



# Advisory Circular

**Subject: Disinsection On Board Aircraft**

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## 1.0 Introduction

- (1) This Advisory Circular (AC) is provided for information and guidance purposes. It describes an example of an acceptable means, but not the only means, of demonstrating compliance with regulations and standards. This AC on its own does not change, create, amend or permit deviations from regulatory requirements, nor does it establish minimum standards.

### 1.1 Purpose

- (1) The purpose of this AC is to inform air operators of their obligations under the *Canada Labour Code*, Part II, with respect to disinsection procedures on board aircraft.
- (2) This AC has been developed in cooperation with Employment and Social Development Canada – Labour Program (ESDC).

### 1.2 Applicability

- (1) This AC is applicable to air operators under federal labour jurisdiction, in regards to passengers and employees on board flights in which disinsection procedures will take place.

### 1.3 Description of changes

- (1) Updates to terminology and contact information.

## 2.0 References and requirements

### 2.1 Reference documents

- (1) It is intended that the following reference materials be used in conjunction with this AC:
  - (a) *Canada Labour Code*, Part II, paragraphs 125(1)(s) and (z.14).

### 2.2 Cancelled documents

- (1) Not applicable.
- (2) By default, it is understood that the publication of a new issue of a document automatically renders any earlier issues of the same document null and void.

### 2.3 Definitions and abbreviations

- (1) The following **definitions** are used in this AC:
  - (a) **Disinsection:** the procedure whereby measures are taken to control or kill the insect vectors of disease present in baggage, cargo, containers, conveyances, goods and postal parcels placed on board aircraft.

## 3.0 Background

- (1) Transport Canada does not require the disinsection of aircraft arriving in or departing from Canada. However, Canadian registered aircraft must comply with the disinsection requirements of other countries.
- (2) Disinsection involves the spraying of insecticides, usually pyrethrins or pyrethroids, in various areas of the aircraft, including the flight deck and the passenger cabin. This procedure, which is intended to

prevent the transmission of disease by insects, has been in place for a number of years in various parts of the world and has been considered to be a necessary public health measure in many International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) contracting states.

- (3) The scientific community usually considers the use of insecticides such as pyrethrins and pyrethroids safe for human health. However, certain individuals are more sensitive than others when these substances are used on board aircraft, especially individuals with pulmonary disease.
- (4) As such, disinsection may be considered a foreseeable hazard to the health and safety of certain individuals. It is therefore necessary that passengers and employees travelling to destinations where disinsection will take place be made aware of the procedure and product being used ahead of time. This will allow them to make an informed decision, with advice from their own physician depending on their health condition, on whether or not they should travel to those destinations

### **3.1 Methods of Disinsection**

- (1) Five methods of disinsection are being used (alone or in combination) in the aviation industry. They are as follows:
  - (a) Blocks away: Takes place after passengers have boarded and the doors have been closed, but prior to take-off. The aircraft is treated by crew members walking through the cabin, discharging single-shot aerosols in the prescribed dosage.
  - (b) Top-of-descent: Similar to “blocks away”, except that the spraying is carried out as the aircraft starts its descent to the arrival airport.
  - (c) On arrival: Similar to “blocks away”, except that the spraying is carried out after the aircraft has landed and is taxiing to the gate, or once the aircraft is at the gate, but prior to passengers disembarking.
  - (d) Pre-embarkation: Takes place approximately one hour before flight departure, before the passengers board the aircraft. The aircraft is treated by crew members walking through the cabin, discharging single-shot aerosols in the prescribed dosage.
  - (e) Residual: The internal surfaces of the aircraft, excluding food preparation areas, are regularly sprayed with a residual insecticide to ensure that if an insect gains access to the aircraft and lands on a surface, it will receive an effective dose of insecticide. It remains effective for approximately eight weeks after treatment.

## **4.0 Duties of Air Operators**

### **4.1 Duties of Air Operators regarding Employee Health and Safety**

- (1) As stated in paragraph 125(1)(s) of the Canada Labour Code, Part II, air operators shall “ensure that each employee is made aware of every known or foreseeable health or safety hazard in the area where the employee works”.
- (2) Therefore, Air operators should ensure that employees working on board aircraft subject to disinsection procedures are aware of the following:
  - (a) that disinsection will take place on the flight or has taken place before the flight;
  - (b) the exact nature of the product being used for disinsection purposes; and
  - (c) the method used for disinsection purposes.
- (3) Air operators should include this information in their standard operating procedures.

#### **4.2 Duties of Air Operators Regarding Passenger Health & Safety**

- (1) Paragraph 125(1)(z.14) of the *Canada Labour Code*, Part II, states that air operators shall “take all reasonable care to ensure that all persons granted access to the work place, other than the employer’s employees, are informed of every known or foreseeable health or safety hazard to which they are likely to be exposed in the work place”.
- (2) Consequently, Air operators should ensure that passengers granted access to flights on which disinsection must be performed are informed of the following:
  - (a) that disinsection will take place on the flight or has taken place before the flight;
  - (b) the exact nature of the product being used for disinsection purposes; and
  - (c) the method used for disinsection purposes.
- (3) This information should be given to passengers before they purchase their tickets (from the air operator or from an agent selling the tickets on behalf of the air operator) and should be clearly stated on the flight ticket. In addition, passengers shall be given this information before boarding the aircraft.

#### **5.0 Conclusion**

- (1) Although Canada does not require disinsection, air operators must still adhere to the legislation of approximately twenty (20) foreign states that require this procedure.
- (2) Until disinsection procedures can be eliminated, or an alternate non-chemical method is developed and accepted by all foreign states, disinsection must be considered to be a foreseeable hazard to the health and safety of certain individuals under the *Canada Labour Code*, Part II.
- (3) Air operators have the obligation to ensure their employees and everyone granted access to an aircraft are aware that disinsection will take place on that particular flight.
- (4) Air operators that do not comply with this obligation will be in contravention of the *Canada Labour Code*, Part II, and compliance measures could be taken by a Civil Aviation Safety Inspector – Occupational– Health and Safety.
- (5) Air operators should develop company-specific procedures and incorporate this AC into their standard operating procedures.

#### **6.0 Information management**

- (1) Not applicable.

#### **7.0 Document history**

- (1) Advisory Circular (AC) LTA-002, **Issue 01**, RDIMS 4220813 (E), 4525257 (F), dated 2009-03-17 — Disinsection On Board Aircraft.

## 8.0 Contact us

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*Document approved by*

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