Guidance on the Safe Service of Alcohol on Board
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1. INTRODUCTION

The safety, security and comfort of passengers and crew are of the highest priority to airlines. For this reason, airlines promote the safe and responsible service of alcohol on board their aircraft and comply with all applicable regulations. On airlines where alcohol is available for purchase and/or service, the crewmembers monitor its consumption and mitigate any behaviors of concern.

Passengers and crew want to get to their destination safely, on time, comfortably and without incident. Airlines and specifically the cabin crew do not want to deal with a passenger who has become intoxicated and disruptive. These types of incidents can be very difficult and at times even traumatic for both passengers and crew.

There are many considerations and competitive aspects that are factors within the aviation industry, as is similar in other industries. Airlines are committed to the safety and comfort of their customers, and the large volume of passengers carried smoothly each year is a testament to the airline industry’s shared objective of providing a safe, secure and valued-service to a diverse customer base.

When a passenger chooses to order and consume an alcoholic beverage on board, they usually enjoy their choice beverage responsibly and without incident. IATA acknowledges that the topic of the abuse of alcohol consumption on board and the resulting intoxication is related to a minority of passengers who choose to consume excessive amounts of alcohol prior to boarding or on board, and/or behave in an unruly manner during the flight. However, the overconsumption of alcohol has been identified as one of a number of triggers to unruly passenger behavior. With this stated, it is important to note that there are other triggers to unruly passenger behaviors on board which have nil relation to alcohol consumption.
Nevertheless, it is a potential safety concern. An intoxicated passenger may affect the overall flight experience of its fellow passengers and distract crew members from their required normal routine duties. Further consequences could also extend in cases of emergency procedures, for example, in the event of an abnormal or emergency situation, the intoxicated passenger may be less likely to be able to comprehend, cooperate, respond, and follow instructions of the crew, be unable to evacuate the aircraft themselves, and/or obstruct the rapid egress of others during such a situation.

While airlines have little control over the level of intoxication upon boarding the aircraft, the refusal to board a passenger in an inebriated state and the on board service of alcoholic beverages can be controlled by the cabin crew when appropriate to do so.

In an effort to address this potential safety issue, IATA has developed this practical guidance to provide airlines with information and tools to consider in delivering the safe service of alcohol on board aircraft. Airlines should also consider applying some of this information, as applicable to their local regulations, to the services they offer to customers on the ground, for example in premium customer lounges.

The main objective of this Guidance is to encourage airlines to develop related policies and procedures to further prevent passenger related events or incidents from happening in the first place and to manage them effectively when they do occur. While there is no “one-size-fits-all” for all airlines, we encourage each to draw inspiration from this guidance material and to provide us with your feedback in order to help us in the continuous improvement of this document. Please send your comments to: cabin_safety@iata.org
2. AVIATION ALCOHOL POLICIES

The service of alcohol on board an aircraft depends on the local regulations of each State (Country), the individual airline policy and in some cases the specific destination or route flown. There are currently no global Standards for the safe alcohol service on board aircraft. However, a number of Countries have implemented regulations or policies on this topic. Certain States (Countries) prohibit the consumption or import of alcohol, and this would be reflected in the airline’s policies or the State’s (Country’s) regulations which results in an alcohol-free portion of the flight. Each airline policy will differ as applicable to local and/or State (Country) regulations.

IATA recommends that airlines develop policies and procedures for cabin crew related to the service of alcohol on board, recognizing intoxicated passengers and dealing with intoxicated passengers. Some examples of how certain States (Countries) have addressed the safe service of alcohol on board include:

**United States** – The Federal Aviation Administration (US FAA), *Regulation 8900, Volume 3, Chapter 33, Cabin Safety and Flight Attendant Management, Section 6 – Operations, Cabin Safety, Service of alcoholic beverages*¹, requires airlines to have adequate procedures outlining the specific duties of crew members related to disturbances caused on board related to alcohol, for example “…procedures to handle disturbances that may occur involving the service of alcoholic beverages; procedures regarding the removal of a passenger who appears to be intoxicated; and procedures to handle passengers who may have brought their own alcoholic beverages onboard”. The FAA *INFO 13013 of December 2013*² also informs air operators of the requirement to provide cabin crew with training regarding serving alcohol to passengers, recognizing intoxicated passengers, and dealing with disruptive passengers.

