

RA 2115 - Aircraft Commanders

Rationale

An Aircraft Commander is designated by the Aircraft Operating Authority as being in command of an Air System and is responsible for its safe operation and the accomplishment of its assigned mission. A failure to execute this responsibility, or a misunderstanding of it, could increase Risk to Life. This regulation requires Aviation Duty Holders (ADH) and Accountable Managers (Military Flying) (AM(MF)) to establish the responsibilities and authority of an Aircraft Commander and ensure that they are understood and acted upon.

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Regulation

2115(1)

Responsibilities of an Aircraft Commander

2115(1) The Aircraft Commander **shall** be entirely responsible for the safety of the Air System, its occupants and equipment, both in the air and on the ground until it is handed over to the appropriate authority after flight.

Acceptable Means of Compliance

2115(1)

Responsibilities of an Aircraft Commander

1. ADH and AM(MF) **should** issue guidance on the standards required of Aircraft Commanders within their Area of Responsibility.
2. The Aircraft Commander **should** ensure that:
 - a. **▶The◀** crew is properly constituted and all members are qualified, current and capable of performing their duties **▶in accordance with (iaw) the Air System Document Set (ADS) and ADH / AM(MF) Orders, both in the air and on the ground.◀**
 - b. All crew members are:
 - (1) Properly clothed and equipped for their tasks.
 - (2) In date for all safety and survival drills appropriate to the Air System.
 - (3) Proficient in the use of the escape and survival equipment carried.
 - (4) Familiar with all emergency procedures.
 - c. All necessary flight and fuel planning has been carried out iaw the ADS **▶and ADH / AM(MF) Orders,◀** and that, when required, a flight plan has been filed with the Air Traffic Control (ATC) authorities.
 - d. The appropriate aeronautical information publications or other national flight planning documents relevant to the area in which they intend to operate are used.
 - e. An appropriate meteorological briefing has been obtained.
 - f. All requisite steps have been taken to prepare the Air System for the flight and the appropriate servicing documents have been inspected and signed.
 - g. **▶The Air System is supervised and managed once the Aircraft Commander has taken responsibility for it iaw RA 2301¹. When the Aircraft Commander is not able to effectively supervise and manage the Air System while it is in their custody, they **should** delegate this responsibility to a suitably qualified Aircrew representative.◀**
 - h. Passengers, if carried, have been briefed on:

¹ **▶Refer to RA 2301 – Responsibility for an Air System.◀**

**Acceptable
Means of
Compliance
2115(1)**

- (1) The authority of the Aircraft Commander.
- (2) Precautions to be taken when boarding and leaving the Air System.
- (3) Crash positions and emergency procedures.
- (4) ►◄ Use of the Air System oxygen, escape and survival equipment carried.
- (5) Loose equipment ► **stowage**.
- (6) **Use of Portable Electronic Devices while on board, if permitted.** ◄
 - i. Correct ATC communications and navigation procedures are carried out during flight.
 - j. Appropriate post-flight procedures are completed.

**Guidance
Material
2115(1)**

Responsibilities of an Aircraft Commander

3. When Qualified Aircrew Instructors (Qualified AI) are qualified to act as Aircraft Commanders and are acting in the capacity of Qualified AI, they will normally be the Aircraft Commander, unless otherwise permitted by ADH or AM(MF).
4. Subordinate orders and instructions may use the term 'Aircraft Captain'. Where this occurs, the meaning will be interpreted as being synonymous with the meaning of 'Aircraft Commander'.

**Regulation
2115(2)**

Authority of an Aircraft Commander

- 2115(2) In matters of Air Safety, all persons on board, whatever their rank or status, **shall** be under the command of the Aircraft Commander.

**Acceptable
Means of
Compliance
2115(2)**

Authority of an Aircraft Commander

5. Nil.

**Guidance
Material
2115(2)**

Authority of an Aircraft Commander

6. This regulation protects the safety of persons on board from attempts to undermine the Aircraft Commander's authority for the preservation of Air Safety. For example, a superior may be instructed by the Aircraft Commander to 'sit down and fasten a seat belt'. ►◄ A superior acting on behalf of the Aircraft Operating Authority may issue a legitimate order affecting the sortie as planned, whether on board or not, such as a Grade 1 diversion, so long as the order ► **is consistent with RA 1020² and / or RA1024³, and RA 1210⁴.** ◄

² ► Refer to RA 1020 - Aviation Duty Holder and Aviation Duty Holder-Facing Organizations - Roles and Responsibilities.

³ Refer to RA 1024 - Accountable Manager (Military Flying).

⁴ Refer to RA 1210 - Ownership and Management of Operating Risk (Risk to Life). ◄