

Disruptive Passengers airline internal actions

While disruptive behaviour remains rare, when it does happen the impact can be substantial – for fellow passengers, employees working at the airport and in the air, as well as for the disruptive passengers themselves. The results can be nuisance and annoyance at one end of the scale, to threats to passenger, crew and aircraft safety at the other. These incidents can be costly and cause delays.

Since June 2015 a selection of British Air Transport Association (BATA) airline members have been working with government, regulators, airports, the police, retailers and bar/pub operators to prevent and minimise disruptive passenger behaviour. This has resulted in the UK Aviation Industry Code of Practice on Disruptive Passengers, further information about which is available [here](#).

In addition to this work, this selection of members – **easyJet, Flybe, Jet2.com, Monarch, Thomas Cook, Titan Airways, Thomson Airways & Virgin Atlantic** – have also been undertaking a variety of separate internal actions.

Below is a very brief general summary of some of these actions.

Prior to arrival at the airport

On flights where sustained disruptive passenger behaviour has been recorded, some airlines are proactively contacting customers due to travel on these routes a number of days before the flight. These texts or emails remind passengers of the zero tolerance approach taken to disruptive behaviour on board these flights.

At the airport

Some airlines have deployed signage at the gate or check-in, reminding passengers of the zero tolerance approach taken to disruptive behaviour. On particularly affected flights, certain carriers also remove duty free alcohol from passengers while boarding and place it in a separate part of the cabin for the duration of the flight. Ground staff, especially gate staff, are encouraged to watch for intoxicated passengers and airlines have reported that they will support the decision to offload passengers at the gate as a safety risk.

On board the aircraft

Airlines have deployed a number of techniques on board to prevent and manage disruptive behaviour. These include:

- Tailor made cabin PA announcements before and during the flight, reminding passengers of the zero tolerance approach taken to disruptive passenger behaviour.

- Only rostering experienced crew on particularly affected flights.
- Rostering additional crew on particularly affected flights.
- Crew have been taught specific de-escalation training to help manage situations. Crew training is constantly reviewed and enhanced.
- Crew are able to refuse the service of alcohol to specific customers or stop the service of alcohol altogether.

After an incident

In the unlikely case of an incident, airlines also employ a number of reactive actions:

- Issuing disruptive passengers with additional terms of carriage or banning disruptive passengers from their return flight.
- Banning disruptive passengers from booking again with the airline. These bans can stretch from three months to, in the case of the most serious incidents, lifetime bans.
- Actively seeking to recover costs from the passenger in case of diversions and/or any damage they have caused to the aircraft.
- Reporting disruptive behaviour to UK Police, even if the incident occurred on an outbound leg.
- Pressing for prosecution and supporting criminal proceedings.
- Pursuing civil proceedings against disruptive passengers.
- Recording and analysing data on disruptive passenger incidents to allow for more targeted prevention techniques.

Supporting crew

Airlines have created specific forums / working groups which meet regularly to discuss the issue and assess / improve disruptive passenger prevention / management.

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