



**IATA/CONTROL AUTHORITIES WORKING GROUP**

**RECOMMENDED BEST PRACTICE  
FOR MINORS**

17 May, 2007

## The IATA/Control Authorities Working Group (IATA/CAWG)

The IATA/Control Authorities Working Group (IATA/CAWG) was established as an IATA initiative in 1987 as a means of bringing together Airlines and States on the issue of inadmissible and inadequately documented persons. The main imperative was to bring Immigration Authorities and representatives of the National Airlines together in an informal setting to develop mutually acceptable working arrangements, recognising the needs and limitations of the two parties. Whilst the original focus was on inadmissible passengers, IATA/CAWG now deals with many key areas of passenger facilitation.

### The IATA/CAWG Vision Statement is:

“For Airlines and Control Authorities to develop and pursue a cooperative programme for the facilitation and processing of a growing number of passengers, whilst ensuring effective action against illegitimate traffic, and to focus on such concepts as risk management, sharing of information and convergence of processes”.

### IATA/CAWG Membership

Members of IATA/CAWG are the National Airlines and Immigration Departments (sometimes supplemented by the Civil Aviation and Border Police) of Australia, Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Arab Emirates, the United Kingdom, and the United States. The Air Transport Association of America, the Air Transport Association of Canada and the Association of Asia Pacific Airlines are also represented.

## Recommended Best Practice for Minors

### 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 International bodies such as the European Union, the United Nations, the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), the G6 and the G8 are all involved in a broad range of work relating to safeguarding the interests of children. Combating a rising trend in the trafficking of minors, whether accompanied or unaccompanied, is an extremely important area of this work and there is now increased awareness at a global level of how minors are being moved both within and across international borders for the purpose of exploitation. IATA/CAWG believes it is well placed to play a part in helping to prevent trafficking and exploitation by introducing recommended best practice guidelines for minors from both a control authority and airlines perspective.
- 1.2 In conducting appropriate research for these guidelines, it was noted there were considerable differences between the airline definition of a minor and that applied by control authorities. In general for control authorities, the legal definition of a minor is a person below the age of **eighteen** while airlines regard children below the age of **twelve** as minors for the purpose of operating their fare structures. It is not intended to limit or undermine the rights of control authorities and airlines to maintain these definitions outside the scope of this document but it is important to recognise that children aged twelve and over are potentially as vulnerable to exploitation as younger children. With this in mind and for the purpose of adopting the provisions of these best practice guidelines, control authorities and airlines will recognise a minor as a person below the age of sixteen.
- 1.3 Benefits that should result from the implementation of the Minors Best Practice, including the definitions in Section 2, are as follows:
- ✓ Increased awareness on the part of Airlines and Control Authorities should make trafficking more difficult.
  - ✓ Enhanced safety and security for minors travelling by air across international borders, especially those travelling unaccompanied.
  - ✓ Closer co-operation between Airlines and Control Authorities when dealing with both accompanied and unaccompanied minors.
- 1.4 Nothing in this document is to be construed as contradicting national regulations, international agreements or court decisions.

## 2. DEFINITIONS

For the purposes of this document, the following definitions shall be applied unless otherwise indicated<sup>1</sup>.

- 2.1 “MINOR” means a child under the age of sixteen.
- 2.2 “UNACCOMPANIED MINOR” means a child under the age of sixteen travelling alone or travelling only in the company of another child aged less than sixteen.
- 2.3 “ACCOMPANYING PERSON” means anyone aged sixteen or over who is travelling with a child aged less than sixteen. This person will not necessarily be the parent or legal guardian of the minor.

## 3. BEST PRACTICE RECOMMENDATIONS

Best Practice for Minors should include the following key elements:

### **ACTION BY CONTROL AUTHORITIES**

- A) States should adopt as best practice the ICAO Annex 9 standard 3.15, which states “contracting states shall issue a separate passport to each person, regardless of age”.
- B) Control authorities should consider improving the collection, collation and retention of statistical data on arriving minors. Where control authorities already have a system in place they should consider extending it to include categories of minors other than those seeking asylum. Control authorities are encouraged to share data with one another.
- C) Control authorities should provide points of contact for carriers for advice on all visa, travel document and immigration issues including those relating to minors.
- D) Control authorities should undertake to provide front line staff with adequate and appropriate training in respect of specific issues relating to minors.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Throughout these guidelines, the use of the male gender should be understood to include male and female persons.

- E) When a minor is a national who requires a visa for his destination or transit country, consideration should be given by control authorities to the introduction of specific visas for minors or specific procedures for the issuing of visas to minors. This is with the intention of improving the safety of children travelling by air and/or facilitating the return to their home country by recording the details of those persons responsible for the care of children who cross an international boundary. Full details of parents/guardians, accompanying adults and/or sponsors of children should be recorded on the visa application forms.
- F) Where they have not yet done so, control authorities should consider enacting national legislation relating to parental permission for minors travelling across international borders<sup>3</sup>. Such legislation could empower airline staff to check, prior to travel, that where a minor is not travelling with their parent or guardian there is written evidence that the parent/guardian has given permission for the child to travel alone or with an accompanying person who will act in loco parentis.
- G) Where a carrier detects the need for the control authority's help in respect of a minor, control authorities at the first available point in the child's journey should be prepared to assist the carrier to ensure appropriate measures are put in place.

