

AUSTRALIAN AVIATION INDUSTRY CODE OF PRACTICE ON OFFENSIVE OR DISORDERLY PASSENGER BEHAVIOUR

INTRODUCTION

This voluntary code of practice (the Code) has been developed by industry to create a common, consistent approach that co-ordinates and enhances existing efforts to prevent and minimise offensive or disorderly passenger behaviour.

The Code will be kept under review and updated periodically to ensure it remains relevant, proportionate, and effective. The Code does not alter any existing legal obligations on any signatories.

ABOUT THE CODE

Principles

The Code is underpinned by the following principles;

- All passengers are responsible and accountable for their own behaviour.
- Offensive or disorderly behaviour cannot and will not be tolerated.
- Reducing disruptive behaviour is a shared responsibility of all partners on the ground and in the air.

Signatory Commitments

All signatories to this Code commit to working together to prevent and minimise the number of incidents of offensive or disorderly passenger behaviour.

These commitments cover:

- Managing incidents of offensive and disorderly passenger behaviour throughout the entire passenger journey – including pre-flight, in the airport terminal, onboard the aircraft, and through post-flight interactions with airport and airline staff.
- Providing support to airline and airport staff with training to identify, pre-empt, de-escalate, and manage disruptive passenger behaviour, and through the provision of appropriate post-incident support.
- Cooperating and communicating with airport precinct partners (airports, airlines, and airport tenants) to share information, as appropriate, on incidents of offensive or disruptive behaviour.
- Communicating with passengers on the importance of appropriate passenger behaviour, and educating passengers on the potential consequences and penalties of offensive and disorderly behaviour.

Signatories to this code take a zero-tolerance approach to offensive and/or disorderly behaviour.

Offensive or disorderly behaviour includes behaviour identified in Commonwealth civil aviation legislation and other State and Territory laws.

Managing Offensive & Disorderly Passenger Behaviour Pre-Flight and at the Airport

1. Pre-flight, and at the airport;
 - a. All signatories will seek to pre-empt offensive or disorderly behaviour so that potential incidents are avoided.
 - b. All signatories will seek to identify passengers exhibiting potential problem behaviour, ie. aggressive, loud, or unruly behaviour, during the check-in process or in the departure area, prior to boarding.
 - c. All signatories will communicate incidents of offensive or disruptive behaviour in the airport terminal to relevant partners where it may help to prevent or manage further disruptive behaviour.
 - i. Signatories may seek to communicate this information through Airport Security Committees.
 - d. Airports will seek to ensure that their tenants – including bars and restaurants – follow best practice and local laws, including the responsible service of alcohol, when selling or supplying alcohol.
 - e. Airlines will advise staff in dedicated airline lounges to follow best practice and local laws, including the responsible service of alcohol, when supplying alcohol to lounge guests.
 - f. Airlines will deny boarding, where necessary, to protect fellow passengers and crew from offensive or disorderly behaviour.
 - g. Airlines and airports (including airport tenants) will report incidents of offensive or disorderly behaviour in the airport terminal to law enforcement and/or the Civil Aviation Safety Authority (CASA).

Managing Offensive & Disorderly Passenger Behaviour Inflight

2. Onboard the aircraft;
 - a. Airlines will seek to pre-empt offensive or disorderly behaviour inflight so that potential incidents are avoided.
 - b. Airlines will take preventative measures to avoid passengers becoming offensive or disorderly onboard, including restricting the sale or supply of alcohol.
 - c. Airlines will take steps to prevent the consumption of alcohol not sold or served onboard.
 - d. Airlines will seek to provide aircrew with training and guidance on how to respond to offensive or disorderly passenger behaviour, including;
 - i. Techniques for de-escalating or diffusing a situation
 - ii. How to classify offensive or disorderly behaviour and incidents of interference with a crew member, as per the classification provided in [CASA Cabin Safety Bulletin #20](#).
 - iii. distribution of procedures to all relevant operational personnel to ensure awareness and consistency in managing incidents.

- e. Airlines will seek to hold passengers, who are offensive or disruptive, accountable for their behaviour – including recouping costs that result from the offensive or disruptive behaviour (for diversions and damage to the aircraft) and implementing bans on future travel.
- f. Airlines will provide clarity on when and under what conditions a passenger may be refused boarding or deplaned for actions displayed on board the aircraft.
- g. Airlines will report incidents of offensive or disorderly behaviour onboard the aircraft to law enforcement, CASA, and/or the Australian Transport Safety Bureau as appropriate.

Enforcement Response to Offensive or Disorderly Behaviour

3. Law enforcement will;
 - a. Support airlines and airports (including airport tenants) to improve the reporting of incidents of offensive and disorderly passenger behaviour.
 - b. Provide training to law enforcement officers to ensure that responses to reports of offensive or disorderly are consistent throughout the sector.
 - c. Investigate all incidents of offensive or disruptive behaviour reported to law enforcement by airlines and airports (including airport tenants), where a statement has been made.
 - d. Support airline and airport staff to make statements on the reported incident.
 - e. Take action, as appropriate, to address reported incidents of offensive or disruptive behaviour – including issuing an infringement notice, pressing charges, or seeking prosecution.
4. Airlines and Airports will proactively engage and cooperate with law enforcement and/or CASA to support any administrative or criminal sanctions against a passenger found to have engaged in offensive or disorderly conduct.
5. The Australian Federal Police will use engagement programs at designated Australian airports (Adelaide, Brisbane, Cairns, Canberra, Darwin, Gold Coast, Melbourne, Perth, and Sydney) to strengthen reporting, engagement, and collaboration across the airport precinct.
6. Signatories will seek to collaborate with CASA to explore the need for training and education for airports, airlines, and law enforcement on the process and information requirements for reportable incidents.
7. Signatories will work with CASA on the new and enhanced process for issuing infringement notices in response to the change in regulation regarding offensive or disorderly passenger behaviour, as contained in the Civil Aviation Safety Regulations (CASR) Part 91.

INDUSTRY COOPERATION & COMMUNICATION

8. With regard for existing legal obligations and privacy laws, signatories to the Code will;
 - a. work collaboratively across the industry to explore developing a consistent national process for sharing information on offensive or disorderly passenger behaviour.
 - b. seek to communicate incidents of offensive or disruptive behaviour to relevant partners where it may help to prevent or manage further disruptive behaviour.

SUPPORTING AIRLINE & AIRPORT STAFF

9. Signatories to this Code will;
 - a. Train and support their staff to identify, pre-empt, de-escalate and manage offensive or disorderly passenger behaviour.
 - b. Provide the necessary procedures, guidance, and tools to properly equip their staff to manage offensive or disruptive passenger behaviour in a consistent manner.
 - c. Provide input into training provided by other stakeholders, if and as requested.
 - d. Ensure that staff are not financially disadvantaged by the need to provide evidence.
 - e. Provide appropriate post-incident support for their staff.

10. Law enforcement will respond to requests for assistance from airline, airport, or airport tenant staff dealing with a disruptive passenger incident.

PASSENGER EDUCATION & COMMUNICATION

11. Signatories to this Code will individually and collectively:
 - a. Promote responsible and considerate behaviour among passengers.
 - b. Communicate to passengers what offensive and disorderly behaviour is and why it is unacceptable.
 - c. Educate passengers about the specific laws around behaviour within the airport precinct and onboard aircraft, and the consequences and penalties that can result from disorderly behaviour.
 - d. Educate passengers about the industry standards around the consumption of alcohol within the airport precinct and on-board the aircraft.