

UNDERSTANDING THE RIGHTS AND LIABILITIES OF AIR PASSENGERS IN NIGERIA*

Abstract

This paper analysed the legal framework for the rights and liabilities of air passengers in Nigeria. The Nigerian Civil Aviation Act 2006 which vests the Nigerian Civil Aviation Authority with the authority to control aviation safety, consumer protection, and airline obligations, is the main piece of legislation. The Nigerian Civil Aviation Authority Regulations which contain comprehensive regulations on passenger rights complements this framework. The paper examined the extent to which passengers are protected by Nigerian law in the event of flight delays, death and personal injuries, and lost or damaged luggage. Additionally, the paper highlighted various challenges in enforcing passengers' rights and recommended various measures aimed at improving the protection of air passengers and enhancing accountability in Nigeria's aviation industry. It adopted the doctrinal legal methodology, relying on primary and secondary legal sources such as statutes, journal articles and internet materials relevant to the subject matter of the study. The study concluded that although Nigeria has a number of international standards in place, effective regulation is nevertheless hampered by lax enforcement and inadequate public knowledge and understanding. It recommended a reassessment of the current legal provisions, sustained public awareness as well as an improvement in the mechanisms of institutional enforcement.

Keywords: Airline, Rights, Liabilities, Passengers, Nigeria.

1. Introduction

Air transportation has gained significant popularity in recent years owing largely to the comfort and speed it provides as well as safety concerns which it allays. Unfortunately, a considerable number of passengers are unaware of the rights which they have been afforded by law and the responsibilities which they owe to the airlines and fellow passengers. The rights and liabilities of airline passengers in Nigeria are governed by domestic legislation, subsidiary legislation and international conventions incorporated into local law. The Civil Aviation Act which created the Nigerian Civil Aviation Authority is central to Nigeria's aviation regulatory framework. The Civil Aviation Act 2022 and the Nigerian Civil Aviation Regulations 2023 (specifically part 19 which outlines the minimum rights and obligations of passengers and airlines) are the main instruments which govern the relationship between passengers and airlines. Nigerian air passengers have a number of fundamental rights, one of which is the right to prompt information about flight schedules, delays, and cancellations. Passengers may be entitled to reimbursement, refreshments, and in certain situations accommodation in the event of major delays or denied boarding. Air passengers are also entitled to be treated fairly irrespective of their gender, nationality, or disability. Additionally, air passengers have various obligations which include following safety instructions and conforming to airline regulations. The inability of passengers to fulfil these obligations may restrict their rights and compensation. In general, Nigeria's framework for air passenger rights and obligations aims to achieve a balance between the interests of passengers and airlines, encouraging efficiency, responsibility, and consumer protection in the aviation sector. The paper examined rights of passengers and their corresponding liabilities, and the enforcement and redress procedures which Nigerian airline passengers are entitled to.

2. Legal Framework Governing the Rights and Liabilities of Air Passengers in Nigeria

Civil Aviation Act 2022

By virtue of Section 3 of the Civil Aviation Act 2022 (CAA 2022), the Minister of Aviation has a duty to formulate policies aimed at promoting the growth of civil aviation, ensuring safe and efficient services by air carriers and other aviation service providers, and ensuring that Nigeria meets its international obligations. Section 4 of the Act creates the Nigerian Civil Aviation Authority (NCAA) which is vested with the power to regulate civil aviation. The NCAA has a duty to register aircraft, issue airworthiness certificates, and certify aerodromes and aviation service providers.¹ The NCAA is also responsible for regulating air navigation and safeguarding the safety of persons and property in the air.² The Authority is charged with the duty to develop and revise regulations concerning aviation safety and security, in addition to applying international aviation conventions.³ Section 102(1) mandates the NCAA to make regulations in order to ensure the adequate compensation of passengers and consumers arising from their complaints. The aim of the CAA 2022 is to provide for an effective legal and

