

Aviation Disaster Family Assistance Code for the UAE

General Civil Aviation Authority

Definitions

“Family assistance is the provision of services and information to address the concerns and the needs of the aircraft accident victims and their families.”

Doc 9973; ICAO Manual on Assistance to Aircraft Accident Victims and their Families
1.12



Definitions

SURVIVOR:

A survivor is a victim who is not fatally injured as a result of the aircraft accident.

VICTIM:

A victim is an occupant of the aircraft, or any person outside the aircraft, who is unintentionally directly involved in the aircraft accident. Victims may include the crew, revenue passengers, non-revenue passengers and third parties.

ICAO Manual on Assistance to Aircraft Accident Victims and their Families 1.18 and 1.19



Definitions

AIR OPERATOR

The air operator is a person, organization or enterprise engaged in or offering to engage in an aircraft operation.

ICAO Manual on Assistance to Aircraft Accident Victims and their Families 1.2

Air France 447 – 31 May 2009



Asiana 214 – 06 July 2013



Malaysia Airlines 370 – 08 March 2014





Malaysia Airlines 17 – 17 July 2014



2/7/2018

Germanwings 9525 – 24 March 2015



ROSTOV, 2016



DUBAI, 2016







Family Assistance



20 January 2018



Aim of Family Assistance

“The aim of Family Assistance is to address the concerns and the needs of the victims and their families, to the extent possible, and to provide them with easily accessible factual information about the progress of the accident investigation.

From the onset, survivors and families should be informed of the objective of the investigation, in accordance with the provisions of Annex 13.”

ICAO Manual on Assistance to Aircraft Accident Victims and their Families 2.1



Examples of Family Assistance Services

- a) Information about the occurrence of the accident, i.e. initial notification of the accident;
- b) Information about the emergency response to the accident;
- c) Information about the location and status of the victims, and the recovery, identification and disposition of remains, both identified and unidentified;
- d) Information about the recovery, management and return of personal effects;
- e) Provide information about the investigation process and its objective, the progress of the investigation, and the public presentation of the findings of the investigation;



Examples of Family Assistance Services

- f) Coordination of travel to, and lodging near or at a family assistance center, as well as assistance to those family members not travelling;
- g) Coordination of a visit to the accident site, where access is practicable, with consideration of safety and security concerns;
- h) Support for immediate financial needs;



Examples of Family Assistance Services

- i) Social, emotional and psychological support; and
- j) Protection from offers of unsolicited legal services for a period of time.



Role of UAE NCEMA in Aviation Disaster Family Assistance

Recognition by **NCEMA** that Aviation Disaster Family Assistance is an essential component of the national response to an aircraft accident.

NCEMA can ensure the effective integration of Family Assistance into the national disaster plan.

The airlines should have representation at NCEMA Committee meetings to ensure proper co-ordination of the response to an aircraft accident.

NCEMA may establish a Family assistance sub-committee.



GCAA view of Family Assistance in the UAE

- Family Assistance is not only important, it is essential.
- The standard of Family Assistance services provided by UAE operators should at least match best international practice.
- The function of the GCAA in Family Assistance is to support the operators in establishing and maintaining appropriate Family Assistance plans and to regulate and exercise oversight of those plans.
- The accountability and responsibility for provision of Family Assistance services will rest with the operator.



Goal

The United Arab Emirates has drafted an Aviation Disaster Family Assistance regulation, using international best practice and experience as guidelines.

This regulation has been approved by the Director General of the GCAA and will come into force on 1 June 2018.



