

Unruly Passengers

Is it Getting Better or Worse?

Tim Colehan

Assistant Director
External Affairs



During the course of this short presentation, I am going to share with you the latest global statistics on unruly passengers and the work the industry is doing to prevent incidents and to ensure a stronger international legal deterrent.

Before I do, let me remind you that the 2017 global statistics I am about to share come with a health warning – they come from reports submitted by airlines to IATA's STEADES database.

Not every airline is a member of IATA and not every member of IATA submits data.

So it is likely that the statistics significantly underestimate the extent of the issue.

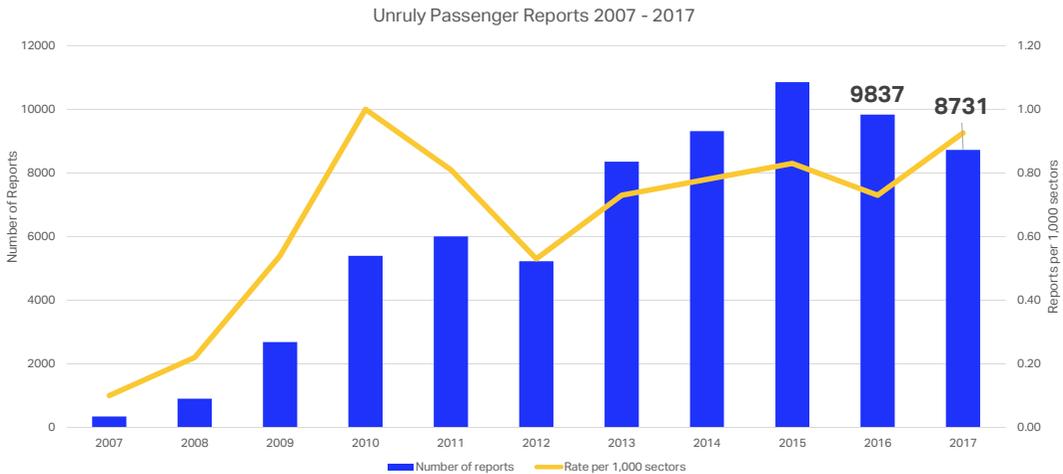
1 incident every
1,053 flights

(2016: 1 every 1,424
flights)



When we look at the incident rate, there was one incident every 1,053 flights in 2017. This means the frequency of reported incidents has increased versus 2016 where there was an incident every 1,424 sectors.

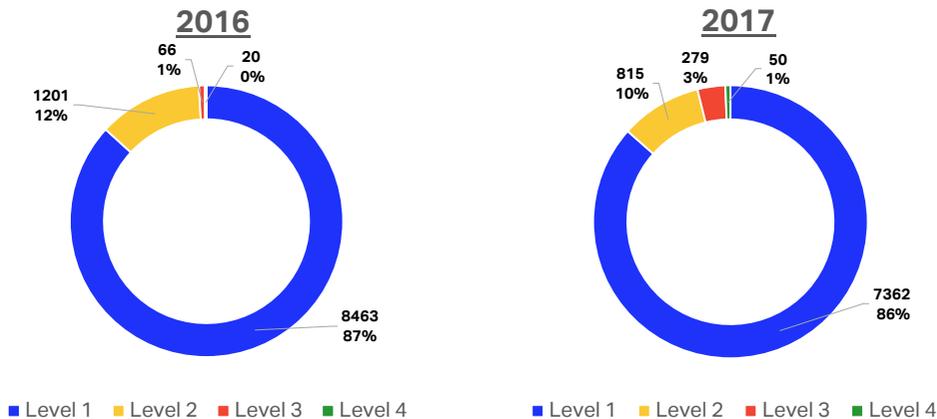
Unruly Passenger Reports 2007-2017



There were 8,731 reports in 2017, which is a reduction of 1,106 versus the previous year.

The total number of reports submitted can be affected by changes in the number of airlines submitting data to Safety Trend Evaluation, Analysis and Data Exchange System (STEADES). For example, some airlines change their reporting systems during the year and so may not submit data.