**Canada** – Transport Canada’s *Advisory Circular (AC) No. 700-010, Guide for Implementing Regulations Regarding Unruly Passengers and Incidents of Interference with a Crew Member, Section 4.2, Procedures*³ mentions that the service of alcohol should be carried out reasonably and responsibly, and for airlines to consider providing training to raise employee awareness on the effects of alcohol to prevent unruly passenger incidents.

**Australia** – All employees engaged in the sale or service of alcohol in an Australian licensed premise must successfully complete a Responsible Service of Alcohol certificate course, as per the *National Alcohol Strategy*⁴. Cabin crew candidates for Australian carriers must also hold this certificate in order to obtain employment with an airline.

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¹ fsims.faa.gov/wdocs/8900.1/v03%20tech%20admin/chapter%2033/03_033_006.pdf
² www.faa.gov/other_visit/aviation_industry/airline_operators/airline_safety/info/alt_infos/media/2013/InfO13013.pdf
³ www.tc.gc.ca/media/documents/ca-opssvs/700-010.pdf
3. **A SAFE ENVIRONMENT FOR ALL**

Depending on the airlines service policy, which often varies by the class of service, the destination or route flown, whether the service is offered on a short haul or long haul flight, the service of alcoholic beverages is provided on board as either a complimentary or for sale service. This service is relatively controllable by cabin crew. However, this can be difficult on large transport category aircraft with multiple crew members, cabins or decks.

3.1 **Airport concessions and lounges**

Passengers may consume alcohol before boarding their flights, either before arriving at the airport or at the airport itself while waiting for departure. It is important for airport concessions (restaurants and bars) and lounges that offer alcoholic beverages to be responsible in their service as passengers will ultimately be boarding a flight. It is important to be aware that it takes the Blood Alcohol Content (BAC) from thirty to sixty minutes to reach their highest peak and maximum effect. Therefore, within that timeframe, ground staff or cabin crew may not yet be fully aware of the effects of alcohol on a passenger.

3.2 **Boarding**

Cabin crew have no control over the condition of a passenger’s level of intoxication at the time of the boarding of the aircraft other than to assess a passenger’s condition at that point in time. Communication between the ground staff and cabin crew in these cases is of utmost importance. In obvious cases of concern, the ground staff and the crew, in consultation with the pilot-in-command, will assess the passenger’s ability to travel. By carefully assessing a passenger’s overall behavior, including any signs or symptoms, the ground staff and cabin crew can determine whether acceptance for carriage on board is the recommended decision or not.

Key aspects to mitigating or managing incidents are a robust, well-communicated airline policy and related procedures for unruly passenger prevention and management (this includes intoxicated passengers) and the airline staff knowing they are supported on the front line by their airline management. It is advisable for airlines to authorize their ground staff and crew members to assess passengers of concern and when deemed necessary, to deny boarding to passengers where there are reasonable grounds to believe that their faculties are impaired by alcohol to an extent that will present a hazard to the safety of the aircraft, to persons on board (both crew or passengers) or to the passenger themselves. Each situation will need to be assessed on an individual case-by-case basis and as per the airline’s procedures.

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If the passenger is deemed appropriate to travel, ground staff and cabin crew members should communicate this information to each other so that cabin crew members may be aware of any potential passengers of concern in order to monitor them throughout the flight. It may also be determined that nil or limited service of alcoholic beverages to these passengers is the most prudent plan of action in mitigating a possible worsening situation.

3.3 Informing passengers of the airline’s alcohol policies

A published airline alcohol policy would be of benefit to assist in mitigating these types of passengers and related incidents. The airline could raise awareness and communicate the alcohol policy by:

- Publishing it on the airline website;
- Printing the policy in the airline magazines;
- Displaying it on the inflight entertainment system.

By having an airline alcohol policy that is well communicated and readily available, passengers and or crew can access its content easily and on site. The goal would be for this to act as a deterrent in order to prevent the excessive abuse of consumption of alcoholic beverages. Cabin crew could also reference this publicly available policy to point an intoxicated and unruly passenger towards the policy either as a gentle reminder when trying to pace service or before they cease service to a passenger when they feel the passenger may become a safety hazard to themselves or others.
3.4 Passengers’ personal alcohol

It is advised for airlines to expressly convey that the consumption of personal alcohol is not permitted on board. The consumption of passenger-provided alcohol (e.g. duty free) should be forbidden on board as the cabin crew would not be able to monitor the passenger’s alcohol intake. The unmonitored overconsumption of alcohol may be a catalyst to disruptive and unruly passenger behavior. Some airlines have a policy which permits the cabin crew to confiscate the passenger’s personal alcohol if they are consuming it on board, which would be returned to the passenger at the end of the flight upon deplaning.

