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# **A Safety Guide for Aircraft Charter Passengers**

**Canada**

## **Introduction**

This information is provided to increase your safety awareness when flying in a small, chartered aircraft that does not have a flight attendant. While the pilot will provide the mandatory pre-flight passenger safety briefing, afterwards you are very much a guardian of your own safety. Although unlikely, the pilot may have to make an emergency landing. Depending on the nature of the problem, this could result in simply an inconvenience or damage to the aircraft and personal injury. You may also have to evacuate the aircraft unassisted. Take an active interest in enhancing your own safety by following the guidelines in this pamphlet.

This information is not intended to replace any instructions given by flight crew members.

## **Planning**

Start safely by reading this pamphlet and then discussing your trip with the aircraft operator. Explain where and when you want to go and who will travel, and work out the details together. Make it clear to the charter company and the pilot that safety is paramount, that delays are acceptable and that unsafe flying is not for you.

## **Weather**

Air operators and pilots are trained and qualified to evaluate the weather for any intended flight. However, if you have any question or doubt about the weather conditions, don't be afraid to ask. In the same vein, you should not pressure any operator or pilot to go flying if they recommend waiting for better weather.

## **Clothing**

Wear appropriate clothing and footwear for the conditions on the ground you are overflying, particularly in winter. If you experience a delay on the ground or if the aircraft becomes stranded in the wilderness, you'll be glad you did.

## **Medication**

Carry adequate reserves of any specialized medication you require.

## **Eyeglasses**

Eyeglasses can easily be broken or lost: it pays to carry an extra pair. Consider removing your glasses during takeoff and landing and placing them in your pocket to protect them.

## **Survival Training**

If you intend to operate in the bush, take a survival training course or at least read a book on the subject. Remember that hostile environmental conditions can exist close to civilization, particularly in winter.

## **Dangerous Goods**

It is dangerous and illegal to pack dangerous goods in baggage or to carry them on board. Don't pack matches in your luggage; carry them on your person. Check with the flight crew before packing or carrying gases, corrosives, aerosols, flammable liquids, explosives (includes ammunition), poisons, magnetic materials or any other material or substance of which you are uncertain.

As a general rule passengers and crew members are not permitted to transport dangerous goods on board an aircraft in their carry-on or checked baggages, or on their person. However there are some exceptions to this rule. Please consult the following website for the Provisions for dangerous goods carried by

passengers or crew: <http://www.tc.gc.ca/CivilAviation/commerce/DangerousGoods/regoverview/passlugg/menu.htm>

## **Load**

All aircraft are limited to a maximum weight and centre of gravity range. It is dangerous to overload an aircraft or concentrate the weight too far forward or rearward. Tell the operator in advance the number of passengers and amount of baggage you want to transport so the right aircraft can be used. Never pressure a pilot to take additional cargo. Loose baggage can become dangerous missiles in an accident and may also block exits. If you are not satisfied that cabin baggage is stowed safely, tell your pilot.

## **Safety Equipment**

An air operator must provide a life preserver for each person when operating from water and for long flights over water. Also, the air operator must carry survival equipment capable of providing a means for starting a fire, providing shelter, purify/providing water and visually signalling distress given the geography, season and anticipated seasonal climate changes of the area over which you will be flying. Ask the pilot where this equipment is stowed and how to get at it.

Consider carrying safety equipment of your own, such as some strong cord, a signalling mirror and extra clothing. Take suggestions from survival books you have read. Ask about the location and operation of the emergency locator transmitter (ELT). The ELT is a battery-powered radio that transmits an emergency signal to enable search aircraft to locate you in the event of a crash.

## **Security Measures**

New security measures now prohibit the possession of knives, pocket-knives and all knife-like objects, straight razors, scissors or ice picks in the passenger cabin of an aircraft, including chartered aircraft. Such objects can be carried in checked-in baggage only and which are inaccessible in flight.

## **Pilot Responsibility**

The pilot is responsible for all aspects of the flight: the weather, fuel requirements, loading, passenger briefings, and emergency and survival equipment. Feel comfortable to ask questions, such as how to open the emergency exits or operate the ELT. Ask about anything that concerns your safety.

## **The Flight**

### **Pre-boarding Safety Briefing**

While a pre-boarding safety briefing is not required by regulations, most charter operators will provide one prior to having the passengers approaching the aircraft before departure. This briefing will include safety measures while walking to and around the aircraft and the need to closely supervise children or other passengers with special needs. A whirling propeller or rotor can kill you, so learn the procedures for boarding and leaving the aircraft safely. If you don't receive this information, ask for it.

### **Pre-flight Briefing**

Every flight must start with a thorough pre-flight safety briefing that includes the stowage of carry-on baggage, smoking regulations (smoking is prohibited on all commercial aircraft in Canada), the location and operation/use of the seat belts, normal and emergency exits, survival gear, fire extinguishers, first aid kits, ELT, flotation devices, and the actions to be taken in the event of an emergency. You should also consult the safety features card, which includes information on emergency exits and brace positions.

## **Takeoff**

For takeoff, make sure your seat belt is tightly fastened, your carry-on baggage is stowed, your seat back is upright and your table is stowed, if applicable. Do not distract the flight crew during this important part of your flight.

## **Cruise**

When you reach cruise altitude, follow instructions given regarding seat belt use. Experienced travellers keep their seat belts on at all times while seated as a precaution against unexpected turbulence.

## **Landing**

Preparation for landing is the same as that for takeoff. Seat belts are fastened, your carry-on baggage is stowed, seat backs upright, and tables stowed, if applicable. Again, do not distract the crew during the landing.

## **After Landing**

Follow the flight crew's instructions for leaving the aircraft. If no instructions are given, then ask. Watch out for those propellers!

## **New Transport Canada Video!**

Transport Canada has produced a new video, entitled *Flying Without Flight Attendants: The Ground (and Air) Rules*. You can borrow a copy from your regional Transport Canada System Safety office or purchase your own by calling 1-800-305-2059.