

Family Assistance for Code-Sharing Flights

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US Airways Code-Share

Chautauqua Airlines – 1974

Republic Airlines - 2005

Historically (pre 1996 Legislation)

- There had been no guidelines for how carriers were to help families
- No major support/coordination efforts from Federal agencies
- No sharing of best practices

Today

- Air carriers have individuals dedicated to emergency response and family assistance
- Individual and collective meetings with NTSB
- Meetings with Code-Share partners
- Meetings with industry groups
- Share information
- Lessons learned
- Legislation
- NTSB - Transportation Disaster Assistance (TDA) team to coordinate resources for family assistance

Goals

- Provide highest level of family assistance
- Plan and drill to ensure the program in place is viable

Major Planning Components

- Investigation
- Media
- Family Assistance for passengers and crew members

Operating carrier responsibility

- Investigation
 - Work with the NTSB to determine probable cause
- Media
 - Coordinated in advance with the major carrier for a consistent message to the public and employees
 - Ensure public and family members know where and how to obtain information
 - Media briefings by Senior Executive (CEO, COO etc.) of operating carrier

Why Utilize the Major Carrier for Family Assistance?

- Resource driven
- US Airways has eight (8) Express Carrier partners
- The Humanitarian Response plans are consistent among all carriers
- The major carrier and the operating carrier have a close working relationship and a collaborative planning process with regular drill schedule
- This practice allows for a quick, effective and well-coordinated activation when necessary

Family Assistance

- Below are two items from the Victim Support Tasks List which illustrate the major carrier's role:
 - **#2 Provide the NTSB, upon request, the most current reconciled copy of the passenger manifest**
 - Major carriers' reservation system contains the information
 - **#3 Provide the public a reliable publicized toll-free number with sufficient telephone capacity**
 - Ties in to "normal consumer practice" of contacting the major carrier for reservations and in the time of an accident maintaining the same practice is less confusing and streamlined

Airport Plan

- Airport Staffing may consist of employees from other carriers as opposed to the operating carrier
- US Airways developed an airport response plan and provides training regardless of carrier affiliation for code-share employees
- All airport employees are trained to manage response and provide assistance to surviving passengers, friends and family members until help arrives

Telephone Centers

- Reservations toll-free number and system is part of the US Airways' infrastructure used to reserve flights on Express carriers
- Accident response relies on the Consumers' practice of contacting the Major carrier for regular business instead of introducing a new contact number
- The Representatives are trained to provide callers with information about who is on board the affected flight at the first point of contact

Telephone Centers

- Dedicated toll-free number for use by the family members in the immediate aftermath of an accident and for the duration of the response
- This Center includes a Transportation Desk with a separate toll-free number for Family members to make travel plans

Care Team

- On-site assistance
- Large number of Care Team members needed; mostly provided by the Major carrier due to the number of resources required
- Liaisons from Express Carrier are part of the Care Leadership team
- Express Carrier Senior Executive attends initial meeting with family members
 - Additional meetings as necessary

The Response Plan has been effectively implemented

- January 8, 2003
 - US Airways Express flight 5481
 - 19 passengers and 2 crew members
 - Operated by Air Midwest
- Investigation
 - Air Midwest
- Humanitarian Response
 - US Airways and Air Midwest
- Media
 - US Airways and Air Midwest