3.5 Inflight service and alcohol familiarity

Consuming multiple alcoholic beverages during a short period of time can easily amount to more alcohol than the human liver can process. It is therefore advised for cabin crew to be familiar with and understand the effects of alcohol content of the beverages they serve.
4. **ALCOHOL’S EFFECT ON THE HUMAN BODY**

Cabin crew should have a basic understanding of the effects of alcohol on the human body. It is commonly known that alcohol affects people differently and to various extents. Some persons may not display signs of intoxication after drinking, whereas others feel the effects after a single glass. Though the outward signs are very diverse, the chemical processing of alcohol in the human body is relatively consistent, though dependent on a number of factors.

4.1 **The absorption of alcohol in the body**

Upon having an alcoholic beverage, the liquid flows into the stomach and moves onto the small intestine. While en route, the stomach wall absorbs about 20% of the alcohol, after which the small intestine absorbs the remaining 80%. The rate of absorption depends, amongst other things, on:

- The alcohol concentration of the beverage: The higher the alcohol concentration, the faster the absorption;
- Whether the beverage is carbonated: Carbonated beverages tend to get absorbed faster due to the increased pressure in the stomach;
- Whether or not the stomach is empty: Food tends to slow down alcohol absorption.

4.2 **How to slow down alcohol absorption**

Cabin crew can promote the consumption of food to slow down the absorption of alcohol. The consumption of food delays the absorption of alcohol into the blood stream and it would also take a passenger longer to finish their beverage if they are also eating, which means that the absorption of alcohol will be more paced and controlled. Though the consumption of food does not change the amount of alcohol in the passenger’s blood, it spreads out the absorption over a longer period of time which gives the body more time to metabolize and remove the alcohol from its system, and lowers the chance of intoxication.

It is important to note that salty food may have an adverse effect as the passenger may become thirsty and drink at a faster rate. Cabin crew can also promote the consumption of a combination of alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverage by automatically serving a glass of water with each glass of alcoholic beverage.
4.3 Metabolism and removal of alcohol from the body

From the stomach and the small intestine, the alcohol travels to the liver where enzymes metabolize the alcohol by breaking it down. Most of the alcohol (approx. 90%) is broken down in the liver by enzymes. The remainder of the alcohol (approx. 10%) is removed through a number of other body organs. In general, a healthy liver metabolizes alcohol at a steady rate of approximately 17 ml of pure alcohol per hour.

If a person ingests alcohol faster than the liver can break it down, the alcohol travels through the bloodstream un-metabolized and unchanged. The concentration of alcohol in the blood, or “Blood Alcohol Content” (BAC), will then increase.

Through the bloodstream, the alcohol will eventually reach the brain where it works as a sedative and slows down transmissions of impulses between nerve cells that control the person’s ability to think and move. Although alcohol is a depressant, it also removes inhibitions, which explains the happy or aggressive behavior associated with alcohol consumption. It also increases fluid excretion through the kidneys, increasing the chance of the person becoming dehydrated.

4.4 The “Standard Drink”

A “Standard Drink” is a theoretical alcoholic beverage that contains a specific amount of pure alcohol. This measure is used to calculate a person’s alcohol intake as various alcoholic beverages have different alcohol content. Though the Standard Drink measure varies significantly from Country to Country, for the purposes of this Guidance Material, a Standard Drink will be set at 17 ml of pure alcohol.

A Standard Drink does not reflect, nor is not equal to, a typical serving size. The importance of a Standard Drink measurement lies in the rational that, in general, a healthy liver metabolizes alcohol at a steady rate of approximately one Standard Drink (17 ml of pure alcohol) per hour. Therefore, if a person drinks more than one Standard Drink in one hour, the liver will not be able to metabolize all the alcohol. The un-metabolized alcohol will travel through the bloodstream unchanged and will eventually reach the brain which can inhibit a person’s behavior.

