

Introduction to Cabin Crew

Beverley Goodman

Edited by Ray Youell

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How to use this book

The purpose of this book is to develop your knowledge and understanding of the role of airline cabin crew. It seeks to dispel myths, to be informative and to encourage you to achieve your personal goals.

The book is structured around the 6 compulsory Units of the **Level 2 Introduction to Cabin Crew Qualification** offered by a number of awarding bodies (exam boards). Currently, these include Edexcel/BTEC, NCFE, City & Guilds and Ascentis. The book is designed to be relevant to a variety of other cabin crew training and education courses. It is a useful revision tool and will prove helpful when completing tests, assignments and interviews.

The *Level 2 Introduction to Cabin Crew Qualification* has been developed to give students the opportunity to:

- Engage in learning that is relevant to them and which will provide opportunities to develop a range of skills and techniques, personal skills and attributes essential for successful performance in working life
- Achieve a nationally-recognised Level 2 qualification
- Progress to employment in the airline industry

Each unit in this book includes:

- **An introductory page** – giving an overview of the content of the unit
- **A overview table** – showing the learning outcomes and assessment criteria for the unit
- **Clearly-labelled sections** – covering the specification content for the unit
- **Activities** – based on the assessment criteria to help you learn more
- **'Did you know?' sections** – short, practical examples of key facts related to the unit
- **Discussion points** – to help you understand main topics
- **Weblinks** – internet links to organisations and topics in the unit

At the end of the book is a **glossary** of common terms used by air cabin crew.

Teaching resources

To accompany this book, the author has developed very comprehensive resources and materials for teachers and lecturers who are delivering the *Level 2 Introduction to Cabin Crew Qualification*. These include detailed schemes of work, student activities with answers, PowerPoint® presentations, assignment briefs, airline-specific paperwork, links to useful websites, etc.

You can find full details of these teaching resources and download sample pages from our website www.tandtpublishing.co.uk.

About the author

Before embarking on a successful teaching career, Beverley Goodman worked as a member of cabin crew for the UK's largest charter airline. Achieving her personal ambition to become cabin crew, she progressed from a junior role to recruiting, training and managing other cabin crew for the 12 years she was with the company. This wealth of experience provided an excellent foundation for 20 years of teaching vocational travel and tourism courses at the largest Further Education College in Bedfordshire. Throughout the delivery of the cabin crew courses, support from a local airline ensured knowledge and procedural updates in line with industry developments. It also gave her students the opportunity to experience a realistic working environment in their mock cabin facility. Although recently retired from teaching, Beverley's driving force continues to revolve around sharing knowledge, providing information, nurturing aspirations and a lifelong passion for the travel industry.

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Working as cabin crew

Introduction

When people ask you what job you do and you reply “*I’m cabin crew*” their faces light up. They imagine a glamorous job, lots of worldwide travel and exciting opportunities. What they do not always appreciate is the responsibility and the hard work that is involved.

The primary role of airline cabin crew is to ensure the safety, health and welfare of their passengers.

At 35,000 feet there is no opportunity to dial 999 if a fire breaks out – **you** are the firefighter. There’s no paramedic or ambulance if someone has a heart attack or threatens a miscarriage – **you** have to deal with the medical emergency. If someone becomes aggressive and abusive can you call the police? No, **you** must deal with it. Who supports and gives advice to passengers in an emergency situation? Yes it’s **you**.

You welcome your ‘guests’ on to the aircraft. Each person wants individual attention, but **you** will be on your feet for hours and, throughout the flight, **you** will be entertaining, serving and communicating with your guests. **You** represent the company and it’s up to **you** to reassure anyone who is nervous. **You** identify individual needs and **you** increase company revenue through the sale of on-board products. **You** say “goodbye” at the end of the flight and then, after a short turnaround, **you** will repeat the process.

Is this the career for **you**? Yes – if you like being with people, enjoy challenges and want every day to be different – being cabin crew is the job for you.

