



Agenda Item 1: PAX/BAG Screening Systems
1.2 Cabin Baggage Screening System

CABIN BAGGAGE SIZE AND QUANTITY RESTRICTIONS

(Presented by the International Air Transport Association (IATA))

SUMMARY

Certain States have in the past proposed to unilaterally restrict cabin baggage size or quantities. While IATA recognizes that under crisis situations, such a policy may be warranted, we would not recommend that such a policy become a standard operation at airports in the CAR/SAM region.

There is no evidence that limiting cabin baggage size or quantity provides any true security benefits. IATA would then recommend that any proposal for security measure be risk-based and do not negatively impact civil aviation operations.

1. Introduction

1.1 Immediately after the foiled plot of 10 August 2006, a number of initiatives were proposed in order to reduce the risk of liquid explosives making their way in aircraft cabins. A major concern was the fact that liquids, gels and aerosols were difficult to identify among the large amounts of cabin baggage and personal items carried by passengers on board aircraft. Therefore certain proposals were made to either limit the number of cabin bags or the size of cabin bags allowed to be carried by passengers.

1.2 IATA's position as developed immediately following the foiled terror plot of 10 August, 2006 did acknowledge a limitation of 56 x 45 x 25 cm on bag size as a potential countermeasure, this was however developed in the context of the situation as it existed at the time. Industry was working under time pressures in a quickly evolving situation. Information and opinion has since come to light which sheds doubt on the security benefits of restricting bag size.

1.3 It must also be emphasized that the entire IATA position was predicated on developing a new security baseline to counter the potential threat posed by liquids, gels and aerosols which accounted for global harmonization. The basis of our positions with respect to all security measures is that they must be risk-based, effective, operationally sound, minimize the negative impact to the customer and be harmonized globally. The harmonization and mutual recognition of security measures has been a long-standing IATA position and cannot be doubted.

1.4 Research and analysis in the last 18 months have demonstrated that there is very little security benefit to restrict cabin baggage size and quantity. IATA and its Member Airlines have their own

recommendations and policies regarding cabin baggage size and quantities. Most air carriers have established based on commercial policies and safety considerations. Therefore, we would recommend that, under normal operations and threat environment, policies on cabin baggage should continue to be established by individual airlines based on IATA recommendations

2. Cabin Baggage Size Restriction

2.1 The effectiveness of restricting baggage size as a security measure is doubtful. This is especially true when accounting for the fact that security staff at screening checkpoints will, in addition to implementing the measures specifically pertaining to liquids, gels and aerosols, will now also be required to measure the size of cabin baggage where this is in doubt. This will inevitably lead not only to a further reduction of throughput at security checkpoints but also to the dilution of the screeners' attention to potential threat items

2.2 Also shedding doubt on the effectiveness of this measure is simple human nature which would dictate that passengers will inevitably try to pack as much as possible into a smaller bag. This will mean that the bag will be packed more densely than a larger bag which in turn decreases image clarity and slow throughput. Rather, we believe that screeners' performance can be addressed much more effectively by simplifying the Prohibited Items List (PIL) to concentrate on true risk items.

2.3 There is also no doubt that there will be a negative impact on passengers service and convenience, especially for those who are traveling on business with overnight stays and who normally prefer to carry their bags onboard with them. While we agree that good communication can play a major role in avoiding problems, IATA and its Members have been doing their best in this regard with respect to restrictions on liquids, gels and aerosols. These efforts will not prevent a proportion of passengers from arriving at airport screening checkpoints un-informed of these new requirements. We have seen this very clearly with the amount of duty free liquids, aerosols and gels that are being confiscated daily at airports where liquids, gels and aerosols restrictions are in place, primarily from transit/transfer passengers.

2.4 While air carries can monitor the situation at check in, because these measures are not harmonized with other jurisdictions, transit and transfer passengers are very likely to arrive with non-compliant baggage and will have to be re-directed to a check-in counter to check their oversized bags. This will be extremely problematic as there are currently no check-in procedures or facilities available within the transit/transfer areas at airports and certain passengers will not hold visas allowing them to go to the public check-in areas. Also even if the passenger has the necessary visa, this entire procedure would not be able to be accomplished within the Minimum Connect Times (MCT) that are currently in place at most airports in the CAR/SAM region.

2.5 The entire issue must be assessed based on a total impact/risk assessment where measures must be assessed for their effectiveness vs. impact on operations, passenger throughput/service and industry economics. We do not believe that such an assessment has been undertaken in relation to this particular measure.

3. Cabin Baggage Quantity Limit

3.1 First, we would like note that some of our Members already limit the number of carry-on items permitted. However, in almost all instances where Members have imposed carry-on baggage limits, the decision was mainly based on commercial reasons, reflecting the fact that there is no general consensus. Additionally, safety and facilitation issues are also taken into consideration. It has not been shown that limiting the quantity of cabin baggage provides significant overall benefits to security. Its major impact will be in providing safety benefits and most likely improve throughput at pre-board screening checkpoint

3.2 We would like to note that it will be almost impossible for air carriers to monitor the numbers of cabin baggage brought on the aircraft at the check-in counter. Whilst air carriers can inform passengers

of the need to check all potential excess cabin baggage, it will be possible for passengers to present themselves at the screening checkpoint with additional bags not accounted for. If implemented, cabin baggage quantity limits will then have to be enforced either by the screening authority at the pre-board screening checkpoint.

3.3 Further, proposals to have cabin baggage quantity verification checkpoints prior to pre-board screening checkpoints will add an unnecessary burden on passengers and force them to queue yet another time.

3.4 Finally, from an operational perspective this measure will result in more checked baggage which will place additional strain on hold baggage screening (HBS) systems. This in turn will cause HBS systems to be out of service due to preventative maintenance and breakdown much more frequently than would otherwise be the case. Anecdotal data that has been provided to IATA shows volumes of checked baggage have increased 10 to 30 % at some airports purely based on restrictions on liquid, gels and aerosols alone – not on actual bag size or quantities.

4. Conclusions

4.1 IATA believes that with benefit of greater information in regard to the true risks as well as the operational and other impacts of certain measures these measures must be reviewed and if necessary amended. IATA feels that this is especially true with respect to measures to restrict the size of cabin baggage. A full risk/impact assessment must be undertaken in full co-ordination with the ongoing work at ICAO to ensure that:

- a) Security measures are effective, efficient and risk-based: measures should address the primary risks and be considered against their impact operational, customer service and economic impact.
- b) The security impact of any measures is optimized: the primary risk in regard to liquids, gels and aerosols was addressed with the quantity limitations; the rule regarding bag size addresses screeners' convenience, which in itself is questionable; and does not consider alternatives to reach the same objective with less negative impacts.
- c) The negative impact of the rule on operations and customer service is minimized: this measure complicates an already complex screening process with further degradation in passenger throughput and service levels expected to result. The measure is not harmonized with other jurisdictions globally and as such passengers arriving at an airports with some restrictions may well be un-informed of it when they arrive. While the proportion is relatively low, because of the lack of infrastructure to accommodate such passengers this will put considerable pressure on operations and severely impact customer service.

5. Action by the Task Force

The Passenger/Cabin Baggage Task Force is invited to:

- a) note the information provided and the IATA position on restrictions to cabin baggage size and quantities.
- b) consider a total impact/risk assessment where measures must be assessed for their effectiveness vs. impact on operations, passenger throughput/service and industry economics.

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