NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

Office of Aviation Safety
Washington, D.C. 20594

May 31, 2017

Attachment 15- American Airlines Crew Authority Guidance

OPERATIONAL FACTORS/HUMAN PERFORMANCE

DCA17FA021

C. Whenever a pilot in command or dispatcher exercises emergency authority, he shall keep the appropriate ATC facility and dispatch centers fully informed of the progress of the flight. The person declaring the emergency shall send a written report of any deviation through the certificate holders operations manager, to the Administrator. A dispatcher shall send his report within 10 days after the date of the emergency, and a pilot in command shall send his report within 10 days after returning to his home base.

3.1.5 Definitions

Reference: 14 CFR 1.1

A. "Crewmember" means a person assigned to perform duty in an aircraft during flight time.

B. "Flight crewmember" means a pilot, flight engineer or flight navigator assigned to duty in an aircraft during flight time.

C. "Pilot in command" means the person who:

1. Has final authority and responsibility for the operation and safety of the flight;

2. Has been designated as pilot in command before or during the flight, and

3. Holds the appropriate category, class and type rating, if appropriate, for the flight.

3.1.6 Captain's Responsibility for Operational Control Domestic, Flag, and Supplemental Operations

Reference: 14 CFR 121.533 and 14 CFR121.535, IOSA FLT 1.3.7

A. The terms Captain and pilot in command are interchangeable. The designated PIC is the pilot listed first in the crew list on the Flight Plan / Dispatch Release. In the case of two Captains being assigned the same flight segment, whether for training or operational reasons, the Captain who is designated pilot in command will clearly identify that status to the cabin crew. The PIC will sign the Flight Release and the Aircraft Maintenance Logbook (AML).

B. Compliance with 14 CFR 121.533 and 121.535 requires that the Captain operate in accordance with FARs, Ops Specs and American Airlines procedures and policies except under circumstances provided for in 14 CFR 121.557 (Emergencies).

C. For the purposes of 14 CFR 121.533 and 121.535, American Airlines policy is to expand the definition of flight time to include the time from when the entry door is closed for the purpose of flight or aircraft movement and ends when the door is opened at the conclusion of the flight or movement, and at any time the engine is running and the Captain is on the flightdeck at the controls.

Reference: IOSA FLT 1.3.9

D. In addition to the provisions of 14 CFR 121.533 and 121.535, American Airlines policy is that the Captain is in complete command of the aircraft and has authority over all assigned crew members from the time they report for duty until termination of the flight. This includes transportation to and from the layover facility. The Captain's operational instructions will receive prompt compliance from all crewmembers while under his / her command. Differences from written procedures or other instructions should be brought to the Captain's attention. If the order still stands, it is to be followed.

E. The Captain is responsible for ensuring that the flightdeck and cabin crew is ready to depart on time and will advise ground personnel, as soon as possible, of any known delay and assist to minimize any such delay.

F. The Captain is in command of the aircraft, cargo, passengers and all crewmembers during an air interruption or diversion, until relieved by appropriate American Airlines personnel or other designated personnel.

G. The Captain will ensure compliance, provide guidance, training and facilitate the professional development of the First Officer under his or her command.

H. The Captain will ensure the timely completion and accurate adherence to checklist procedures.

I. Pre-flight: planning

1. The Captain and Dispatcher will independently analyze the latest pilot reports, NOTAMS, weather reports and weather forecasts along the route and at the origination, destination and alternate airports as appropriate and available.
2. The Captain and Dispatcher will jointly evaluate the Flight Plan / Dispatch Release for:
    - Fuel requirements and alternate airports to satisfy FARs and American Airlines policies.
    - Cruise altitude and mach, route, station dispatched to and alternate(s).
    - Conditions, known and contemplated, that will affect safe operation of the flight in accordance with AA and FAA regulations and policies.

3. For the Dispatch Release to be valid, both the Dispatcher and Captain must sign the Dispatch Release either electronically or on a physical copy.
    - Normally the Flight Dispatcher will use an electronic signature and it will be shown on the Flight Plan / Dispatch Release.
    - Normally the Captain will convey acceptance of the Dispatch Release with an electronic signature. A physical signature on a paper copy filed at the station is acceptable during periods of computer outage.
    - For the 757/767, the Captain's signature also indicates that all flightdeck crewmembers meet the recency of experience requirements set forth in this Chapter of this manual.
    - An electronic signature is the preferred method of Captain concurrence and will have the same force and effect as a signature affixed by hand.

3.1.7 Captain and Dispatcher Deferral and Cancellation Authority

Reference: 14CFR121.551

A. When a certificate holder conducting domestic or flag operations knows of conditions, including airport and runway conditions that are a hazard to safe operations, it shall restrict or suspend operations until those conditions are corrected.

Reference: 14CFR121.533 and 121.535

B. The Captain or Dispatcher has the authority to delay a flight when conditions are unsuitable for starting or continuing. Only American Airlines Dispatch can cancel a flight.

3.1.8 First Officer Responsibility

The First Officer is required to immediately advise the Captain of any deviation from applicable regulations, policies or procedures, or any unsafe condition which may place the aircraft, passengers or crewmembers in jeopardy. The Captain may choose to disregard this advice, but regardless of the degree or frequency with which advice may go unheeded, flight crewmembers will be held responsible for continuing to offer advice for the Captain's consideration.

EXCEPTION

On final approach, if the pilot-monitoring directs a go around, the directed go around will be executed unless an emergency situation overrides this requirement.