This unit will help you to develop your knowledge and understanding of:

- The roles and responsibilities of air cabin crew
- The chain of command on the aircraft
- The ground staff that cabin crew interact with
- Industry-specific terminology
- IATA codes
- Pre and post-flight briefings
- Industry standards related to time keeping, personal grooming and uniform
- Task prioritisation
- Customer service



Learning Outcomes	Assessment Criteria
1 Know the roles and responsibilities of crew	1.1 Outline the different roles cabin crew may have to undertake 1.2 Describe the responsibilities associated with the cabin crew roles 1.3 Identify the chain of command on an aircraft 1.4 Describe the roles of ground staff that cabin crew will interact with
2 Know aviation terminology used by cabin crew	2.1 Identify IATA (International Air Transport Association) codes that are used by airlines and airports nationally and internationally 2.2 Define key industry terms 2.3 Describe the different types of duties cabin crew may be scheduled to undertake, including different types of standby
3 Know the pre and post-flight duties that cabin crew undertake in the crew room	3.1 Describe the duties undertaken by cabin crew before the pre-flight briefing 3.2 Describe the importance of time keeping prior to a pre-flight briefing 3.3 Identify the elements of a pre-flight briefing 3.4 Identify the elements of post-flight briefing
4 Be able to take part in a pre-flight briefing	4.1 Receive and relay Safety and Emergency Procedures (SEP) information during a pre-flight briefing 4.2 Complete documentation relating to a pre-flight briefing in readiness for the flight
5 Understand the importance of maintaining industry standards	5.1 Explain the importance of time keeping 5.2 Explain the importance of grooming and uniform standards 5.3 Describe personal presentation standards on and off duty and during stopovers 5.4 Explain the importance of task management and prioritisation of tasks 5.5 Explain the importance of customer relationship management (CRM)



for the smooth operation of the airline business that the terminology is understood by everyone.

English is the universal language used by the worldwide aviation industry. However, cabin crew are required to learn airline specific terminology and express these using the phonetic alphabet. This alphabet was introduced in the 1950s by NATO to standardise the words used to describe the letters of the alphabet. The phonetic alphabet has now become the accepted means of spelling out names, abbreviations and aircraft registrations. Once you have learnt it you will find you use it often.

A	Alpha	J	Juliet	S	Sierra
B	Bravo	K	Kilo	T	Tango
C	Charlie	L	Lima	U	Uniform
D	Delta	M	Mike	V	Victor
E	Echo	N	November	W	Whiskey
F	Foxtrot	O	Oscar	X	X-ray
G	Golf	P	Papa	Y	Yankee
H	Hotel	Q	Quebec	Z	Zulu
I	India	R	Romeo		

IATA (the International Air Transport Association) is an international organisation which is responsible for allocating codes for airlines, cities and airports. They also issue codes for meals and passenger types.

As cabin crew you will become familiar with the 3-letter codes used for the main UK airports. Some codes are easily recognisable, e.g. EDI – Edinburgh and LBA – Leeds Bradford, while others are less obvious, e.g. Cardiff – CWL and Birmingham – BHX. Airlines use 2-letter codes to identify the company, for example BA – British Airways and MT – Thomas Cook. These letters usually precede numbers and are used to compile the flight numbers found on all documentation relating to a flight, as shown in the following example from Virgin Atlantic.

virgin atlantic

Passenger Details

Your flights

London (LHR) to New York (EWR) economy	Depart Wed 25, Feb 2015 at 09:40	Arrive Wed 25, Feb 2015 at 12:45	Stops 0	Flight No. VS001
New York (EWR) to London (LHR) economy	Depart Wed 04, Mar 2015 at 07:30	Arrive Wed 04, Mar 2015 at 19:40	Stops 0	Flight No. VS018

> Important information



1. Airline health and safety documentation and legislation

Health and safety legislation and regulations

IATA regulations

IATA (the International Air Transport Association) interacts with airline companies and associated businesses worldwide on many aspects of air travel, for example 3-letter airport codes. IATA is also responsible for updating and informing the aviation industry about a range of policies, procedures and recommendations to do with health and safety.

One aspect of their work relates to 'dangerous goods', which are substances and equipment used on board the aircraft that could cause damage to health, property or the surrounding environment.

Did you know? Some of the equipment that may be used in a medical situation could be classified as 'dangerous goods'. The airline, however, will have written permission from the authority to have these items on board and cabin staff will be trained in how to use them and checked on their knowledge on a regular basis.

Members of cabin crew also receive training about the transport of dangerous goods, prohibited (forbidden) items and the procedure for dealing with any in-flight leakage or spillage of these items.

