

First-Aid Kits

First-aid kits are required to be carried on aircraft used for air transport operations and on any aircraft with 10 or more passenger seats. There are no rules that specify what a first-aid kit must contain.

It is important to have a well-stocked first-aid kit in the aircraft you fly, regardless of whether you are required by the rules to have one or not.



Suggested Contents

To help pilots put together their own first-aid kit, or assess which pre-packed first-aid kit to buy, here are some guidelines on suitable first-aid kit contents. This is just a starting point; you can add extra items to your kit to suit your own individual requirements. We have not recommended how many of each item you should include, as this will depend on the seating capacity of your aircraft.



First-aid manual

Simple instructions on how to deal with common first-aid situations. Keep this at the top of your kit.



Tweezers

For removing splinters and stings.



Disposable gloves

For infection control.



Survival blankets

If you do not already have these on board in a survival kit, include one blanket per seat.



Pen and notepad

For taking notes about an accident.

Plasters

A range of different sized plasters for small cuts and blisters.



Triangular bandages

These can be used as a sling or as a large bandage.



Scissors

For cutting bandages and clothing.



Crepe bandages

To hold dressings in position and support injured limbs. Several required.

Hypoallergenic tape

To hold dressings and bandages in place.



Saline solution/sterile water

To clean eyes, wounds and burns.



Pain killers

Paracetamol tablets.



CPR mask/mouth shield

For infection control when performing CPR.



Dressings

Several sterile dressings, both non-adhesive and adhesive, for burns, abrasions, and cuts.



Safety pins

Several, of different sizes, for securing bandages.

All these items should be stored in a container that is waterproof and resealable.

We recommend that you do **not** include:

- **Antiseptic cream or solution.** Creams can grow bacteria after they are opened, and if liquid solutions are not diluted correctly (difficult to achieve in an aircraft accident situation) they can cause burns to a wound. Instead, simply clean a wound with saline solution or clean running water.
- **Cotton wool or tissues.** These can leave fibres behind in a wound that will slow the healing process.

Organising the Contents

If your first-aid kit is in a plastic container without divisions or pockets to separate items, snap-lock style plastic bags can be used to organise the contents. Group bandages, dressings, gloves, etc, in different snap-lock bags. This will allow you to empty out the contents of your kit without getting things dirty, making it easier to survey the contents and find what you need quickly in an emergency. Trying to sift through the contents while keeping them all in the box could be frustrating and stressful.

Snap-lock bags will help keep the items in your kit waterproof in case the container leaks. They can also be used for carrying water, or disposing of dirty dressings. They can be used to irrigate wounds with water if the corner is cut off then squeezed like a cake decorator, as well as being used as an improvised glove.

Other Factors

It is recommended that operators who are required to have a first-aid kit should decide on its contents by taking into account: the operating environment, routes to be flown, the type of operation, the number of passengers carried, and any likely medical requirements.

It is a good idea to keep a contents list inside your kit and have it inspected against the list:

- every 12 months,
- when crew have reported that the kit has been used, or
- when an item in the kit has reached its expiry date.

The first-aid kit inspection should also confirm that its location and placarding are in accordance with rule 91.523. This requires the kit to be readily accessible for the treatment of injuries in flight, and any compartments or containers with kits inside must be marked to indicate location. Also check that the location of the first-aid kit minimises damage to the kit itself, or injury to aircraft occupants should the kit become detached (such as during an accident).

Private operators who are not required to have a first-aid kit should also take the above factors into account when placing a kit in their aircraft. ■

AICs Aren't a Pain

Our *AIP New Zealand* amendments arrive about a month before they are effective, so we put them to one side and diligently incorporate them when they are due. Don't we? We insert the new *AIP Supplements* and remove the old ones – hello, what's this other thing, *Aeronautical Information Circular (AIC)* dated some time ago? Surely it's out of date, out with it – but wait! Refer to *AIP Supplement 1* for the current year – it is an *AIP New Zealand* publication checklist, updated each cycle, and it will include details of current *AICs*.

AICs are a means of promulgating aeronautical information that does not qualify for inclusion in the *AIP New Zealand* or *NOTAM*, and this normally includes:

- A long-term forecast of any major change in legislation, procedures or facilities.
- Information of a purely explanatory or advisory nature liable to affect flight safety, or concerning technical, legislative or administrative matters.

ICAO Annex 15 *Aeronautical Information Services* Chapter 7 lists 20 sub-categories of these types of information, but it is not intended to reproduce these here. For the record, current *AICs* (as at 16 MAR 06) are:

- **1/04** *GPS Receiver Autonomous Integrity Monitoring Prediction Service in New Zealand.*
- **4/04** *Auckland Oceanic FIR RNP Implementation.*
- **3/05** *Proposed Changes to Provision of Flight Information for IFR Flights.*

- **4/05** *GNSS Procedure Development Policy.*
- **5/05** *Non-Precision Instrument Approach Procedures – Constant Angle Descent Profile.*
- **1/06** *Pre-Departure Clearances at Auckland, Wellington and Christchurch via Airline Host Computer*

The trigger for this article was a comment by Airways New Zealand to the effect that one of the difficulties when proposing new procedures or making changes that affect a significant portion of industry, is how to consult or how to get the message across.

There always remains the question as to whether everybody who might be affected has been contacted. Although the ICAO way is to issue an *AIC*, it has been found that very few take notice of *AICs* until after the fact. An example is 4/05, where it was not until Airways notified the withdrawal of the Gisborne NDB that any user reaction occurred. The first iteration of that *AIC* was published some 18 months earlier.

Key phrases in both 3/05 and 4/05 respectively are, "Comment is invited" and "Should you have any comments ... please contact ..." – so feedback was being sought the whole while. Is there a message in there somewhere? ■