Levels of unruly behavior



Now let's look at the severity of incidents reported. We classify behaviors as follows:

Level 1 – Verbal aggression and noncompliance with safety requirements

Level 2 – Physical actions such as kicking, punching, spitting, obscene or lewd physical contact as well as damage to the aircraft fixtures and equipment

Level 3 – Life threatening behavior – dangerous behavior including display or use of a weapon and intent to threaten or injure.

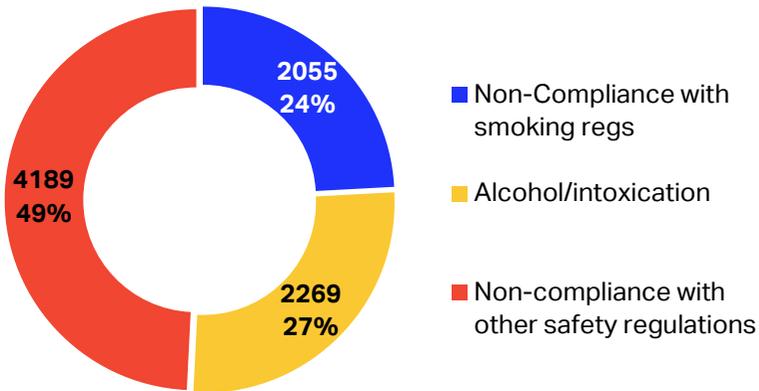
Level 4 – Attempted or actual breach of flight deck security (whether intentional or not) , act of sabotage and credible threat of unlawful seizure of the aircraft

86% of incidents were level 1 in 2017, a 1% improvement on 2016. Level 1 incidents are typically verbal in nature – so it may be refusing to follow crew instructions, but also includes things like smoking in lavatories which is obviously a very serious threat to safety. These incidents can usually be deescalated by the crew.

We also saw an improvement in the proportion of incidents classified as Level 2 from 12% in 2016 to 10% in 2017.

It's of some concern that we saw a significant increase in Level 3 incidents which comprised 3% of all incidents versus 1%. Level 4 which are attempted breaches of the flight deck also increased slightly.

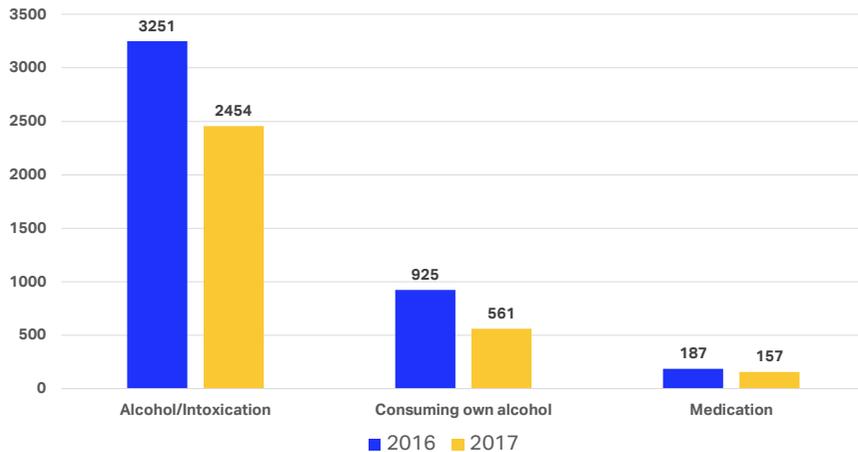
Top 3 On-board Issues - 2017



So what were the top 3 onboard issues?

Non-compliance with smoking regulations and intoxication represent 24% and 27% of all reported incidents respectively in 2017. Just under half of the incident reports relate to non-compliance with other safety regulations.

Intoxication



When we look at the intoxication, we see that 562 out of the 2,454 cases (so 23%) relate to consumption of own alcohol – for example duty free brought on to the aircraft. We know that the remaining amount relates mostly to alcohol consumed prior to boarding.

So, what we can conclude from these figures?