IATA and the CAA (Civil Aviation Authority) keep airlines updated with any new developments and changes to procedures. Airlines pass this information on to their staff through training or an internal SEP (Safety and Emergency Procedures) communication.

Activity →

Search the official UK government website (www.gov.uk) for information on hand luggage that can be taken on to an aircraft. Study the section that covers 'chemicals and toxic substances'. Can you think of any circumstances when *you*, as a passenger, might take one of the listed items? Discuss the consequences of this.



Air Navigation Order (ANO)



The Air Navigation Order contains information about the day-to-day operation of the aviation industry. The focus of the CAA is to ensure safe air travel and they use legislation (international, European and domestic) to update and produce the ANO. This publication sets the standards for recruitment, training and procedures within all aspects of the aviation industry.

Health and safety documentation

As an employer of an ‘absent’ workforce, where much of the work is carried out away from the company base, it is important that airlines have a system of communication which captures and reports incidents. All airlines have these systems in place, some of which will remain on board the aircraft and relate only to that particular aircraft, and other documents which are completed routinely by the crew and returned to the company.

Did you know? Each aircraft has its own registration number which is issued by IATA (the International Air Transport Association) and incorporates a country code (G for the UK) and four letters. All documents that are completed use this aircraft registration, dates, flight route, etc.

Flight report

Crew names	Crew No.	Coord	Date:	Flt Nos:	A/C Reg
1			O/B	O/B	G -
2			I/B	I/B	
3			Route:		
4				O/B	I/B
5			Pax load:		
6			Flt Time:		
7			STD/ATD		
8			STA/ATA		
Captain:			Delay due		
			CHARTERER		
Service O/B					
Service I/B					
Bar set no.		Target £		Achieved £	
Information /incidents - state O/B or I/B					
				Department	
AIRPORT SERVICES					
UK <input type="checkbox"/>					
OVERSEAS <input type="checkbox"/>					
SECURITY <input type="checkbox"/>					
PRESENTATION <input type="checkbox"/>					
CLEANING <input type="checkbox"/>					
MAJOR DEFECTS <input type="checkbox"/>					
PROVISIONING <input type="checkbox"/>					
BARS <input type="checkbox"/>					
CATERING <input type="checkbox"/>					
FAK REQUESTS <input type="checkbox"/>					
MARKETING <input type="checkbox"/>					
AUDIO/VIDEO <input type="checkbox"/>					
BRIEFS/LONGHAUL <input type="checkbox"/>					
PRODUCTS/SERVICES <input type="checkbox"/>					
FAK RELATIONS <input type="checkbox"/>					
PUBLIC RELATIONS <input type="checkbox"/>					
INFIGHT SALES <input type="checkbox"/>					
FINANCE <input type="checkbox"/>					
BAR CONTROL <input type="checkbox"/>					
CASHIERS <input type="checkbox"/>					
CLAIMS <input type="checkbox"/>					
OPERATIONS <input type="checkbox"/>					
CABIN SERVICES <input type="checkbox"/>					
ON TIME <input type="checkbox"/>					
SAFETY/IMC <input type="checkbox"/>					
STANDARDS <input type="checkbox"/>					
INCENTIVES <input type="checkbox"/>					
TARGETS <input type="checkbox"/>					
COMPUTER <input type="checkbox"/>					
ADMIN <input type="checkbox"/>					

A flight report is completed for each flight. It contains details of the operating crew, the Captain’s name, dates and flight details, aircraft registration and a record of what occurred on the flight.

