commercial Air Transport Operation – means an aircraft operation involving the transport of passengers, cargo or mail for remuneration or hire.

Delay – Is when a specific flight departs or arrives later than its scheduled time.

Denied boarding – means a refusal to carry passengers on a flight, although they have presented themselves for boarding, except where the passenger does not comply fully with the carrier's contract of carriage or tariff provisions regarding ticketing, reconfirmation, check-in, and acceptability for transportation.

Departure Time – means the time that a specific flight is scheduled to leave the gate according to the schedule of flights announced by the carrier or according to the agreed date in case of charter flights.

Diversion – Means a flight that has been routed from its original arrival destination to a new, typically temporary, arrival destination.

Final destination – means the destination on the ticket presented at the check-in counter or, in the case of directly connecting flights, the destination of the last flight.

Operator – means a person, organization or enterprise engaged in or offering to engage in an aircraft operation.

Passenger – means any person other than the crew members who have been or will be transported on board an aircraft under the ticket issued.

Passenger Welfare Program – means a program developed and implemented by an air carrier and an airport in accordance with the requirements of the competent authority, containing all measures and procedures to deal with the welfare of passengers in airplanes and airports following a disruption, in coordination with all concerned entities.

Reservation – means the fact that the passenger has a ticket, or other proof, which indicates that the reservation has been accepted and registered by the air carrier or tour operator.

Responsible UAE Authorities – Federal and local government entities in the State to which any provision of this regulation applies.

Scheduled time – is the time of departure or arrival which is fixed in the flight schedule and indicated on the reservation or other evidence held by the passenger.

Ticket – means valid document giving entitlement to transport, or something equivalent in paperless form, including electronic form, issued or authorized by the air carrier or its authorized agent.

Transit flights – means a flight that requires passengers to change from one aircraft to another at a hub airport on their way to their final destination. It should be noted that according to the official definition of some airlines transit passengers are on a connecting flight that carry the same flight number.

Tour operator – means, with the exception of an air carrier, an organizer engaged in or offering package travel, package holidays and package tours.

Volunteer – means a person who has presented himself for boarding under the conditions laid down in Article 3(2) and responds positively to the air carrier's call for passengers prepared to surrender their reservation in exchange for benefits.

Welfare – means the general health, happiness and safety of a person, an animal or a group.



SUBPART B: UAE COMMERCIAL AIR TRANSPORT OPERATOR'S PASSENGER WELFARE PROGRAM

PWP.B.001 UAE Commercial Air Transport Operator's Passenger Welfare Program

- (a) UAE Air Transport Operators, conducting commercial air transport operations, shall establish, implement, and maintain a Passenger Welfare Program with sufficient and qualified resources to provide timely and effective assistance to passenger when required by this regulation.
- (b) An operator may contract all or part of its Passenger Welfare Program to a third-party service provider subject to the following requirements:
 - (1) the operator remains ultimately responsible and accountable for the effective implementation of its Passenger Welfare Program; and
 - (2) unrestricted access is granted to the GCAA by the operator to verify continued compliance with the intent of this chapter.
- (c) As part of the Passenger Welfare Program, the operator shall establish and document Service Level Agreements (SLAs) with relevant organizations as appropriate to ensure dedicated support at times of operational disruptions.
- (d) The Passenger Welfare Program shall document the arrangements in place in coordination with the relevant airport authorities to facilitate orderly transfer of passengers and provision of temporary or short-term visas when required.
- (e) The Passenger Welfare Program shall be documented, include a Statement of Compliance with this regulation signed by the Commercial Air Transport Operator and a copy submitted to the GCAA for acceptance.
- (f) The Passenger Welfare Program shall be part of the UAE Commercial Air Transport Operator's Compliance Monitoring Program.
- (g) The UAE Commercial Transport Operator shall maintain records of activation of its Passenger Welfare Program at an UAE Airport to demonstrate compliance with the relevant Subpart/s of this regulation.
- (h) The records of activation of the Passenger Welfare Program shall be retained for a minimum period of 3 years from the date of activation and submitted when required by the GCAA.

AMC1 PWP.B.001 (a) UAE Commercial Air Transport Operator's Passenger Welfare Program

The Program should serve as the coordination document between the Commercial Air Transport Operator and the Airport Operator clarifying the duties, obligations and responsibilities of all concerned parties, avoiding overlap and conflict of interest between the stakeholders to achieve effective care of passengers in the event of disruption of flights.