Well they show that unruly passenger incidents remain a significant issue. We know that they are committed by a tiny minority of our customers, but like we heard in the example I gave at the start, they have disproportionate impacts on other passengers, crew and the operation.

So that's the figures. Let's now turn to what IATA and the industry doing to address this problem.

One Too Many Campaign - UK

- 325% rise in reported incidents*
 - 2013: 98 reports
 - 2017: 417 reports
- Alcohol intoxication - a key trigger



* UK Civil Aviation Authority



IATA members agreed a resolution in 2014 which sets out the strategy and approach – one element of that is to work with other stakeholders to try and improve prevention and to share best practice internationally.

One market which has seen a significant rise in reported incidents is the UK. In the period 2013-2017 there was a 325% increase, with alcohol intoxication identified as a trigger in many of these cases. Many of the cases were focused in the key summer months and on flights to particular destinations.

The UK Air Navigation Order already makes it illegal to board an aircraft when drunk or to be drunk when onboard. The penalties are a GBP5,000 fine or two years in prison.

But the industry itself has been proactive in trying to prevent incidents. IATA was part of a ten-week government-endorsed public information campaign called "One Too Many" during summer 2018 that aimed to raise awareness of the need to fly responsibly.

Objectives

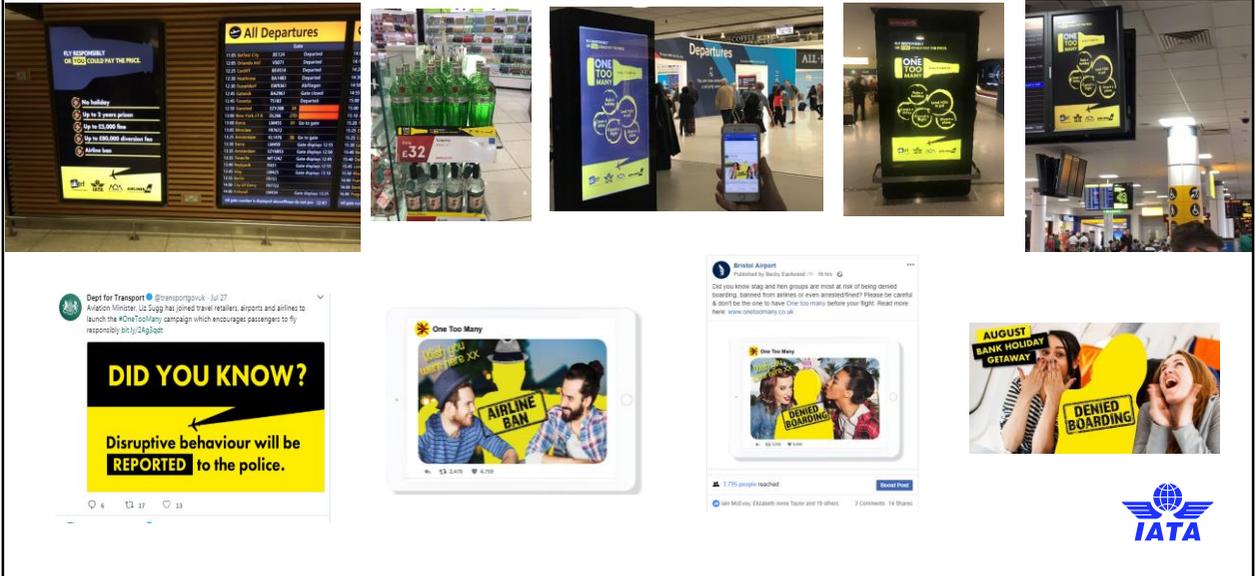
- Launch a consumer education campaign to inform passengers of the consequences of disruptive behaviour at airports and aboard aircraft.
- **Key areas of focus:**
 - Summer holiday travellers
 - Passengers within specific age demographics
 - Passengers travelling on routes where incidents have previously occurred
- **Three deployments:**
 - Physical presence in participating airports and food and beverage outlets
 - Social media channels – Instagram, Facebook, Snapchat
 - Traditional media outreach – TV, radio, print



The “One Too Many” (OTM) campaign brought together UK Travel Retail Forum (UKTRF), Airport Operators Association (AOA), IATA and Airlines UK.