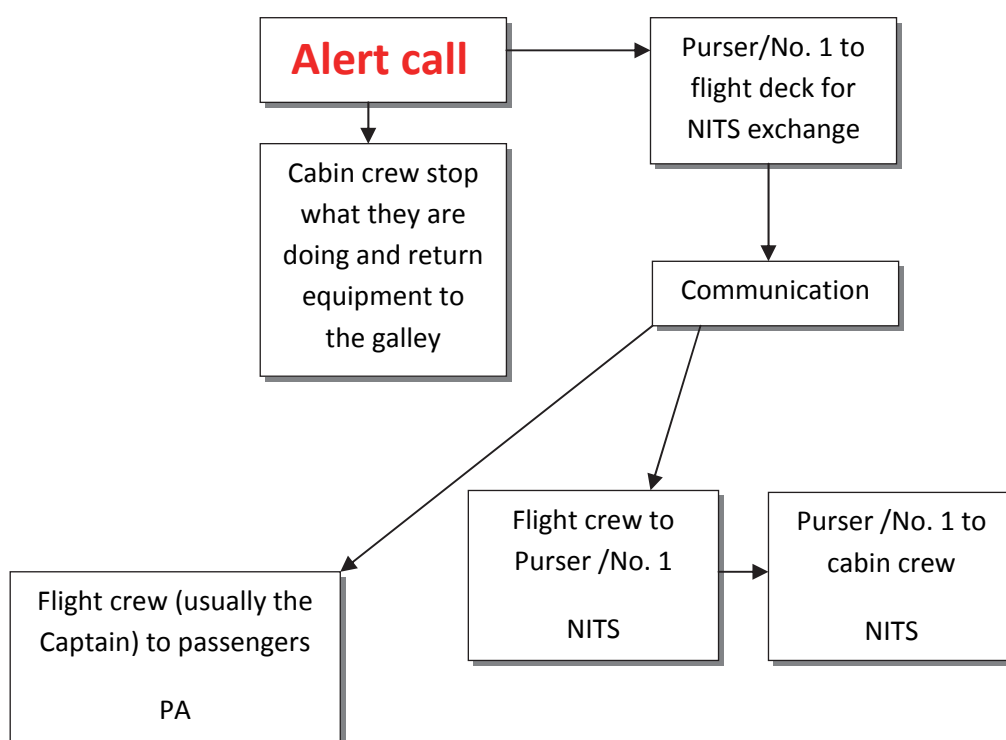
The flight report is returned to base where it will be read and any necessary actions will be processed, e.g. a passenger returning in 2 weeks requires a vegetarian meal.

The flight report is a legal document and in certain circumstances may be accessed by the CAA. The report must be signed and dated.



Once the senior member of cabin crew (often called the Purser/No.1) has collected all of the information and recorded it onto the NITS page, having checked and confirmed details with the Captain, they will return to the cabin and share the information with the rest of the cabin crew, who will also note the details down on the NITS page of their own EPB booklets. Watches will be synchronised (the Purser/No.1 will already have checked the time on their watch with the flight crew to make sure it matches) – this is done to ensure that the aircraft crew are all working within the same time frame and will be ready for the landing.

Preparation for a planned landing



It is now time to prepare the passengers and the cabin for landing as follows:

- Passenger briefing
- Preparing passengers
- Securing the cabin
- Preparing self
- Collecting useful equipment
- Selecting ABPs (able-bodied passengers)

How much preparation is completed will depend on the time until impact.

Did you know? Each emergency situation is different and the time until landing and types of situation will determine how much preparation can be completed. The selection of equipment to be used is also affected by the type of emergency, e.g. are you landing on water or on land?



The first impression that your passengers should have is of someone who is pleased to see them, someone who is prepared to help them and someone who is confident about what they are doing.

2. Establishing passenger needs and wants

Airline companies satisfy the basic needs of passengers by providing them with the necessary aspects related to their personal comfort and safety. On an aircraft, the passenger needs a seat to sit in, a seatbelt to keep them secure and someone who will check that the seatbelt is secure. These *needs* develop into *wants* when people are given the opportunity to make choices, for example choosing a seat with extra legroom, one that converts into a bed or an individual entertainment system.

Did you know? Needs are what a person *must* have for survival, whereas wants are more personal and are what a person *would like to have*. For example, if a passenger asks for a drink of water, offering them a choice of bottled or tap water with or without ice enables them to state their preference. Offering the passenger a choice makes them feel valued and special.

Using 'open' and 'closed' questions helps cabin crew to respond to passenger requests, to develop opportunities to sell products and to find out information, e.g. in a medical situation.

Closed questions usually result in short answers and they can be used effectively in a number of situations. Closed questions can be answered with a 'yes' or 'no', but they can also be answered with a short phrase. Closed questions are useful when checking information and establishing facts. These questions are quick to answer, which might be



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Making passenger announcements on board an aircraft

Introduction

Communicating with passengers is one of the key aspects of a successful flight, whether it is to inform the passengers about sales and service, e.g. “*the cabin crew will shortly be coming into the cabin with a bar service....*” or to give the passengers information about safety procedures, e.g. “*in the unlikely event of a sudden loss of pressure...*” The ability of cabin crew to deliver the information effectively and appropriately is very important. Most of the announcements they are required to give will be over the public address (PA) system using a script, but sometimes it may be necessary for cabin crew to communicate without a script or the PA system.