#### **ACTION BY AIRLINES**

- H) Carriers should provide points of contact for control authorities to facilitate the disclosure of such information relating to travelling minors as can be shared without breaching data protection legislation.
- I) Contact details of the parent/guardian of any unaccompanied minor should be recorded on the child's PNR.
- J) Carriers should establish clear procedures for handling unaccompanied minors, including interline, delay and disruption procedures. Training programmes should take into account the need for both ground and cabin staff to be fully conversant with these procedures. It is recommended that minors remain the responsibility of the delivering carrier until accepted for travel by the onward carrier.

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<sup>2</sup> One country (United Kingdom) has, for instance, instigated a network of 'minors' teams' located at ports of entry. Team members are given special training in how to interview minors and they liaise closely with police child protection officers and social workers.

<sup>3</sup> Several countries have a legal requirement that children up to the age of 18, travelling on their own or unaccompanied by their parents or by the legal guardian, need a written authorisation signed by whoever has the parental custody over the child/children. The signature must be lawfully attested in the form of an authorisation by notary.

- K) Carriers are encouraged to comply with IATA UM (unaccompanied minor) recommended practice 1753<sup>4</sup>. Where it is detected during a flight that appropriate provisions are not in place for an unaccompanied minor, airlines should assume responsibility for the care of the child until they can be placed into the care of the control authorities. In circumstances where the unaccompanied minor is embarked on a journey involving more than one sector and there are significant concerns, which cannot be resolved quickly, consideration should be given to placing the unaccompanied minor into the care of the control authority at the first available opportunity.
- L) The IATA Unaccompanied Minor Handling Advice Form has multiple copies some of which are often illegible. Carriers and their handling agents should ensure that all sections of the form are complete and legible. The form should include a section to enable carriers to capture contact details of the persons seeing off and meeting the unaccompanied minor.
- M) Airlines and their handling agents should insist on seeing satisfactory identification from the person/s bringing an unaccompanied minor to the port of departure and collecting at the port of arrival. Consideration should be given, where practical, to making a photocopy of the identification provided. Where they are not satisfied by the standard of identification produced they should not assume/handover responsibility for the minor without reference to the appropriate control authority.

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<sup>4</sup> Attached is an extract from the IATA Passenger Service Conference Resolutions Manual setting out Recommended Practice 1753, which includes an example of the UM Handling Advice Form.



## RECOMMENDED PRACTICE 1752 NUMERIC LOCATION CODES

PSC(07)1752

RECOMMENDED that:

For the purpose of printing destinations on baggage tags in machine readable format, e.g. bar code, four digit location codes be used by Members. The location codes will be established and maintained by the IATA Traffic Services section, as part of the three-letter location identifiers system (see Resolution 763).

The location codes will not be published along with the three-letter location identifiers in the IATA Airline Coding Directory and ATA/IATA Reservations Interline Message Procedures — Passenger (AIRIMP). However, they will be available at nominal cost in printed form or computer tape.

Members requiring additions, changes or deletions to the location codes, should send their request to the Code Assignments Assistant, IATA, Montreal.

## RECOMMENDED PRACTICE 1753 INTERLINE HANDLING PROCEDURE FOR UNACCOMPANIED MINORS

PSC(10)1753

RECOMMENDED that, for the interline carriage of unaccompanied minors, Members shall apply the following procedure:

### 1. APPLICABILITY

1.1 These procedures shall always apply to the carriage of unaccompanied minors under 12 years of age and, at the request of the parent or guardian, to unaccompanied minors 12 years of age or over.

1.2 For the purpose of this Recommended Practice, an unaccompanied minor is a child or infant travelling alone or with the Member's escort.

1.3 Each carrying Member is responsible for the safe delivery of the unaccompanied minor to the receiving carrier at the transfer station.

### 2. CONFIRMATION OF SPACE

2.1 Carriage of unaccompanied minors shall be permitted only for immediate continuous space, all segments of which have been confirmed.

### 3. REQUEST FOR CARRIAGE — HANDLING ADVICE

3.1 In order to give advice to Members participating in the carriage and to indemnify them, the form in Attachment 'A' shall be used; provided that the declaration may be printed on the reverse of the form.

3.2 At Members option, additional sentences or clauses may be added to the declaration.

3.3 Distribution of copies of the form shall be as follows:

3.3.1 original — to be retained by issuing office and to be made available on request to any Member participating in the carriage;

3.3.2 copy — to be attached to the ticket of the unaccompanied minor;

3.3.3 in interline carriage, at least one copy will be supplied to the other carrier(s) at the interline transfer point(s).

