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Title: Legislative Oversight on NCAA Investigation into Air Peace Flight Disruptions, Passenger Complaints, and Compensation Issues

Authors:

Prof. Nse Akpan and Dr. Etimbuk Obot

Department of Democracy and Governance

Institute for Legislative and Democratic Studies (NILDS)

Executive Summary

Recent reports indicate that the Nigerian Civil Aviation Authority (NCAA) has summoned Air Peace to its headquarters following passenger complaints related to flight disruptions, delayed refunds, and compensation issues. The action reportedly followed complaints from passengers on the Abuja–London route whose flight returned to base after the aircraft developed a cracked windscreen, allegedly caused by a bird strike. Passengers were subsequently rerouted through the Gatwick–Lagos–Abuja corridor, with some reportedly experiencing delays and disruptions during the rescheduling process.

According to the regulator, the matter is being reviewed in line with Part 19 of the NCAA Regulations 2023, which governs passenger rights and airline obligations in cases of delays, cancellations, and other service disruptions. In its response, Air Peace stated that the decision to return the aircraft was based strictly on safety grounds and maintained that no passenger was abandoned, adding that accommodation and alternative travel arrangements were provided where necessary.

While the prompt regulatory response is a positive step, the incident raises broader concerns about passenger protection, operational reliability, and compliance with aviation consumer protection rules. Complaints relating to delayed refunds, compensation processes, and rerouting arrangements continue to generate public concern, particularly as Nigerian airlines expand international operations. Although safety-related disruptions such as technical faults are legitimate occurrences in aviation, passengers often face uncertainty regarding their rights, refund timelines, and the procedures for compensation during such incidents.

The situation also highlights a broader pattern of passenger complaints within the aviation sector. Reports indicate that in September 2025, the Nigerian Civil Aviation Authority summoned 13 domestic airlines over recurring flight cancellations, delays, and consumer complaints, suggesting that these concerns extend beyond a single airline or incident. Strengthening oversight and enforcement of passenger protection regulations is therefore essential to maintaining public confidence in Nigeria’s aviation industry.



Considering the National Assembly's oversight responsibility over aviation regulatory institutions and consumer protection frameworks, legislative engagement may help ensure that investigations are transparent, that passenger rights are effectively enforced, and that industry standards are strengthened.

In this regard, the National Assembly, through its Committee on Aviation may consider the following actions:

1. Invite the Nigerian Civil Aviation Authority to provide a detailed briefing on the circumstances surrounding the flight disruption, passenger complaints, and the ongoing investigation involving Air Peace.
2. Request clarification on the airline's compliance with Part 19 of the NCAA Regulations 2023, particularly regarding passenger care, rerouting arrangements, refund processing, and compensation obligations.
3. Seek sector-wide data on passenger complaints, including trends relating to delays, cancellations, and refund processing among airlines operating in Nigeria.
4. Encourage periodic reporting by the NCAA to the National Assembly on enforcement actions taken against airlines that violate aviation consumer protection regulations.

Background:

Recent reports indicate that the Nigerian Civil Aviation Authority (NCAA) has summoned Air Peace to its headquarters following complaints related to unexplained flight disruptions, delayed refunds, and compensation issues affecting passengers¹.

The action by the regulator reportedly followed complaints from passengers on the Abuja–London flight who were rerouted via Gatwick–Lagos–Abuja after the aircraft returned to base due to a cracked windshield allegedly caused by a bird strike. Some passengers reportedly experienced delays and disruptions during the rescheduling process².

The Nigerian Civil Aviation Authority, through its Director of Public Affairs and Consumer Protection, indicated that the authority would investigate the incident in line with Part 19 of the NCAA Regulations 2023, which governs passenger rights and airline obligations in cases of flight disruptions.

¹ Sumaina, K. (2026, March 15). NCAA Summons Air Peace Over Unexplained Disruptions, Delayed Refunds, Compensations. *This Day*. <https://www.thisdaylive.com/2026/03/15/ncaa-summons-air-peace-over-unexplained-disruptions-delayed-refunds-compensations/>

² Ibid



In response, Air Peace clarified that the return of the aircraft was strictly based on safety considerations and stated that no passenger was abandoned or left stranded, adding that accommodation and alternative travel arrangements were provided where necessary³.

