



FAAA NEWS

FLIGHT ATTENDANTS ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA
(Domestic/Regional Division)

19 March 2010

CCR02-10

Attention: All Domestic/Regional cabin crew

WE'RE SERIOUS ABOUT SAFETY DON'T DELAY - RESPOND TODAY

Further to our Newsletter last week, all members should consider responding to CASA on the proposed rule change to the cabin crew ratio from 1:36 to 1:50. As cabin crew, we have a vested interest not only in the safety and welfare of our passengers but in the safety and welfare of ourselves. Having one less crew member on board means one less trained professional that we as cabin crew **rely** on and our passengers **depend** on in an emergency.

In 2003 when the issue was last considered, Parliamentarians on both sides of politics, acknowledged the **critical safety and security role of cabin crew** and ruled out any reduction in the Australian minimum crew to passenger ratio. This was following the incident on QantasLink Flt1737 from MEL to LST. Some politicians went as far as to suggest that a reduction in the cabin crew ratio should **never** have been entertained in the first place.

Surely we do not need another incident like Flt1737 to remind legislators and airlines of the importance of our role as safety and security professionals.

Ask questions of CASA in your response – they are accountable not only to the travelling public but to **you** as a cabin crew member for your safety:

What has changed since Parliament last looked at this in 2003?

Australian airlines have sought 'exemptions' to the legislation and CASA has complied with these requests. Why and how?

Why have airlines sought these 'exemptions'?

CASA states in its own documentation that air operators would realise **efficiency benefits** in aligning with the world's minimum standard and aircraft manufacturers' evacuation standards. Of course, aircraft manufacturers have a vested commercial interest in stipulating the minimum requirements. These simulated evacuations are in a controlled environment, using fit mobile people who are aware of what they have to do – unlike an actual evacuation where other factors are involved such as cabin crew incapacitation, fire, blocked exits, disabled passengers and children.

These are the minimum safety standards but are they the **optimum levels for safety?**

Why does Australia have to standardise with the world's minimum standard?

Other countries such as Canada have not. Canada has a 1:40 ratio – higher than the world's minimum standard.

Australia has the world's best standards, why change?

How have airlines demonstrated equivalent levels of safety or better? Where is the evidence?

The proposed change will involve the majority of aircraft flying domestically. ***What are the risks and how significant are the risks when a smaller overall cabin crew complement is involved?***

Management of in flight emergencies, for example an in flight fire, with one less of us, as well as maintain control of 50 passengers per crew member? It's our safety at risk too!

What is the justification of having a floor level exit on a single aisle aircraft uncovered by a cabin crew member? How does CASA justify that a 30 second briefing to a passenger on how to open an emergency exit will provide a equivalent level of safety to having a trained cabin crew member present at the primary exit to control the exit and manage the evacuation?

Cabin crew already have to rely on the willingness and compliance of passengers at overwing exits.

Cabin crew are trained professionals and passengers depend on this expertise in the event of an emergency. After all, passengers pay for their seat, they should not be expected to take on the responsibility of what is clearly the responsibility of the airline to provide – **SAFETY AND SECURITY.**

CASA will not reply to you unless you specifically request a response. Therefore, the FAAA strongly suggest you request a response to your submission.

Remember, your family and friends have the right to submit a response to CASA. They are members of the travelling public and also have a vested interest in your safety.

**Don't delay – Respond today
Submissions close 6 April 2010
www.casa.gov.au/newrules/ors**

The Association has written to the Federal Minister for Transport and will keep you informed.

More Information:

Go to our website www.faaadomestic.org.au and click on Cabin Crew Ratio for the Notice of Proposed Rule Making and past Newsletters.

Written and authorised by **Jo-Ann Davidson, Divisional Secretary** on behalf of **Carol Locket, National OHS Coordinator**