
AIRCRAFT CRASH LANDING PROCEDURES

When faced with an aircraft emergency landing or possible crash (in situations where it has not been possible to exit the aircraft at a safe altitude) it will be necessary quickly to ensure that cabin occupants are braced for a crash landing. All skydivers (and any other passengers) should be briefed on the emergency crash procedures and brace positions relevant to their seating or kneeling position in the aircraft. Instructors should also ensure that the emergency crash procedures and brace positions are taught to Student Skydivers as part of their initial training. These procedures should also be published in Parachute Training Organisation (PTO) rules and Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs).

The following procedures should be adopted whenever possible in crash situations.

1. The pilot is in command of the aircraft and his/her instructions should be carefully followed.
2. If restraints are available and not already being used, they should immediately be attached and tightened as much as possible.
3. Helmets should be put back on if they have been removed subsequent to the aircraft take off.
4. Skydivers who are floor seated and facing forwards should kneel facing the direction of travel, cup the top of their head in their hands, bring their elbows together and lower their head and arms as far as possible to the floor.
5. Skydivers who are floor seated and facing rearwards should lean backwards towards the direction of travel. They should then cross their arms in front of their face and hold tightly with each hand onto the opposite shoulder. They should also endeavour to bend their legs at the knees and place the soles of their feet flat on the floor.
6. Skydivers who are seated facing sideways should try to push their torso and head back into seat, support their head with their arms, if possible, hold onto the seatback or any structure behind head. It also helps if all occupants in the row try to support each other. i.e. all bunch up together leaving no gaps between each other.
7. Skydivers who are unrestrained and seated on benches or elevated sections of cabin floors (e.g. occupants seated on the rear baggage platforms in Islander aircraft) should endeavour to get onto the main cabin floor and achieve a rearward or forward facing brace position as detailed above. What is achievable will depend very much upon the circumstances of the flight and the loading. It is important, however, that occupants in these elevated positions do their best to ensure that they do not remain in a position where an impact will allow their bodies to be propelled from a distance into other parachutists who are seated facing them.
8. Tandem pairs should be disconnected (but only when a crash landing is inevitable).
9. When the aircraft has come to rest the cabin should be vacated as quickly as possible and all occupants advised to get well clear of the aircraft vicinity.
10. It is the duty of the jumpmaster to ensure that these directions are followed.

It is recognised that alternative procedures may prove to be more suitable in some circumstances, when the above procedures may not be practicable. If this is felt by some operators or instructors to be the case, then they should ensure that guidance notes are included within PTO SOPs and PTO rules, which clearly outline the circumstances in which alternative procedures are to be adopted and what those procedures are.