

Emergency Vacating of Aircraft Cabin (EVAC) Act

FAA regulations require that airlines must train to be able to evacuate all aircraft passengers within 90 seconds in an emergency. However, recent FAA aircraft evacuation simulation tests are unrealistic, limiting test subjects to adults under age 60. This composition of passengers is vastly different from that of an actual passenger flight.

These evacuation simulations don't account for many real-life conditions, to include passengers of different ages, including young children and the elderly, passengers of various heights and weights, passengers with disabilities, passengers who do not speak English, passengers who cannot speak are non-vocal or non-verbal, presence of carry-on luggage and personal items like purses, backpacks, and briefcases, seat size and pitch, seat configuration, location, and other obstacles in the pathway to exit, the presence of smoke or darkness, or other factors diminishing visibility.

The **FAA Reauthorization Act of 2024** (HR 3935) was signed into law on May 16, 2024. Section 365 (EVAC Act) directly addresses this shortcoming by making improvements to the safety and efficiency of evacuation standards for manufacturers and carriers of transport category airplanes, as described in parts 25 and 121 of title 14, Code of Federal Regulations. The EVAC Act specifically requires the FAA to conduct a "Comprehensive Evacuation Study" on aircraft evacuation processes, evaluating the current standards and identifying areas where adjustments are needed. It also mandates that the FAA form a committee to include experts and advocates from various fields, such as pediatricians and disability representatives, to address diverse passenger needs, thereby enabling stakeholder involvement. Lastly, the EVAC Act mandates that the FAA must use the study findings to initiate a rulemaking process to adjust regulations, ensuring they reflect realistic scenarios, such as the impact of carry-on baggage and assistance for individuals with limited mobility.

The EVAC Act was supported by many associations and organizations, to include Association of Flight Attendants-CWA, Chicago Firefighters Union Local 2, Association of Professional Flight Attendants (APFA), Transport Workers Union of America (TWU), Air Line Pilots Association (ALPA), Allied Pilots Association (APA), Captain Chesley "Sully" Sullenberger, FlyersRights.org, AARP, American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), National League of Cities, Paralyzed Veterans of America, National Association of the Deaf, World Institute on Disability, Autism Society of America, Autistic Self Advocacy Network (ASAN), American Foundation for the Blind, Disability Rights Education & Defense Fund (DREDF), Muscular Dystrophy Association, All Wheels Up, Amputee Coalition, Christopher & Dana Reeve Foundation, United Spinal Association, ALS Association, Access Ready, and American Council of the Blind.

The Allied Pilots Association is grateful to Congress for their diligence in making improvements to the safety and efficiency of potential aircraft evacuations. We look forward to seeing the results of the FAA's Comprehensive Evacuation Study and their Aviation Rulemaking Process.

For questions or additional information please email GAC-Chairman@alliedpilots.org