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DIRECTOR GENERAL OF CIVIL AVIATION

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Subject: **Special permission to conduct cargo operations using passenger category aircraft during the COVID-19 lockdown period**

With the COVID-19 outbreak and subsequent lock down in the country, there is a demand for cargo operations for transporting medical equipment and essential goods. DGCA has been receiving requests from scheduled and non-scheduled operators for allowing cargo operations using the existing passenger category aircraft.

Considering the extra-ordinary situation the country is facing, scheduled/ non-scheduled operators may use the available passenger category aircraft (without configuration change) for carriage of cargo, subject to the following conditions:

1. Scheduled/ non-scheduled operators other than those operators with AOC/ AOP endorsed for carriage of goods, shall obtain permission from DGCA (Air Transport Directorate) after obtaining approval from Flight Standards and Airworthiness directorates before conducting such operations.
2. The type of cargo to be carried shall be as per current government directive only.
3. Carriage of Dangerous Goods including lithium batteries, oxygen canister, etc. shall NOT be allowed. However, Operators whose AOC includes permission to carry dangerous goods may continue to do so, even when passenger version aircraft is deployed entirely for cargo operation, subject to adhering to following conditions:
 - (i) Such packages are loaded and secured appropriately in the cargo compartments (belly space) only;
 - (ii) No dangerous goods shall be carried, either in the main deck (passenger cabin) or flight deck; and

- (iii) All documentation requirements including information to Pilot-in-command shall be complied with.
4. In the absence of any manufacturer's guidance on carriage of cargo in passenger compartment and the operator intends to carry cargo in the passenger compartment, the following shall be followed:
- a) Cargo shall be permitted only in the approved stowage locations within the passenger compartment, such as closets, overhead stowage bins, provided the load limitations are met.
 - b) Any cargo stowed must be restrained. Cargo placed within enclosed stowage areas must not interfere with the closing and latching of the compartment.
 - c) Items shall not be stowed in lavatories or against bulkheads that are incapable of restraining articles against movement forward, sideways, or upwards.
 - d) Cargo must not be stowed where it will prevent or impede access to emergency equipment or interfere with emergency evacuation.
5. However, any cargo on seats or under the seats shall be permitted only after specific permission taken in this regard from DGCA (Airworthiness). The operator has to prepare and submit detailed SOP addressing the following minimum areas before airworthiness approval can be considered:
- a) Details of specific box/ packet/ container size to be used for on seat and under seat cargo. The cargo packaging and containers must be capable of self-equalizing pressure.
 - b) Max Weight limitations to be permitted on the seat and under seat cargo.
 - c) Procedure to be followed for restraining the cargo at respective position securely.
 - d) Preparation of Load and Trim based on cargo size and weight before every flight.
 - e) Training on Securing and lashing of cargo on seats/ under the seats for technicians/ loaders.
 - f) Familiarization of Loader/Cabin crew and/ or Medical supervisor (if carried) during cargo operation for exigencies such as required for cargo fire or any other emergency.
 - g) To and Fro communication system must be serviceable between flight deck and cabin (No MEL release to be allowed).
 - h) All cargo shall be properly harnessed/ laced to prevent its movement during flight.
 - i) Procedure for cleaning and use of solvent (as per SRM), in case of spillage of any liquid (either on seat or floor).
 - j) Procedure for post-flight inspection of all the pax seats /floor area for damage to cushion and disinfection, as applicable.
 - k) Procedure to ensure that the cargo is secured prior to "FASTEN SEAT BELTS" light.

- l) No cargo to be placed on floor area (under seat), if so they need to be secured properly WITH ADHERING TO FLOOR LOAD LIMITATIONS (as specified by manufacturer). In such case, the Load & trim sheet needs to be separately approved.
 - m) Any other requirement given in the manufacturer's guideline, if available. Otherwise undertaking to be submitted by QM regarding non availability of any specific guideline from manufacturer in this regard.
6. Operations without passengers and with cargo in the passenger compartment, will require suitable number of crew member/ personnel to survey and access all areas of the cabin during all phases of flight. Any fire that might occur must be discovered and extinguished immediately utilizing existing emergency equipment and report to flight crew as required.
 7. The aircraft must meet the weight and balance requirements in accordance with the limitations and recommendations provided within the Weight and Balance Manual.
 8. Load and Trim shall be prepared based on cargo size and weight before every flight.

Sd/-
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