*By John Arinze EZE, LLB, BL, LLM, PhD, Lecturer, Faculty of Law, Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University, Anambra State, Nigeria. Tel: 07038584399. Email: ja.eze@coou.edu.ng; aribest01@yahoo.com;

*Chidimma Stella NWAKOBY, LLB, BL, LLM, PhD, Lecturer, Faculty of Law, Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University, Anambra State, Nigeria. Tel: 08037955734. Email: cs.nwakoby@coou.edu.ng; and

*Ezinwanne Anastasia NWAObi, LLB, BL, LLM, Lecturer, Faculty of Law, Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University, Anambra State, Nigeria. Tel: 08066766162. Email: ezinwannenwaobi@yahoo.com.

¹ CAA 2022, s 8.

² CAA 2022, s 31.

³ CAA 2022, s 31.

institutional framework for the regulation of civil aviation in Nigeria in accordance with the standards and recommended practices established by the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO).⁴ Additionally, the Act exists to ensure that Nigeria's obligations under international aviation agreements are implemented, create rules of operation and divisions of responsibility in the Nigerian civil aviation system in order to foster aviation safety and security; and to consolidate the laws relating to the regulation of civil aviation in Nigeria.⁵ Furthermore, except for foreign State aircraft and the officers and crew, the application of the CAA 2022 encompasses all persons holding issued or validated licences, every person, air craft, air operator, aviation training school, maintenance and repair organisation, allied service provider and consumers of aviation services in Nigeria, every Nigerian aircraft whether within or outside Nigeria, and every foreign registered aircraft operating in Nigeria, into and out of Nigeria.⁶ The Federal High Court is vested with the jurisdiction to deal with matters arising under the CAA 2022, whether or not the offence was commenced in Nigeria and completed outside Nigeria.⁷ The Act empowers the NCAA to impose administrative sanctions such as suspension of licences, fines, or withdrawal of operational certificates for violations.⁸

Nigeria Civil Aviation Regulations 2023

The Nigeria Civil Aviation Regulations were initially issued in 2006 to set national standards for civil aviation and ensure compliance with the Civil Aviation Act. The Nigeria Civil Aviation Regulations 2023 (NCARs 2023) was created by the Nigeria Civil Aviation Authority in April 2023 pursuant to section 8(1) (f) of the Civil Aviation Act 2022. The NCARs 2023 which came into effect in July 2023 replaced the 2015 Regulations. The NCARs 2023 deal with different issues concerning civil aviation in Nigeria, with Part 19 of the regulations dealing with consumer protection in the aviation industry. The NCARs contains provisions concerning the rights and responsibilities of passengers as well as the responsibilities of the airlines to passengers.

The applicability of NCARs 2023 cover passengers departing from one Nigerian airport to another; passengers departing from an airport in a foreign country to a Nigerian airport, except compensatory assistance was already given; passengers on foreign air transportation with respect to flight segments originating at a point within Nigeria.⁹ It also addresses consumer protection issues, including, compensations for denied boarding,¹⁰ delays,¹¹ and cancellations of flights.¹² The NCARs provides a clear framework for passenger complaints.¹³ Passengers can lay complaints with the NCAA or other designated bodies after attempting to resolve the issue with the airline.¹⁴ Airlines are required to assign a representative to deal with complaints and submit a consumer complaint procedure manual to the Authority.¹⁵ When complaints are laid, they are assessed by investigators, and based on the findings, the NCAA may dismiss the complaint, advise mediation, conduct administrative hearings, or take other necessary actions.¹⁶ Where mediation fails or is refused, the Authority's Administrative Hearing Procedure will apply to resolve the dispute.¹⁷ The Nigerian Civil Aviation Authority, tasked with enforcing these regulations, has recently taken a more assertive stance, publicly humiliating non-compliant carriers, enforcing sanctions, and issuing harsh warnings in an attempt to force a higher standard of service.¹⁸

Federal Competition and Consumer Protection Act 2018

The Federal Competition and Consumer Protection Act 2018 (FCCPA 2018) was enacted to create the Federal Competition and Consumer Protection Commission (FCCPC), Competition and Consumer Protection Tribunal (CCPT), and for the development and promotion of fair, efficient and competitive markets in the Nigerian economy to facilitate access by all citizens to safe products and secure the protection of rights for all consumers in Nigeria among other reasons.¹⁹ The protection of consumers including air passengers is dealt with in Part XV of the Act. By virtue of the FCCPC Act, the CCPT is empowered to resolve disputes relating to conduct prohibited

⁴ CAA 2022, s 1(a).