This unit will help you to develop your knowledge and understanding of:

- The communication techniques used on board
- How to use the PA system
- The correct methods to use to ensure successful communication
- Passenger announcements used during normal flight operations
- Passenger announcements made during emergency situations



Did you know? The content of the final announcement depends on the type of flight operation, i.e. charter flight = enjoyable holiday, scheduled flight = information about facilities at the airport, low-cost airlines = information about onward travel.

Whichever airline you are working for, this last announcement and your “farewell” will be the last opportunity you have to make a positive impression on the passengers.

Passenger announcements during emergency situations

The approach and delivery of passenger announcements in an emergency situation needs to be confident and calming. There *may* be time to deliver a scripted passenger announcement or the situation may need a quick response and shouted instructions – think about the planned and unplanned emergency situations we discussed in Unit 3 (see from page 35 onwards).

In a planned emergency the captain will have given the NITS briefing and advised the cabin crew of the time available. Their EPB (emergency procedures booklet) will include alternative passenger announcements to use, depending on the amount of time available.

In an unplanned emergency there will be no time to search for the correct passenger announcement and the cabin crew will need to react using their initiative. For example, in an explosive decompression the most important actions would be to ensure that every passenger is in a seat and that they have activated their drop-down oxygen mask. It is also important to make sure that all passengers have their seatbelts on and securely fastened. The announcements given by the cabin crew should cover these emergency procedures as a matter of urgency.

Did you know? In an explosive decompression, the cabin crew would sit in the first available seat and grab the oxygen mask – they would not return to their crew stations, where the PA system is located.

Once the aircraft has reached a safe altitude, the senior member of cabin crew would give a post-decompression passenger announcement to reassure and inform the passengers of the flight crew intentions.

When making a passenger announcement in an emergency situation, the content of the message and the delivery may need to be modified to ensure passenger compliance:



instructions, e.g. evacuate using left side only. It is used by cabin crew and flight crew in the event of an emergency situation on board an aircraft.

Offload: to take someone, or something, off an aircraft. A disruptive passenger, for example, may be offloaded at an airport and handed over to the police.

PA: stands for public address system. On aircraft, the PA is used to communicate with passengers, e.g. to announce the start of the safety demonstration. Sometimes the term PA is used to refer to the document which is read over the system.

Passenger cabin: the section of the aircraft that contains the passenger seats.

Passenger manifest: a list of the passengers on a flight.

PAX: this is the plural term for passengers – one passenger is referred to as a PAP. It is used in written documents and also during conversations between crew members.

PBE: stands for protective breathing equipment, such as a smoke hood, which cabin crew wear when fighting a fire on board an aircraft. Without this, cabin crew can be overcome by toxic smoke and fumes within 15-20 seconds. The PBE also protects the wearer from flames and heat which can cause damage to eyes and skin.

Phonetic alphabet: a series of words used to represent the letters of the alphabet in radio or telecommunications. The words are used to ensure that there is no confusion over which letter of the alphabet is being used, e.g. F and S can sound the same but Foxtrot and Sierra are very different. Approved by the International Civil Aviation Organisation and used worldwide.

Pilot incapacitation: the sudden inability of a pilot to continue flying an aircraft, usually caused by a medical emergency. The pilot who is not incapacitated will normally divert to the nearest available airport for landing.

PPE: stands for personal protective equipment, such as disposable gloves. One of the basic procedures is to provide personal protective equipment (PPE) for employees. The COSHH Regulations state that it is the employer's responsibility to provide, replace and pay for any PPE that is needed.

Protocols: these are rules and regulations laid down by airlines and regulators (such as the CAA) to ensure that passengers and crew have safe, secure and pleasant flights at all times.

Pushback: an aircraft does not have the facility to move backwards under its own power. A low-level, powerful vehicle called a tug with a tow bar is used to push the aircraft back from the stand onto the route for the taxiway. Once in position the aircraft can use engine power to move itself forward. Pushback is the name given to this procedure.

Risk assessment: this is a structured process used in health & safety to identify potential risks in the workplace and list measures that should be carried out to minimise these risks.