Foundation of UAE Family Assistance Code

- ICAO Documents, Recommendations and Guidelines
- Examination of International Legislation and regulation
- Gap analysis of the situation at the time in the UAE
- Review of international Family Assistance case history
- Include careful consideration of cultural aspects



UAE Operators Family Assistance Responsibilities

- An air operator conducting commercial air transport operations shall ensure that:
 - “A suitable and trained person is appointed to coordinate the Family Assistance Plan and monitor its effectiveness”



UAE Operators Family Assistance Responsibilities

- request that passengers provide, at the time of booking a ticket or when they check in for a flight, the name and contact details of a person who may be contacted in the event of an emergency. This person will preferably be next of kin and shall not be onboard the same flight;
- If a passenger refuses to provide the name of a person to be contacted in case of an emergency, then this shall be recorded;
- information collected shall not be communicated to third parties other than those directly involved in the operator's Family Assistance Plan, nor shall the information be used for commercial purposes;



UAE Operators Family Assistance Responsibilities

- Within three hours of notification of the air accident a verified or partially verified copy of the passenger name list will be provided to the National Aviation Disaster Family Assistance Coordinator;
- The most up to date verified copy of the passenger name list with date and time of issue (UTC Time) will be provided to the National Aviation Disaster Family Assistance Coordinator, upon request;
- The passenger name list remains confidential and classified until publication becomes possible. Passenger name lists shall be issued as soon as verification of passenger names is accomplished, and after next of kin have been notified and consulted;
- No information or speculation regarding the accident investigation is to be communicated to the public;



UAE Operators Family Assistance Responsibilities

- Within one hour from the time of the accident, toll-free telephone number(s), catering for domestic UAE calls will be made available, and at a later stage international call numbers with sufficient capacity and personnel to handle the anticipated call volume are to be provided and publicized;
- Timely notification will be provided to family members of passengers that their relatives' name appears on the preliminary verified passenger name list. The operator has no obligation to release the name of a person affected by the accident, if the person's family do not wish the name to be released;
- In any case notification to family members must be provided prior to releasing passenger names to the public;
- A website (darksite), containing appropriate information for victims and family members, will be activated by the operator within two hours of notification of an accident;



UAE Operators Family Assistance Responsibilities

- The airline must ensure that secure and private facilities are provided at the affected departure, arrival, and intermediate airports for family members in coordination with airport operators;
- Provide secure accommodation for family members at a location near the accident site and provide with transportation to that location, where the nature of the accident permits;
- Appropriate counseling services should be provided by an organization recognized by the relevant UAE government authority for social, emotional, and psychological support of the survivors and victims' families;



UAE Operators Family Assistance Responsibilities

- Privacy and security for the families and the survivors at airports are maintained at all times;
- Immediate financial assistance of a minimum of AED 80,000 to the family of each victim is provided which is considered to be part of the air carrier liability under the Warsaw Convention of 1929 and the Montreal Convention of 1999;
- Consult family members about memorial services and erection of memorial structures and facilitate their execution including funeral arrangements, entry into the UAE on a temporary basis of family members of victims of an aircraft accident, transportation, and accommodation;
- Facilitate the formation of a family association, if desired by the family members;



UAE Operators Family Assistance Responsibilities

- Repatriation of human remains according to the wishes of the family members; and
- Storage and return of personal effects to the family members, unless they are needed for accident investigation, or for a criminal investigation. Any unclaimed effects shall be securely retained by the operator up to a period of at least 24 months from the date of the aircraft accident.



UAE Government Family Assistance Responsibilities

1. Ministry of defense
2. Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International
3. General Civil Aviation Authority
4. Federal Customs Authority
5. UAE Red Crescent
6. The National Emergency and Crisis Management Authority (NCEMA)
7. Health Authority
8. Emirates Transport
9. Abu Dhabi Civil Defense

UAE Government Family Assistance Responsibilities



Inputs and outputs from AAIS Activity



Foreign Operators Family Assistance Responsibilities

- 5. Foreign Commercial Air Transport Operators
- 5.1 Foreign Commercial Air Transport Operators conducting commercial air transport operations to and from the UAE will provide to the GCAA a letter, signed by the Accountable Manager, confirming that the Operator has a Family Assistance Plan that is equivalent to the Plan described in this regulation, and that the Operator is committed to activating the Plan in the event of an accident occurring in the UAE involving its aircraft. A copy of the signed document shall be provided by the GCAA to the National Aviation Disaster Family Assistance Coordinator.



Benefits of establishing a **Family Assistance Plan**

1. Will provide practical and humanitarian assistance and information to victims and their families following an accident.
2. The Plan will help to protect and enhance the reputations of the operator that has suffered the accident and the UAE.

Thank you