4.4.1 One Standard Drink

To further put this into perspective, the following beverages amount to a total of one Standard Drink:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Beer</th>
<th>Wine</th>
<th>Spirits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>340 ml/11.5 oz of 5% alcohol</td>
<td>142 ml/4.8 oz of 12% alcohol</td>
<td>43 ml/1.5 oz of 40% alcohol</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.5 How a Standard Drink is calculated

Clearly, cabin crew would not be expected to conduct mathematical calculations during the inflight service of numerous beverages. It would be more important for cabin crew to be aware of what constitutes the equivalent of a Standard Drink. A more in-depth analysis on how a Standard Drink is calculated is included below.

1. Calculate the amount of **pure alcohol** in a particular beverage using the following formula:

   \[
   \text{Volume of beverage (ml) } \times \frac{\% \text{ of alcohol}}{100} = \text{Pure alcohol in drink (ml)}
   \]

2. Calculate the amount of **Standard Drinks** in a serving of this particular beverage using the following formula:

   \[
   \frac{\text{Pure alcohol in beverage (ml)}}{17} = \# \text{ of Standard Drinks in serving}
   \]

Examples of a Standard Drink:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Volume of beverage or bottle</th>
<th>Alcohol content</th>
<th>Calculation for pure alcohol in beverage</th>
<th>Calculation for Standard Drinks in serving</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Beer</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One bottle</td>
<td>340 ml (11.5 oz)</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>340 x (5/100) = 17 ml</td>
<td>17 / 17 = 1 Standard Drink</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Wine</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One glass</td>
<td>150 ml (5 oz)</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>150 x (12/100) = 18 ml</td>
<td>18 / 17 = 1.1 Standard Drinks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small bottle</td>
<td>187 ml (6.3 oz)</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>187 x (12/100) = 22.4 ml</td>
<td>22.4 / 17 = 1.3 Standard Drinks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Spirits</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single shot</td>
<td>30 ml (1 oz)</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>30 x (40/100) = 12 ml</td>
<td>12 / 17 = 0.7 Standard Drink</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miniature bottle</td>
<td>50 ml (1.7 oz)</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>50 x (40/100) = 20 ml</td>
<td>20 / 17 = 1.2 Standard Drinks</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.6 Factors influencing the Blood Alcohol Content (BAC)

The Blood Alcohol Content (BAC) reflects the level of alcohol in a person’s blood through the difference between the rates of absorption of alcohol and the elimination of alcohol from the blood. The BAC is generally used by law enforcement to determine if a person is legally impaired while driving. This can be determined through several means such as: a breath-test (Breathalyzer) which calculates the level of alcohol in a person’s blood through a breath sample, a urine test, or a blood test.

Multiple factors influence the BAC after the consumption of alcohol which may subsequently have an impact on a passenger’s resulting behavior on board. These include:

**Body mass:** A small person will have a higher BAC than a big person when they consume the same amount of alcohol, as the alcohol is concentrated in a smaller body mass.

**Body fat:** The ingested alcohol is not absorbed in the fatty tissue of the body, so it will be more concentrated in the smaller body mass of the remaining muscle tissue.

**Gender:** Women’s stomachs produce much less of the enzyme that breaks down the majority of alcohol than men.

**Age:** Older people produce fewer enzymes that break down the majority of alcohol, so the rate at which their body breaks down alcohol will be slower.

**Amount and rate of alcohol consumed:** If a person drinks more and faster than their liver can break down the alcohol, their BAC will increase.

**Food intake before or during ingestion of alcohol:** If there is food present in the stomach, the rate of alcohol absorption slows down and keeps the alcohol in the stomach for longer. The liver will have more time to break down the alcohol and increase the BAC slowly.

**Use of medication or (illicit) drugs:** Some medication may interact with either the body or the alcohol enzymes that break down the alcohol, causing them to slow down and making the person become more intoxicated on a smaller dose of alcohol. Some medication enhances the effects of alcohol, especially those of the sedative class such as sleeping pills or anti-anxiety medications.

4.7 Signs of alcohol intoxication

The Blood Alcohol Content (BAC) of a person increases as they ingest alcohol and decreases as their liver is able to metabolize the alcohol. Alcohol is absorbed in the bloodstream faster than the liver can metabolize it and break it down. When the alcohol reaches the brain, the person may exhibit signs of alcohol intoxication.
4.7.1 One tequila, two tequila, three tequila, floor...

