



FACILITATION PANEL (FALP)

SEVENTH MEETING

Montréal, 22 to 26 October 2012

Agenda Item 5: Amendments to Annex 9

STANDARDS RELATED TO THE REPATRIATION OF HUMAN REMAINS

(Presented by the International Air Transport Association (IATA))

SUMMARY

This working paper proposes that some Standards for the documentation and packaging of human remains be considered for adoption into Chapter 4 of Annex 9 to provide some clear requirements for the international air transport of human remains.

Action by the FAL Panel:

The FAL Panel is invited to consider the proposals described in this paper and agree that Annex 9 be amended, as set out in the Appendix.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Air transport has grown significantly and continues to grow with an increasing number of people travelling for leisure and for business. At the same time the population has become much more mobile with a consequential increase in the expatriate population in many countries.

1.2 Unfortunately, illnesses and accidents, and other events mean that there are a greater number of people who die while travelling, or living and working out of their home country. For the next-of-kin this may mean that they wish to repatriate the remains for a funeral in the home country.

1.3 Repatriation of human remains however can be difficult and expensive for the next-of-kin with a lack of international agreed standards on the documentation / information that may be required by the State of destination to permit the entry of the human remains.

1.4 There is also a lack international harmonisation on how the human remains must be prepared for air transport to address health and safety requirements for the States of origin, transit, if applicable, and destination.

1.5 IATA was approached by FIAT-IFTA, the World Organisation of Funeral Operatives (<http://www.thanos.org/>) earlier this year to discuss airline requirements related to the airline acceptance and transport of human remains on IATA member airlines. FIAT-IFTA were interested in how appropriate international standards for the documentation / information and packaging of human remains could be developed and adopted such that there would be a greater level of international harmonisation that would facilitate the transport of human remains and ease the difficulties and costs incurred by the next-of-kin.

1.6 In the discussions with FIAT-IFTA they identified that the Council of Europe had an Agreement on the Transfer of Corpses that was signed in Strasbourg in 1973 that addresses harmonised standards for the signatory States. A copy of this document is presented as FALP7/-IP/3 for information.

1.7 IATA currently has some recommended practices in the IATA Airport Handling Manual (AHM 333) on the handling of human remains, which primarily deals with how human remains must be packed for air transport..

1.8 The provisions of AHM 333 largely align with the provisions of Article 6 of the Council of Europe Agreement for the packaging of human remains except that AHM 333 includes provisions for the use of an inner containment manufactured from a flexible material. These flexible materials are now widely available and are recognised by many States as being suitable to achieve the requirements for a hermetically sealed inner containment. In addition this flexible material avoids the problems with the use of lead or zinc, both of which are heavy, expensive and present difficulties as they must meet the requirements for environmental waste applicable in most States.

1.9 FIATA-IFTA in supporting the work of their members has developed a standard template for the documentation that provides for all of the information required for the international repatriation of human remains. This template largely reflects the contents of the *laissez-passer* included in the Council of Europe Agreement, but has been adapted for air transport. It is proposed that the FIAT-IFTA document be included into the proposal for amendment to Chapter 4 of Annex 9.

1.10 It is also proposed that guidance material be included in Doc 9957, *The Facilitation Manual*, to complement these new provisions in Annex 9.

APPENDIX

Amend Annex 9 as follows:

Chapter 4: Entry and Departure of Cargo and other Articles

I. Human remains

4.59 A Contracting State shall facilitate the prompt release of human remains being imported by air, provided that applicable laws and regulations governing the importation of human remains are complied with.

Note.— *The advance notification, either in paper form or electronically, of the transport of human remains would likely facilitate the entry of human remains at the State of destination.*

4.60 Human remains shall be accompanied by a *laissez-passer* for a human remains, reproduced in Appendix 14 issued by the appropriate public authority of the State of origin.

4.61 The *laissez-passer* shall be issued by the appropriate public authority referred to in 4.60, after it has ascertained that:

a) all the medical, health, administrative and legal requirements of the regulations in force in the State of origin relating to the transfer of human remains and, where appropriate, burial and exhumation have been complied with;

b) the coffin only contains the remains of the person named in the *laissez-passer* and such personal effects as are to be buried or cremated with the human remains.

Note.— The human remains should be placed in a coffin which complies with the following requirements: The remains must be packed in a hermetically sealed inner containment which may be constructed of a flexible material or may be a rigid coffin of lead or zinc. The inner containment must then be packed inside a wooden or metal coffin. The wooden or metal coffin may be protected from damage by an outer packing and covered by canvas or tarpaulin so that the nature of its contents is not apparent.

APPENDIX 14. LAISSEZ-PASSER FOR HUMAN REMAINS

Certified International Document – Repatriation Human Remains

Deceased Details

Family Name:
Given name(s):
Address:
Country: Nationality:
Date of Birth: Date of Death:
Place of Death:
Cause of death (if available).....
Shipper:
Tel: email:
Consignee:.....
Tel: email:

Flight Details

Origin Airport:..... Dep. Time:..
Destination Airport: Arr. Time:
Company:..... Tel:
Company Contact: email:
Flight No.: Date:
Air waybill No.:.....

Accompanying Person:

Document Details

Death Certificate:
Embalming Certificate (if applicable):
Freedom from Infection Certificate:.....
Funeral Director Declaration:
Out of Country Declaration:.....
Transportation Permit:
Other:
Done at on

Signature of the competent authority

Official stamp of the competent authority
