

Air Travel Crisis Management Information ¹

The following information addresses airline hijacking

- ❖ Do not assume all hijackers identify themselves at the beginning of a hijacking. Hijack teams may keep a card up their sleeve by holding one or more of their number in reserve among the ordinary passengers.
- ❖ Avoid making eye contact with the terrorists, especially within the first 20 minutes to an hour of their takeover.
- ❖ Listen carefully to the hijackers and follow their instructions.
- ❖ If the hijackers collect valuables and passports, do not hide or attempt to withhold anything.
- ❖ Concentrate on being as quiet and as inconspicuous as possible.
- ❖ Don't talk to other passengers. If hijackers have any reason to think you are plotting something, they are likely to harm you.
- ❖ Don't ask the terrorists for favors, such as special permission to smoke, move to another seat, or use the lavatory.
- ❖ Do not refuse a terrorist's offer of food, beverages or tobacco, but consume them only in moderation. If you are offered an alcoholic drink, accept but do not drink it.
- ❖ If possible, avoid turning your back to a terrorist – especially to the terrorist who appears to be in command of the hijacking.
- ❖ Bear in mind that efforts are underway to secure your safe release. Do not complicate matters. Or draw attention to yourself, by attempting to take an active role in negotiations.
- ❖ Don't worry about your loved ones. They have heard about the hijacking and are keeping abreast of developments.
- ❖ Remain as calm as possible throughout the hijacking and conserve your energy.
- ❖ Prepare yourself psychologically for the possibility the hijackers will question you at gunpoint and /or under other forms of pressure.
- ❖ Do not openly defy questioning, but do not volunteer any information. With hijackers, it is wisest to speak only when you are spoken to.
- ❖ Mentally rehearse a plausible and unremarkable account of your employment and the specific reason for your being on the airplane.
- ❖ Do not offer any opinions about the hijackers' cause – or about any other political or religious subjects. Opinions, your own or those you think the hijackers want to hear, will not help you, and may hurt by focusing terrorist attention on you.
- ❖ Even if heat inside the airplane becomes uncomfortable, continue to wear as much clothing as you can tolerate.
- ❖ Try to remain awake and alert to everything going on around you. Feign sleep if you think keeping your eyes open draw attention to you. If the hijacking becomes a prolonged incident and you must sleep, try to do so in brief spells of a few minutes at a time.
- ❖ Use your time to evaluate the situation and to consider your options in various situations which might arise.
- ❖ Mentally rehearse what you will do if there is a struggle or a firefight. In such a situation, you may have to move rapidly. Be ready.
- ❖ Don't let clutter accumulate in the area of floor between your row of seats and the row directly in front. If you hear gunshots, explosions, or other disturbances indicating a firefight or a struggle, you should crouch down as low as you can and try to be ready to move quickly.
- ❖ If an opening for escape presents itself, first carefully weigh the chances of being stopped and punished by the terrorists. If your first escape attempt fails, you are not likely to get another opportunity.
- ❖ If you decide to try your escape path, move rapidly. Don't hesitate or the opportunity could be lost.

¹ Content taken from material published by Thomas A. Clayton Consultants, Inc.