Recognizing the signs of alcohol intoxication will help cabin crew assess whether the service of alcohol to a certain passenger is safe. The most common signs are:

- Changes in physical appearance;
- Reduced coordination and balance;
- Reduced judgment and change in behavior;
- Loss of self-control, emotional restraint and inhibitions;
- Impaired reasoning, caution and memory.

During the assessment of signs of intoxication, cabin crew should always keep in mind the possibility of external factors. These could include possible medical conditions which may mimic or attribute to certain signs or symptoms or cultural aspects which may be attributed to certain behaviors. It is therefore suggested for cabin crew to interact with the passenger in order to evaluate and assess of their condition.

4.8 Assessing behavior and determining the appropriate response

Keeping track of a passenger’s alcoholic beverage consumption is not always accurate or easy, especially on larger aircraft with multiple cabin crew, cabins and decks. Added to this is the fact that passengers may have consumed alcoholic beverages prior to their arrival on board. Therefore the use of the “Traffic Light System” and communication with the passenger (if behavior is assessed as of concern) can help cabin crew identify the type of service that can safely be offered.

4.8.1 The Traffic Light System

The Traffic Light System is a tool that can be utilized by cabin crew in assessing a passenger’s level of sobriety by assessing their behavior. Based on this the cabin crew can determine if the service, or continued service of alcohol is deemed appropriate. By matching the passenger’s behavior to the corresponding traffic light color and associated behaviors, cabin crew can determine an appropriate response.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Traffic Light System</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Green Behaviors:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Sociable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Relaxed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Comfortable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Happy</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

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**Consideration:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Consideration:</th>
<th>Consideration:</th>
<th>Conclusion:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The passenger has probably had little or nothing to drink.</td>
<td>The passenger is starting to show signs of alcohol intoxication.</td>
<td>The passenger has had too much to drink.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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**Response:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response:</th>
<th>Response:</th>
<th>Response:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Alcohol service may be safely provided. 2. Maintain situational awareness for any changes to passenger behavior.</td>
<td>1. Alcohol service should be slowed or stopped to prevent the passenger from reaching the red level. 2. Offer the passenger food and non-alcoholic beverages to slow down the alcohol absorption. 3. Notify other cabin crew, Senior Cabin Crew Member and the flight crew of passenger behavior.</td>
<td>1. Tactfully and discreetly refuse to serve the passenger any more alcohol. Offer the passenger non-alcoholic beverages instead. 2. Notify other cabin crew, Senior Cabin Crew Member and the flight crew that the passenger appears to be intoxicated.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.9 The safe service of alcohol action plan

The following are additional considerations and techniques for the safe service of alcohol on board:

- **Engage, assess and identify**: Engage with the passengers and use the Traffic Light System in order to assess and identify potential risk cases, starting from the first greeting, during the delivery of service, and monitor the cabin.

- **Count drinks**: If possible, when serving alcoholic beverages, keep track of the number of drinks a passenger has consumed within a certain period of time. (*Note that this technique may not be possible or feasible on multi cabin crew operations on larger aircraft, however, communication amongst cabin crew can help with tracking.*)

- **Communicate and document**: Communicate amongst the cabin crew regarding which passenger(s) may be of concern due to excessive drinking. Document this information either on a sheet of paper or on a company issued electronic device. This tracking could be used in subsequent reporting if the passenger becomes unruly.

- **Promote food**: Promote the consumption of food to slow down the absorption of the alcohol. Keep in mind that salty food will make a passenger thirstier and could cause them to consume their alcoholic beverages at a faster rate.

- **Offer alcohol-free beverages**: Promote the consumption of alcohol-free beverages.

- **Just Add Water**: Serve water with every offer of an alcoholic beverage to combat dehydration.

- **Follow airline SOPs and policy**: Cabin crew should follow the airline’s SOP and specific procedures or policies.

- **Know when to stop service**: Discuss with the Senior Cabin Crew Member and fellow cabin crew on when and how to cease service if required to do so. It is also important to always advise the PIC when a cease of alcoholic beverage service decision will be actioned.

- **If a passenger warning is required**: Make use of the airline’s unruly passenger warning card to mitigate and manage incidents requiring this level of intervention. Always advise and consult with the PIC if a warning card will be issued. It is also recommended to have another crew member present to bear witness during the process of issuing a warning card.6

- **Common sense**: Use common sense when serving beverages: count beverages, assess passenger behavior, and cease service when appropriate in order to maintain control of the cabin environment.