⁵ CAA 2022, s 1(b)-(d).

⁶ CAA 2022, s 2.

⁷ CAA 2022, s 86.

⁸ CAA 2022, s 32.

⁹ NCARs 2023, reg 19.2.1.1 (a-c).

¹⁰ NCARs 2023, reg 19.4.

¹¹ NCARs 2023, reg 19.6.

¹² NCARs 2023 reg 19.7.

¹³ NCARs 2023, reg 19.22.

¹⁴ NCARs 2023, reg 19.22.1.1.

¹⁵ NCARs 2023, regs 19.24.1.1–19.24.1.2.

¹⁶ NCARs 2023, reg 19.26.1.1(a).

¹⁷ NCARs 2023, reg 19.27.1.1.

¹⁸ Timothy Enietan-Matthew, 'NCAA cracks down on airlines as flight delays, cancellations spark passenger outrage' *Ripples Nigeria* (9 September 2025) < <https://www.ripplesnigeria.com/ncaa-cracks-down-on-airlines-as-flight-delays-cancellations-spark-passenger-outrage/> accessed 11 January 2026.

¹⁹ FCCPA 2018, preamble

under the Act and exercise its jurisdiction, powers, and authority throughout the Federation.²⁰ Additionally, the CCPT has the power to hear appeals from or review any decision of the FCCPC, hear appeals from or review any decision from the exercise of the powers of any sector of specific regulatory authority in a regulated industry in respect of competition and consumer protection matters, issue order, and make rulings.²¹ It therefore follows that the FCCPC can adjudicate over issues pertaining to infringement of air passengers' rights. Section 114 of the Federal Competition and Consumer Protection Act 2018 (FCCPA 2018) requires that any notice or document provided to consumers must be clear and understandable. Therefore, air passengers should be presented with unambiguous information concerning flights, delays, cancellations and fees. By virtue of section 130 of the FCCPA consumers are entitled to timely and quality service, therefore by implication airlines have a duty to ensure flights take off as scheduled and make certain that their services such as customer support meet reasonable standards.

3. Rights of Air Passengers under Nigerian Aviation Law

In Nigeria majority of the rights and liabilities of air passengers are provided for in legislation. These rights and liabilities set out in the laws are implied in contracts of air transportation. Some of these rights include the right to information, right to compensation, right to care and the right to baggage protection.

Right to Information

A passenger is entitled to be duly informed of the reason(s) for any cancellation, delay or denial in boarding the aircraft. The passengers are to be informed of any cancellation for domestic flights at least twenty-four (24) hours before the slated time of departure and in the case of international flights seven (7) days before the slated time of departure.²² Airline operators are required to provide a clearly legible written notice prominently displayed to passengers at check-in providing: 'if you are denied boarding or if your flight is cancelled or delayed for at least one hour, ask the airline officials for a written statement of your right'.²³ Furthermore, each passenger affected should be provided with a written notice setting out the procedures for compensation and assistance.²⁴ Where a passenger is illiterate or suffers any disability, the NCAR provides that appropriate alternative means should be adopted to inform the passenger of their rights.²⁵ However, the term 'appropriate alternative means' is not clearly defined. Passengers are entitled to be informed on the cause of the delay and receive updates every thirty minutes where there is tarmac delay after the doors of the aircraft are closed for take-off.²⁶ A passenger is also entitled to information about all documents required to be presented at check-in, check-in deadlines, refund and rebooking policies, and procedures concerning delayed and cancelled flights.²⁷ The right of information of a passenger also extends to being informed, before purchasing the ticket, of all the terms and conditions of carriage.²⁸

