



FACT SHEET: CAMPAIGN FOR SMOKE-FREE SKIES WORLDWIDE

- **Long-Term Objective:** A total prohibition on smoking on all commercial passenger airline flights, domestic and international.
- **Short-Term Objective:** To launch a worldwide campaign for smoke-free international flights and to demonstrate worldwide public support for smoke-free public transport on World No-Tobacco Day (May 31, 1991), with a special emphasis on smoke-free airline flights.
- **ICAO Must Be Persuaded To Adopt a Standard Prohibiting Smoking On all International Airline Flights:** The International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), which is based in Montreal, Canada, is a United Nations-affiliated body founded in 1947 that sets international standards for air transportation. Standards set by ICAO must be agreed to by its member nations, which now number 162. A majority of all ICAO member states must agree to take up the issue of airline smoking, and two-thirds of the 33 countries represented on the ICAO Council (ICAO's executive body) must approve any proposed smoke-free standard.

In addition to the clear health reasons for prohibiting smoking on airlines, there also are strong safety reasons for requiring flights to be smoke-free. To achieve a worldwide airline prohibition, advocates will work to convince the governments of their respective nations to support adoption of a "Standard" by ICAO that would prohibit smoking on all commercial passenger airline flights.

- **Domestic Airline Smoking Prohibitions Already Are Popular and Their Number Is Growing:** Twenty-eight nations, including many of the world's largest, have prohibited smoking on some or all domestic flights. Some airlines, such as Air Canada (which is completely smoke-free on all domestic and international flights) and Northwest Airlines in North America, Lunda Air and Scandinavian Airlines in Europe, and Cathay Pacific in Asia, already offer smoke-free international flights on a limited basis. However, in the absence of an international smoke-free standard, most airlines refuse to go smoke-free because they fear losing the business of smokers who might switch to smoking flights on other airlines.
- **An international airline smoking prohibition is needed for reasons of:**
 - **Health:** Environmental tobacco smoke causes lung cancer and other respiratory illnesses in healthy nonsmokers. Because air circulates throughout an aircraft, the health of those who do not smoke is endangered if smoking is allowed anywhere on board. The simple separation of those who smoke and those who do not smoke within the same airspace may reduce, but does not eliminate, the exposure of nonsmokers to environmental tobacco smoke. A complete prohibition on smoking is the only workable solution to protect the more than one billion passengers who fly the world's airlines every year. Flight crews are at particularly high risk because of the length of time they spend in the airline cabin. Numerous cases have been documented of flight attendants who have suffered from lung cancer and other illnesses resulting from exposure to environmental tobacco smoke.
 - **Safety:** Open flames and lighted tobacco products present an obvious fire hazard. It has been suspected that a fire that led to a fatal airline crash in the United States was caused by smoking, and many other fires caused by smoking have been documented.

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A significant percentage of life-saving oxygen masks have failed to drop down in some tests due to a buildup of tar and other residue from cigarette smoke on aircraft. Moreover, exposure of airline cabin crew members to high concentrations of the carbon monoxide in environmental tobacco smoke over many hours can cause headaches, respiratory problems, light-headedness and other symptoms that impair their performance in the event of an emergency.

- **Passenger Preference:** Recent surveys of airline passengers in Australia, Canada, the United States, Germany and other countries show a strong preference for smoke-free flights, including long-distance flights. This is true even in countries with relatively high smoking rates such as France, where 73 percent of passengers surveyed favored smoke-free policies on flights longer than 4 hours. Surveys in France also show that the majority of those who smoke approve of the existing smoking prohibition and that the margin of approval increased from 64 percent to 72 percent after a domestic prohibition was implemented.
- **The Practical Implications For Those Who Smoke:** Airline smoking prohibitions have been successfully implemented in 28 countries. Smokers have proven that they can abstain from smoking on flights of all durations, and airlines and voluntary health organizations, such as the American Lung Association, the American Heart Association and the American Cancer Society, have developed tips to help smokers cope with smoking restrictions. Airline cabin crew members report that enforcing smoking prohibitions is easier than enforcing baggage limits and other rules they are trained to enforce. Airlines have learned to deal with the few problems that have resulted from smoking prohibitions by training airline crews, educating passengers and installing tamper-resistant smoke detectors in the lavatories.

For more information about the Campaign for Smoke-free Skies Worldwide, contact:

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