AMC2 PWP.B 001 (a) UAE Commercial Air Transport Operator's Passenger Welfare Program

The Passenger Welfare Program should contain mechanisms for periodic review of the adequacy of the program and for reviewing the results in order to improve the program's effectiveness.

- (a) Operators should ensure that a trained and competent person is appointed to manage the operator's Passenger Welfare Program, monitor its effectiveness, and report to the operator's senior management team accordingly.
- (b) Operators should make appropriate arrangements with the airports at which they operate, including diversion airports; to facilitate and coordinate the provision of passenger welfare services.

AMC PWP.B 001 (c) UAE Commercial Air Transport Operator's Passenger Welfare Program

The operator should establish and document Service Level Agreements (SLAs) with the following organizations as appropriate to ensure dedicated support at times of operational disruptions:

- 1. Airport Passenger Handling Organizations;
- 2. Airport Operators;
- 3. Ground Transportation Service providers; and
- 4. Hotels.

AMC PWP.B 001 (g) UAE Commercial Air Transport Operator's Passenger Welfare Program

The records of activation of the Passenger Welfare Program should contain the following as a minimum:

- (a) Date;
- (b) Time;
- (c) Flight number;

- (d) From-To;
- (e) Nature of disruption;
- (f) Number of passengers affected; and
- (f) Nature of welfare provided.

PWP.B.002 Denied boarding

In the event of a denied boarding, the affected passengers shall be provided with:

- (a) option for a return flight to the first point of departure or re-routing to their final destination;
- (b) care (refreshments, meals, hotel accommodation, transport between the airport and place of accommodation, and appropriate means of communication) as appropriate.

GM1 PWP.B.002 Denied boarding

The requirements are applicable in circumstances where passengers are denied boarding by the operator and excludes circumstances where in the passenger does not comply fully with the carrier's contract of carriage or tariff provisions regarding ticketing, reconfirmation, check-in, and acceptability for transportation.

GM2 PWP.B.002 Denied boarding

When an operator reasonably expects to deny boarding on a flight, it first calls for volunteers to surrender their reservations in exchange for certain benefits. If an insufficient number of volunteers come forward to allow the remaining passengers to board the flight, the air carrier may then deny boarding to passengers against their will, in which case the requirements of PWP.B.002 shall apply.

PWP.B.003 Delay – Passengers in Terminal (Terminal Delay)

- (a) For delays of 1 to 3 hours from the scheduled time of departure; passengers shall be provided with up to date information on flight status by the operator or its representative.
- (b) In the event of anticipated delays of 3 to 8 hours (regardless of the distance of the flight) scheduled time of departure; passengers shall be provided with:
 - (1) up to date information on flight status by the operator or its representative;
 - (2) free meals and refreshments commensurate with the waiting time;
 - (3) appropriate means of communication;

- (4) hotel accommodation (commensurate with the time of the day) for passengers who have missed their connection and their next probable connection is after 8hrs.
- (c) If the anticipated delay is more than 8 hours from the scheduled time of departure; passengers shall be provided with:
 - (1) hotel accommodation (commensurate with travel distance to the city of residence/domicile and time of day);
 - (2) free meals and refreshments commensurate with the waiting time;
 - (3) Appropriate means of communication;
 - (4) transportation between the airport and the place of accommodation/hotel.

PWP.B.004 Delay – Passengers on-board Aircraft (Tarmac Delay)

- (a) For delays of 1 to 3 hours from the scheduled time of departure; passengers shall be provided with up to date information on flight status by the operator or its representative.
- (b) In the event of anticipated delays of 3 to 8 hours (regardless of the distance of the flight) scheduled time of departure; passengers shall be:
 - (1) offered the possibility/opportunity to disembark from the aircraft (subject to local regulations);
 - (2) provided up to date information on flight status by the operator or its representative;
 - (3) provided free meals and refreshments commensurate with the waiting time;
 - (4) provided appropriate means of communication;
 - (5) provided hotel accommodation (commensurate with the time of the day) if they have missed their connection.
- (c) If the anticipated delay is more than 8 hours from the scheduled time of departure; passengers shall be:
 - (1) disembarked from the aircraft (subject to local regulations);
 - (2) provided hotel accommodation (commensurate with travel distance to the city of residence/domicile and the time of the day);
 - (3) provided free meals and refreshments commensurate with the waiting time;
 - (4) provided appropriate means of communication;
 - (5) provided transportation between the airport and the place of accommodation/hotel.