Right to Compensation for Delay

The NCARs define compensation as 'direct and/or indirect monetary and/or non-monetary benefits offered to passengers whose rights have been infringed upon'.²⁹ The regulations provide that any passenger that is denied boarding³⁰ or whose flight is delayed extensively³¹ or has their flight is cancelled³² is entitled to compensation. The compensation to be received by the passenger is at least 25% of the passenger's ticket price in the case of a domestic flight, or 30% in the case of international flights.³³ The right to compensation is activated where the airline fails to inform passengers of the cancellation at least twenty-four hours before with respect to domestic flights and for international flights at least seven days before the scheduled departure time.³⁴ In order for a passenger to be entitled to compensation for a flight delay, it must be a lengthy delay, for instance where the expected time of departure is more than six hours after the time of departure. An airline will not be required to pay compensation where the delay is caused by extraordinary circumstances which could not have been avoided even if all reasonable measures had been taken.³⁵

²⁰ FCCPA 2018, s 39.

²¹ FCCPA 2018, s 47.

²² NCARs 2023 reg 19.7.1.1.

²³ NCARs 2023, reg 19.17.1.1.

²⁴ NCARs 2023, reg 19.17.1.2.

²⁵ NCARs 2023, reg 19.17.1.3.

²⁶ NCARs 2023, reg 19.6.3.

²⁷ NCARs 2023, reg 19.21.

²⁸ NCARs 2023, reg 19.21.1.1.

²⁹ NCARs 2023, reg 19.1.2.1.

³⁰ NCARs 2023, reg 19.4.

³¹ NCARs 2023, reg 19.6.

³² NCARs 2023, reg 19.7.

³³ NCARs 2023, reg 19.8.1(a) and (b).

³⁴ NCARs 2023, reg 19.7.1.1(c) and (d).

³⁵ NCARs 2023, reg 19.6.1.1(d) - 19.6.1.2.

Right to Compensation for Death or Injury

In the event that there is an airline accident which leads to the death or injury of any passengers, each passenger or his/her legal representative is entitled to be compensated.³⁶ In order for the right of compensation for death or injury to be due, the death or injury must have taken place while the passenger was on board the aircraft or while boarding or disembarking.³⁷ Where the damages payable by the air carrier does not exceed 100,000, (one hundred thousand) dollars there will be exoneration upon sufficient proof of contributory negligence or the wrongful act or omission of the passenger.³⁸ However, where it exceeds 100,000, (one hundred thousand) dollars the air carrier cannot exclude or limit its liability except the negligence or wrongful act or omission was not from it or its servant or agents, or it was solely due to the negligence or wrongful act or omission of the third party.³⁹

Right to Reimbursement and Re-routing

A passenger becomes entitled to reimbursement for a flight delay after three hours with respect to domestic flights⁴⁰ and for international flights after specified timeframes.⁴¹ The reimbursement of passengers is effected in accordance with the manner in which payment was made.⁴² Where the payment was made in cash, the reimbursement is to be made immediately for domestic flights or within fourteen days for international flights. If by electronic bank transfer, bank orders or bank cheques, travel vouchers or other services, reimbursement is to be made within fourteen days of the full cost of unused ticket at the price at which it was bought, for the part or parts of the journey not made.⁴³ Airline passengers whose flights have been cancelled are entitled to rerouting. In the event of flight rerouting, passengers will be re-routed under similar conditions to their final destinations at the earliest opportunity or at a later date and the passenger's convenience, depending on the availability of seats.⁴⁴

Right to Care

Where a flight has been delayed for over two hours,⁴⁵ or there is a tarmac delay⁴⁶ a passenger is entitled to free of charge refreshment such as water, soft drinks, confectioneries/snacks, a meal, hotel accommodation, and transport between the airport and place of accommodation⁴⁷ unless the pilot-in-command determines that food and water service cannot be provided due to safety or security reasons.⁴⁸

