

I am a retired USAF pilot, a current Commercial pilot operating my privately owned aircraft and a frequent commercial airlines passenger.

The pilot in command of any aircraft is responsible for essentially everything that goes on with his/her flight. I feel that with the proper safeguards in place (Locked storage, proper weapon/rounds) and proper training, the pilot and/or co-pilot should be allowed to have a firearm if he/she desires. I would expect it to have sub-sonic rounds (lower velocity) to minimize any colateral damage. Aircraft that have a bullet go through the pressurized structure only blow up on James Bond movies.

I would personally feel more secure with the pilot/co-pilot being armed than if they were at the mercy of a terrorist. I know that some people would advocate that the weapon would be the first item a potential terrorist would seek. They would have to go through, what should be, a more secure cockpit door and a secure locked storage area for the weapon. The weapon would be only available to the pilot and/or co-pilot and could be the difference between a victory and another tragedy.

My opinion is that absolutely YES, the Pilot in command and/or the co-pilot, should be allowed to have available a suitable firearm to protect the safety of the passenger, crew and aircraft. I would expect these officers to have the proper training and be provided the proper firearms/rounds.

I would also expect that there would be a proper storage area, only accessible to the cockpit crew. With the technology in existence today, it should not be too difficult to produce a suitable locking system that is fast to access, but only by the cockpit crew. I would also require that a alarm signal be transmitted to ground stations when the secure weapon's area is accessed that would go off everytime the door is opened. This should be undefeatable by everyone (Including crew) to alert ATC that a weapon was accessed.

Thank you for allowing me to voice an opinion. This one of the many reasons our country is so great!

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