Its aim was to collectively remind passengers of the personal consequences of disruptive behavior when travelling by air – whether that’s denied boarding, a fine and/or a prison sentence or missing your holiday. The message was simply – we don’t want to stop your fun, but wait until you get to the destination before you start the party started.

Physical and online content



It's too early to see if there has been any impact on the number of incidents but we understand that overall reports of disruptive passengers for 2018 are down versus 2017. It certainly raised significant awareness, particularly on social media:

- **11 participating airports**
- Over **100 articles/interviews** generated in traditional media
- Over **5.6 million impressions** on social media
- UK-wide Instagram ads generated **over 1.1 million impressions**
- Facebook Ads reached over **1.5 million users**, generating over **4.5 million impressions** across the UK and selected airports

This awareness-raising campaign sits alongside actions by all partners in the UK Aviation Industry Code of Practice on Disruptive Passengers. These include communications to passengers before they arrive at the airport, rolling out sealed bags for all duty-free sales (irrespective of destination) and urging criminal and civil prosecutions against disruptive passengers.

Focus for 2019

- Promote One Too Many and the UK Industry Code of Practice as examples of best practice – assess potential application in other locations (e.g. Balearic Islands)
- Joint Europe-wide passenger education campaign with European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA)
- Continued promotion of the Montreal Protocol 2014 (MP14) and ICAO Guidance



For 2019 we are going to continue the OTM campaign – indeed we are launching a winter version of it targeting ski flights.

We are also working with EASA to develop a passenger education campaign which will be launched in the early part of 2019. This will include a video and other materials which airlines and other stakeholders can use to highlight the types of prohibited conduct in an innovative way.

As you heard from the start of my presentation, one of the major issues we have is that there is a gap in international law which means that those accused of committing offenses on flights often escape prosecution. But we know travelers want to see unruly passengers face consequences for their misbehavior. In a recent IATA Poll*, 32% of the 2,500 people surveyed, 32% had witnessed unruly or inappropriate behavior in the previous 6 months. 80% of them thought the perpetrators should be subject to criminal prosecution.

So the second element of IATA's work on unruly passengers is to promote ratification of the Montreal Protocol 2014 or MP14.

MP14 addresses this issue and will ensure a consistency by ensuring that States have the necessary powers to deal with unruly passengers irrespective of where the aircraft is registered.

*Rockland Dutton Research and Consulting, survey of 2,500 travelers in 5 geographies

Deterrent – Montreal Protocol 2014 (MP14)

- 22 States required to bring MP14 in to force. Expected in 2019.
- Currently at 15 States (Singapore was latest)
- Kuwait and Malaysia will ratify by end of 2018
- Many countries including France, Spain, Turkey and UAE are in advanced progress
- 40th ICAO Assembly – a key opportunity
- Strong leadership required from States such as Australia, Canada, China, US and UK to ensure we have international uniformity



So what is the latest?

We need 22 States to bring this treaty in to force. Today we are at 15 States, Singapore being the latest.

By the end of the month we should be at 17 as Kuwait and Malaysia are in the process of depositing their instruments of ratification.

Many others are in advanced stage so MP14 should enter in to force in 2019.

The ICAO triennial Assembly takes place next September with many Ministers attending so it's a good opportunity for depositary actions to take place. IATA will present a working paper to remind States of the need to ratify.

We certainly need larger aviation States that sit on the ICAO Council such as Australia, Canada, China, US and UK to demonstrate leadership and urgently ratify MP14 so we have uniformity and stronger international deterrent.

Prevention + Deterrent = An even safer and better flying experience for all



In summary, unruly passengers incidents remain a serious concern for the industry.

We continue on the two aspects to deal with this issue – prevention and deterrent. We need to act on both.

We are working hard on the prevention side.

We need governments to do more to fix the problems with the deterrent.

This is the formula for delivering an even safer and even more pleasant flying experience for all.

Thanks for your attention.

Thank you

Tim Colehan
colehant@iata.org
www.iata.org