Right to Baggage Protection

Passengers are entitled to the protection of their baggage from destruction, damage and loss.⁴⁹ Under the NCARs baggage is defined as the personal property of passengers or crew carried on an aircraft.⁵⁰ Where the baggage of a passenger is destroyed, damaged or lost, the passenger will be entitled to compensation.⁵¹

Right to File Complaint about Airline upon Infringement of Passengers' Rights

Air passengers have the right to file complaints to an airline about the flight services provided.⁵² In an instance where the complaint remains unresolved, passengers are entitled to make a complaint in writing to the NCAA against the airline by filling and submitting a complaint form which can be obtained online or at any airport.⁵³

Right to Reimbursement for Downgrading

An airline is required to reimburse a passenger who has been placed in a class lower than that for which the ticket was initially purchased. The airline is to reimburse the passenger with the difference⁵⁴ in line with the mode of payment within 30 days from the date of travel in addition to a certain percentage of the price of the ticket depending on whether it was a domestic flight or international flight.⁵⁵

³⁶ CAA 2022, s 55(3).

³⁷ CAA 2022, Second Schedule, art 17(1).

³⁸ CAA 2022, Second Schedule, art 20(2).

³⁹ CAA 2022, Second Schedule, art 21(1) and (2).

⁴⁰ NCARs 2023, reg 19.6.1.1(b).

⁴¹ NCARs 2023, reg 19.6.2.

⁴² NCARs 2023, reg 19.9.1.1 (a)

⁴³ NCARs 2023, reg 19.9.1.1 (a)

⁴⁴ NCARs 2023, reg 19.9.1.1(b) and (c).

⁴⁵ NCARs 2023, reg 19.6.1.1(a).

⁴⁶ NCARs 2023, reg 19.6.3.1(d).

⁴⁷ NCARs 2023, reg 19.10.

⁴⁸ NCARs 2023, reg 19.6.3.5(d).

⁴⁹ CAA 2022, Second Schedule, art 17(2).

⁵⁰ NCARs 2023, reg 19.1.2.

⁵¹ NCARs 2023, reg 19.18.2.1(a) and (b); CAA 2022, Second Schedule, art 17(2).

⁵² NCARs 2023, reg 19.22.1.1.

⁵³ NCARs 2023, reg 19.24.1.1-3.

⁵⁴ NCARs 2023, reg 19.11.1.1(a).

⁵⁵ NCARs 2023, reg 19.11.1.1(a) (1) and (2).

Right to Refund for cancelled ticket reservation

Where a customer cancels a ticket reservation not later than twenty-four after buying it, for tickets bought at least seven days before the scheduled date and time of departure the airline will either allow the customer to cancel their ticket reservation and receive a refund or allow the customer to reserve the ticket that is place it on hold for six months.⁵⁶

Rights of Air Passengers with disabilities or reduced mobility

All airport operators are not to discriminate against any passenger as a result of his/her disability or reduced mobility.⁵⁷ The airline or its agents are not to leave a person with disability or reduced mobility unattended for longer than 30 minutes in a wheelchair or other device, in which the passenger is not independently mobile.⁵⁸

Right to be notified of the reason for the refusal

Where an airline or its agent or a tour operator declines carriage of a person with disability or reduced mobility (in order to meet applicable safety requirements established by international, community or national law or the NCAA, or if the size of the aircraft or its doors makes the carriage of that person with a disability or reduced mobility physically impossible)⁵⁹ it shall immediately inform the person with reduced mobility of the reasons. If requested by the person with disability or reduced mobility the refusal shall be communicated in writing within five working days of the request.⁶⁰

Right to be informed of relevant safety rules and restrictions

An airline or its agent is required to make publicly available in accessible and substitute formats and in at least the same languages as the information made available to other passengers, the safety rules and all other vital information provided to passengers that concerns the flight information, transportation of persons with reduced mobility, as well as any limits on their transport or on that of mobility equipment due to the size of aircraft. A tour operator is to make such safety rules and restrictions available for flights included in package travel, package holidays and package tours which it organizes, sells or offers for sale.⁶¹