3.4 At the Member's option the outward and return flights and appropriate information may be shown on one form, together with additional information on the unaccompanied minor's actual travel, for the benefit of the carriers involved in such transactions. To further smooth the handling and proper release to the receiving party it is moreover recommended that the latter confirm receipt of the unaccompanied minor by his signature, name and address on the Handling Advice to be retained by the delivering carrier.

### 4. TICKETING PROCEDURE

After passenger's name in the box entitled "Name of Passenger" on the ticket, the words "UM (followed by age)" shall be added.



## Recommended Practice 1753

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### 5. IDENTIFICATION

Use of a special identification tag/badge for unaccompanied minors, preferably containing the letters "UM". For any kind of identification of unaccompanied minors such as special cabin-bags, badges, special labels for checked/cabin baggage, wallets, etc. the colour scheme, red diagonal bars on white or silver background, shall be used. An example is shown in Attachment 'B'.

### 6. TRAVEL DOCUMENTS

Tickets and other travel documents including baggage identification tag(s), health certificates, etc. of unaccompanied minors shall be carried in the charge of the cabin staff; when this is not possible, these documents may be retained by the minor, preferably in a wallet provided by the carrier.





**RECOMMENDED PRACTICE 1753**

**Attachment 'A'**

**UNACCOMPANIED MINOR**  
Request for Carriage — Handling Advice

ABC AIRLINES

FULL NAME OF MINOR		AGE	SEX	LANGUAGES SPOKEN
PERMANENT ADDRESS <small>Given Name(s)      Surname      Party or Surname</small>		AND TELEPHONE No.		
FLIGHT DETAILS				
FLIGHT NO. _____	DATE _____	FROM _____	TO _____	
FLIGHT NO. _____	DATE _____	FROM _____	TO _____	
FLIGHT NO. _____	DATE _____	FROM _____	TO _____	
PERSON SEEING OFF ON DEPARTURE — Name, Address and Telephone No.				
_____				
PERSON MEETING AND SEEING OFF AT STOPOVER POINT — Name, Address and Telephone No.				
_____				
PERSON MEETING ON ARRIVAL — Name, Address and Telephone No.				
_____				
SIGNATURE FOR RELEASE OF MINOR FROM AIRLINES' CUSTODY				

**DECLARATION OF PARENT GUARDIAN**

- I confirm that I have arranged for the above mentioned minor to be accompanied to the airport on departure and to be met at stopover point and on arrival by the persons named. These persons will remain at the airport until the flight has departed and/or be available at the airport at the scheduled time of arrival of the flight.
- Should the minor not be met at stopover point or destination, I authorize the carrier(s) to take whatever action they consider necessary to ensure the minor's safe custody including return of minor to the airport of original departure, and I agree to indemnify and reimburse the carrier(s) for the costs and expenses incurred by them in taking such action.
- I certify that the minor is in possession of all travel documents (passport, visa, health certificates, etc.) required by applicable laws.
- I the undersigned parent or guardian of the above mentioned minor agree to and minor named above and certify that the information provided is accurate.

Name, Address and Telephone No. \_\_\_\_\_ SIGNATURE \_\_\_\_\_  
Date \_\_\_\_\_

**AIRLINE STAFF IN CHARGE OF MINOR WHILST IN THEIR CUSTODY**

ESCORT AT THE DEPARTURE AIRPORT Name _____ Department/Airline code _____	ESCORT AT TRANSFER POINT No. 1 Name _____ Department/Airline code _____
ESCORT IN FLIGHT Name _____ From/To _____ Department/Airline code _____	ESCORT IN FLIGHT Name _____ From/To _____ Department/Airline code _____
ESCORT AT ARRIVAL AIRPORT Name _____ Department/Airline code _____	ESCORT AT TRANSFER POINT No. 2 Name _____ Department/Airline code _____
SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS, IF ANY (to be completed by issuing office)	ESCORT IN FLIGHT Name _____ From/To _____ Department/Airline code _____
	ESCORT AT STOPOVER POINT TO PERSON MEETING* Name _____ Department/Airline code _____
	ESCORT AT STOPOVER POINT ON DEPARTURE* Name _____ Department/Airline code _____

\*Remove from set if not applicable

Distribution



**Recommended Practice 1761b**

**RECOMMENDED PRACTICE 1753**  
**Attachment 'B'**  
**UNACCOMPANIED MINORS**  
**LABELS, TAGS AND CHECKED**  
**BAGGAGE**

**Self-adhesive Label**



**String Tag**



**△ RECOMMENDED PRACTICE 1761b**  
**FORM OF EXCHANGE OF SCHEDULE**  
**INFORMATION**

PSC(27)1761b

RECOMMENDED that, for the purpose of exchanging schedules information with other carriers or for furnishing schedules information to interested Governments and private agencies, Members should use the data exchange standards specified in IATA Standard Schedules Information Manual (SSIM) for the schedule data handling procedures and the standard formats used for the exchange of schedule information.

(Copies of SSIM may be obtained from [www.iataonline.com](http://www.iataonline.com))