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5. UNRULY PASSENGER BEHAVIOR DUE TO ALCOHOL INTOXICATION

Unruly passenger behavior on board aircraft continues to be a significant issue of concern for airlines. Each incident marks an unacceptable inconvenience to passengers and crew and compromises safety and security. IATA is working with its member airlines to defend the rights of their passengers and crew, who are entitled to enjoy their journeys free from disruptive or other unacceptable behavior. For this reason, we have developed a comprehensive range of measures to assist airlines with this issue.

IATA has also been working on other aspects, including strengthening international law so that it acts as an effective deterrent to unruly passenger behavior. Five years of intense work by the industry paid dividends in April 2014 when a Diplomatic Conference convened by the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) adopted the Montreal Protocol 2014 to amend the Tokyo Convention 1963. Finally, at the 70th IATA Annual General Meeting in June 2014, IATA’s member airlines unanimously endorsed a set of core principles for dealing with unruly passengers. These set out a balanced approach to tackling the issue, highlighting the need for governments, airlines and the wider industry to work together. Taken together with the core principles, the IATA Guidance on Unruly Passenger Prevention and Management is a tool for mitigating unruly passenger behavior and ensuring that flying remains a safe, secure, and pleasurable experience for all.

5.1 The Tokyo Convention 1963

Unruly behavior or acts by passengers, due to alcohol intoxication or otherwise, is against international law based on the Tokyo Convention of 1963. The Convention defines unruly acts as: “…acts which, whether or not they are offences [against the penal law of a State], may or do jeopardize the safety of the aircraft or of persons or property therein or which jeopardize good order and discipline on board…”

Among other things, the Convention authorizes the Pilot-in-Command to disembark or deliver an unruly person to law enforcement (article 6). Furthermore, article 10 of the Convention grants flight crew and cabin crew members immunity from subsequent legal proceedings for actions taken against an unruly passenger:

“For actions taken in accordance with this Convention, neither the aircraft commander, any other member of the crew, any passenger, the owner or the operator of the aircraft, nor the person on whose behalf the flight was performed shall be held responsible in any proceeding on account of the treatment undergone by the person against whom the actions were taken…”

The text of the Tokyo Convention 1963 can be found here.
5.2 The Montreal Protocol 2014

The issue of unruly passengers continues to be a concern to the airline industry. ICAO and the Member States recently reviewed the Tokyo Convention 1963 as applicable to the issue of unruly passengers in 2014.

The Convention was updated and amended by the Montreal Protocol 2014 in order to give States (Countries) increased legal powers to pursue unruly passengers. It also clarifies certain behavior which should be considered, at a minimum, as an offense, and encourages States (Countries) to take appropriate criminal or other legal proceedings. These include addressing physical assault or a threat to commit such assault against a crew member and refusal to follow a lawful instruction given by or on behalf of the aircraft Commander.

The Protocol will enter into force once 22 States (Countries) ratify its text. The text of the Montreal Protocol 2014 can be found here.

5.3 IATA Guidance on Unruly Passenger Prevention and Management

To further support the airline industry at large on the issue of unruly passengers, IATA published its 2nd edition of the Guidance on Unruly Passenger Prevention and Management in January 2015. This Guidance provides a compilation of significant risk factors and recommendations. This compilation includes a comprehensive set of appendices to assist in the prevention and management of such events.

Though this Guidance is primary aimed towards airlines, it has been referenced by regulators, ground handlers, and other applicable stakeholders worldwide. This Guidance can be found here or at www.iata.org/cabin-safety.

5.4 National laws and regulations

This Guidance is not intended to replace or to contradict any current State regulations. Airlines should always comply with the regulations and requirements of their competent Authority. Depending on the State (Country), there may be laws and regulations specific to the safe service of alcohol and/or handling of unruly passengers as applicable to both flight and cabin crew.

5.5 Airline Policy and Procedures

While there is no “one-size-fits-all” approach to preventing and managing unruly passengers, we encourage each airline to develop a distinctive set of policies and procedures related to the safe service of alcohol on board. Each airline should consider these tools as applicable to their regulations, their airline operation, local cultures and customs, routes flown, the type of inflight service offered, aircraft size and the crew complement on board.