Right to compensation for loss or damage of wheelchair or mobility equipment

According to the regulations in the event of a loss or damage of wheelchairs or other mobility equipment or assistive devices in the course of being handled by the airline or while being conveyed on the aircraft, the airline will be responsible for 100% of the repair or replacement cost.⁶² For the purpose of compensation, the mobility equipment of a person with reduced mobility is assumed to have been lost if within a period of seven days for domestic flights and twenty-one days for international flights, calculated from the time the passenger should have received the said mobility equipment it is not delivered to the passenger.⁶³

Right to make complaints

A person with disabilities or reduced mobility may lay a complaint with the airline or NCAA where he/she is dissatisfied with the services which have been provided. Complaints about issues under the airport's responsibility can be filed with the airport operator or the NCAA.⁶⁴ Where a passenger with disabilities is still dissatisfied with the handling of an issue by the customer service staff of an airline, he/she may refer the issue to the NCAA for further redress.⁶⁵ On receipt of a disability related complaint, an airline is required to respond to and directly address the complaint in writing within 30 days. The foregoing notwithstanding, airlines are not required to deal with complaints sent more than 45 days after the incident unless the complaint is referred by the NCAA.⁶⁶ The NCAA is to investigate all disability-related complaints it receives to determine whether a violation of the regulations has occurred.⁶⁷

⁵⁶ NCARs 2023, reg 19.9.2.1.

⁵⁷ NCARs 2023, reg 19.12.1.2.

⁵⁸ NCARs 2023, reg 19.12.1.5.

⁵⁹ NCARs 2023, reg 19.12.5.1.

⁶⁰ NCARs 2023, reg 19.12.6.1.

⁶¹ NCARs 2023, reg 19.12.6.2.

⁶² NCARs 2023, reg 19.12.7.1.

⁶³ NCARs 2023, reg 19.12.7.2.

⁶⁴ NCARs 2023, reg 19.12.8.1.

⁶⁵ NCARs 2023, reg 19.12.8.3.

⁶⁶ NCARs 2023, reg 19.12.8.4.

⁶⁷ NCARs 2023, reg 19.12.8.5.

4. Liabilities of Airline Passengers

Liability for Refusing Security Checks

It is the responsibility of air passengers to consent to the search and scanning of both themselves and their baggage. A refusal to allow oneself or one's baggage to undergo security inspections before boarding an aircraft is a crime that carries a minimum fine of five hundred thousand Naira (₦500,000).⁶⁸

Liability for Endangering the Safety of an Aircraft

Any person who destroys an aircraft or damages it in a way that prevents it from flying, or who commits an act of violence against a person on board during an aircraft flight that is likely to jeopardize the safety of the aircraft and/or its passengers, may be convicted of an offence punishable with life imprisonment without option of fine.⁶⁹

Liability for Interfering with Air Navigation

By virtue of the provisions of the Civil Aviation Act, if found guilty a person is liable upon conviction to a fine of at least Two Million Naira (₦2,000,000) or at least one year imprisonment, or both for illegally interfering with or attempting to interfere with the operation of air navigation and meteorological facilities in a way that jeopardizes the safety of an aircraft in flight.⁷⁰

Liability for Interference with Crew Members

Where a passenger on a flight interferes with a crew member while on a flight, and this interference hampers the crew member's ability to perform their duties, such a passenger will be liable for an offence. This offence is liable upon conviction to a fine of not more than two hundred thousand Naira (₦200,000) or imprisonment for a term of at least two months, or both.⁷¹

Liability for Assault and Battery against Crew Members

Additionally, any passenger who assaults, intimidates or threatens any crew member, including attendants, stewards or stewardesses, or engages in an unruly behaviour on-board is deemed to have committed an offence. The passenger will be liable upon conviction to a fine of at least Two Hundred Thousand Naira (₦200,000) or imprisonment for a term of at least two months or both.⁷²