Issue:

While the prompt response by the Nigerian Civil Aviation Authority to investigate the matter is a welcome development, the incident raises broader concerns regarding passenger protection, operational reliability, and compliance with aviation consumer protection regulations.

The complaints relating to flight disruptions, rerouting, delayed refunds, and compensation continue to generate public concern within Nigeria's aviation sector, particularly as domestic carriers expand international operations⁴. While safety considerations such as aircraft technical faults are legitimate reasons for flight delays or air returns, passengers often experience uncertainty regarding their rights, refund timelines, and compensation procedures during such disruptions.

Furthermore, the growing volume of passenger complaints across airlines suggests the need for stronger monitoring of compliance with aviation consumer protection regulations, including the timely handling of refunds and passenger welfare obligations⁵. Public confidence in Nigeria's aviation industry depends not only on safety compliance but also on transparency and accountability in the handling of service disruptions.

These issues reflect the importance of institutional oversight to ensure that regulatory investigations are thorough, transparent, and consistent with the protection of passenger rights.

Rationale for Legislative Oversight:

The National Assembly plays a critical role in providing oversight over regulatory agencies within the aviation sector.

Legislative engagement is important for the following reasons:

1. **Protection of Passenger Rights:** Air passengers are entitled to protections under Nigerian aviation regulations, including compensation and care during flight disruptions.
2. **Oversight of Aviation Regulators:** Ensuring that the Nigerian Civil Aviation Authority effectively enforces passenger protection regulations strengthens regulatory accountability.

³ Omobola, D. (2026, March 14). NCAA summons Air Peace over stranded passengers, flight disruptions. *Vanguard*. <https://www.vanguardngr.com/2026/03/ncaa-summons-air-peace-over-stranded-passengers-flight-disruptions/>

⁴ ibid

⁵ Akinlotan. O. (2025, September 9). NCAA summons 13 domestic airlines over flight cancellations, delays. *Punch*. <https://punchng.com/just-in-ncaa-summons-13-domestic-airlines-over-flight-cancellations-delays/>.



3. **Public Confidence in the Aviation Sector:** Transparent handling of passenger complaints and regulatory investigations contributes to public trust in Nigeria's aviation system.
4. **Strengthening Industry Standards:** Legislative oversight can help identify regulatory gaps and encourage improvements in airline operational standards and passenger service frameworks.

Recommendations to the National Assembly:

The National Assembly, through its Committee on Aviation is respectfully urged to:

1. Invite the Nigerian Civil Aviation Authority to provide a briefing on the circumstances surrounding the reported flight disruptions, passenger complaints, and the ongoing investigation involving Air Peace.
2. Request information on whether the airline complied with Part 19 of the NCAA Regulations 2023, particularly with regard to passenger care, rerouting arrangements, refunds, and compensation obligations.
3. Review passenger complaint trends in the Aviation Sector by urging the NCAA to provide data on recent passenger complaints relating to delays, cancellations, and refund processing across airlines operating in Nigeria.
4. Encourage periodic reporting by the Nigerian Civil Aviation Authority to the National Assembly on enforcement actions taken against airlines found to have violated aviation consumer protection regulations. This is because In September 2025, NCAA summoned 13 domestic airlines to address recurring flight cancellations, delays and passenger complaints, showing that the issue extends beyond a single incident⁶.

Conclusion:

The decision by the Nigerian Civil Aviation Authority to summon Air Peace over recent flight disruptions and passenger complaints represents an important step toward regulatory accountability. However, legislative oversight remains essential to ensure that investigations are conducted transparently and that passenger protection regulations are consistently enforced.

Such engagement by the National Assembly will help strengthen consumer confidence, regulatory effectiveness, and operational standards within Nigeria's aviation sector.

Contact

National Institute for Legislative and
Democratic Studies
National Assembly
Plot 307 Cadastral Zone
Umaru Musa Yar'adua Expressway, Airport
Road

Abuja Nigeria

E-mail: info@nils.gov.ng

Website: <http://nils.gov.ng>

NILDS Liaison Office

Suite 214 Senate Wing
National Assembly Complex
Mobile: +234 806 694 5075

⁶ Ibid