PWP.B.005 Diversion

Following a diversion to an airport other than the planned destination, passengers shall be provided with:

- (a) care (refreshments, meals, hotel accommodation, transport between the airport and place of accommodation, and appropriate means of communication) in accordance with PWP.B.003 and PWP.B.004 as applicable;
- (b) option for a return flight to the first point of departure or re-routing to their final destination without additional cost.

PWP.B.006 Cancellation

- (a) In the event of the cancellation of a flight by the operator, regardless of whether checked-in or not; passengers shall be:
 - (1) informed at the earliest time practicable;
 - (2) offered care (refreshments, meals, hotel accommodation, transport between the airport and place of accommodation, and appropriate means of communication) as appropriate;
 - (3) carried along with their baggage as soon as practicable on another flight on which space is available and, where necessary, extend the period of validity of their ticket to cover that carriage.
 - (4) provided an option for a return flight to the first point of departure or re-routing within a reasonable period of time on a flight of another airline subject to availability, or by other mutually agreed means and class of carriage.
- (b) The above requirement shall apply to:
 - (1) all transit flights; and
 - (2) flights not originating from the city of residence /domicile of the passenger.

SUBPART C: UAE AIRPORT OPERATOR'S PASSENGER WELFARE PROGRAM

PWP.C.001 General

The Program shall serve as the coordination document between the Airport Operator and Commercial Air Transport Operator clarifying the obligations and responsibilities of all concerned parties, avoiding overlap and conflict of interest between the stakeholders to achieve effective care of passengers in the event of disruption of flight.

PWP.C.002 UAE Airport Operator's Passenger Welfare Program

- (a) Airport Operators shall establish, implement and maintain a Passenger Welfare Program with sufficient and qualified resources to provide timely and effective assistance to passengers for whom PWP.B.003, PWP.B.004, PWP.B.005 and PWP.B.006 of this regulation apply.
- (b) The Airport Operator's Passenger Welfare Program shall include:
 - (1) procedures, means of coordination and agreements with the Commercial Air Transport Operators and relevant authorities including but not limited to Immigration and Security to facilitate entry/temporary entry in to the UAE of passengers when required to facilitate any ongoing or further travel arrangements.
 - (2) Procedures, means of coordination and agreement with foreign operators ensuring the operator has a passenger welfare program or a program equivalent to the program described in this regulation.
 - (3) procedures, means of coordination and agreements with road transport service providers for the transportation of passengers when necessary.
 - (4) Details of facilities to provide care and assistance to passengers directly, in accordance with Service Level Agreements with Commercial Air Transport Operators.
 - (5) Integration of the Passenger Welfare Program into the airports business continuity plan (BCP) along with procedures and process to allow for short and long term disruptions to ensure the welfare of passengers.
- (c) The program shall detail the means to ensure that there is clear communication, cooperation, coordination and commitment in dealing with passengers to whom PWP.B.003, PWP.B.004, PWP.B.005 and PWP.B.006 of this regulation apply.

- (d) The declaration form shall accompany the Airport Operator's self-assessment checklist. Completion of this form confirms that the Airport Operator's Passenger Welfare Program meets the requirements described in this regulation.
- (e) The requirements of this Subpart shall also apply to the airports in the UAE designated as an alternate/diversion airport by a Commercial Air Transport Operator.

GM1 PWP.C.002 (b) (4) UAE Airport Operator's Passenger Welfare Program

Business Continuity Plans

Airport Business Continuity Planning helps ensure that airports can maintain the flow of passengers and goods in the event of an emergency or other disruption. Effective business continuity strategies will safeguard passengers and the airport community, enable the delivery of services to customers, sustain commercial revenue streams and protect infrastructure.

Airport Business Continuity Planning should provide a clear risk mitigation strategy, based on a detailed risk assessment of all possible scenarios providing collaborative planning with stakeholders; implementing a clearly defined command and control system, with clearly defined level of responsibilities and authorities; ensuring coordinated management of passenger welfare.

GM2 PWP.C.002 (b) (4) UAE Airport Operator's Passenger Welfare Program

The Service Level Agreements should cover means of re-imbursement between the two parties



SUBPART D: FOREIGN COMMERCIAL AIR TRANSPORT OPERATOR'S PASSENGER WELFARE PROGRAM

PWP.D.001 Requirements

Foreign Air Transport Operators conducting commercial air transport operations to and from the United Arab Emirates are required to provide the airport operator according to its conditions of use, with a Passenger Welfare Program that is equivalent to the program described in this regulation, and that the operator is committed to activating the program in the event of flight delays, cancellations, diversions and denied boarding.