Liability for Operating Mobile Phone or any Instrument against the Instruction of Pilot-in-Command

All individuals on board an aircraft may be instructed by the pilot-in-command not to use any equipment or gadget, including a mobile phone that could interfere with the aircraft's radio frequency or other navigational devices. Non-compliance with such an instruction is an offence which is punishable upon conviction with a fine of two hundred thousand Naira (₦200,000) or at least two-month imprisonment or both.⁷³

5. Challenges in the Enforcement of Passengers' Rights and the Effectiveness of Enforcement Mechanisms

The rights of air passengers in Nigeria are enforced using judicial and administrative measures. Passengers are initially required to file their complaints directly with the airline in line with the provisions of the Nigerian Civil Aviation Authority Regulations.⁷⁴ Where the airline fails to resolve the issue(s) complained about the passenger may make a direct complaint to the NCAA. Additionally, by virtue of the provisions of the Civil Aviation Act a passenger may seek judicial enforcement in court. The Federal High court is empowered to exercise jurisdiction and hear and determine proceedings arising under the Civil Aviation Act.⁷⁵

The Nigerian Civil Aviation Act and the Civil Aviation Regulations provide safeguards for passenger rights however their implementation is nevertheless difficult for different reasons. A significant challenge to the enforcement of passenger rights is the lack of awareness of the existence of such rights by air passengers. In order for their rights to be upheld, passengers must be informed about their existence. Therefore, there is a need for increased public education on the existence of air passenger rights. In order to establish an effective system for the enforcement of passenger rights in the aviation sector, passengers and agencies must work together to make sure that each side fulfils its responsibilities to the other. Additionally, in order to facilitate the receipt and referral of consumer complaints to the appropriate authorities, airlines should have an operational customer service desk at every airport where they conduct business. Another significant challenge is the difficult enforcement process

⁶⁸ CAA 2022, s 45(1) - (3).

⁶⁹ CAA 2022, s 84.

⁷⁰ CAA 2022, s 82.

⁷¹ CAA 2022, s 85(1).

⁷² CAA 2022, s 85(2).

⁷³ CAA 2022, s 85(3).

⁷⁴ NCARs 2023, reg 19.24.

⁷⁵ CAA 2022, s 86(1).

for enforcing passenger rights particularly with respect to international airlines. International airlines usually do not have an adequate system for redress as most of their offices located at the airport are not manned by the requisite staff to deal with complaints. Therefore, attempts to make complaints may require visiting the airline offices located far from the airport which can be time-consuming with the end result that passengers have to depend on proxy handling companies to deal with their complaints especially with respect to missing or delayed baggage.⁷⁶

6. Conclusion

Air transportation in Nigeria protects passengers and requires their fulfilment of certain obligations. The rights of passengers to timely and accurate information, compensation for rejected boarding, flight delays, and lost baggage have been clearly outlined by the Nigerian Civil Aviation Authority (NCAA) Regulations which hold airlines responsible for the services rendered from the entitlement to timely and accurate information to compensation for rejected boarding, flight delays, and lost baggage. In co-existence with these rights are a comparable set of obligations. Passengers have a duty to follow safety procedures, undergo security checks and act responsibly. A failure to fulfil these obligations may result in severe repercussions such as being denied a flight or facing legal action. Ultimately, an informed public is essential to a peaceful and effective air transport system in Nigeria. Air passengers who understand their rights and obligations can insist on quality standards and seek restitution, as well as maintain a secure and organized atmosphere. It is vital for the NCAA to be proactive in constantly enforcing the regulations and engage in public enlightenment programmes on the rights and obligations of air passengers. This is the only way that air transport in Nigeria can achieve the status of being safe and ensuring the protection of passengers' rights.

⁷⁶ Olasunkanmi Akinlotan, 'Passenger misconduct, airline gaps spark calls for tighter airport security' Punch Newspaper 13 August 2025 < <https://punchng.com/passenger-misconduct-airline-gaps-spark-calls-for-tighter-airport-security/>>.