

Does an Air Ambulance Need RVSM?

If you are someone you know will be needing to use an air ambulance service, there are numerous factors to consider before making the trip. One factor to consider when flying in an air ambulance is the aircraft. If the patient must travel by air over a distance of 500 miles, then it is advisable to transport the patient in a jet. Before selecting any air ambulance service that uses jets to transport their patients, check to see if the aircrafts are equipped with RVSM.

What does RVSM mean? The letters RVSM are an abbreviation for Reduced Vertical Separation Minimum. RVSM is a modification to the jet aircraft that has been required by the FAA on all aircrafts that want to fly above 29,000 feet in the air. Despite the FAA regulation since January of 2005, many pilots have chosen not to make this modification to their jet aircraft. Without RVSM, pilots are forced to fly their aircraft at lower altitudes.

For personal flights, flying at lower altitudes is primarily a minor inconvenience, but when traveling for medical necessity by air ambulance, the situation changes. Patients flying on an air ambulance jet are in need of comfort, safety, and speed. The lack of RVSM requiring flight at lower altitudes compromises the patient's comfort and the speed of the flight.

When a pilot is forced to fly at lower altitudes, the transit time is lengthened. When time is of the essence, patients cannot afford to waste time. Jets having RVSM are able to fly at higher altitudes and save precious time. In some instances, this can make the difference between life and death.

Another negative side to flying without RSVM includes more fuel stops. With each landing and takeoff for fuel, more time is spent circling the airport, taxiing, and fueling up the plane. Waiting for more fuel can spend time that some patients don't have to spare. Selecting an air ambulance service that flies with RVSM can save time and offer patients and family peace of mind.

More turbulence is frequently experienced at lower altitudes when compared to flying with RVSM. Turbulence can compromise the safety of the patient. This can be avoided using RVSM technology on the air ambulance flight permitting the aircraft to fly above the turbulence. Choppy flights can also become uncomfortable and unpleasant for patients. Selecting an air ambulance service that has RVSM on their jets will ensure the highest possible comfort for the patient.

Anyone traveling by air ambulance is undoubtedly concerned with safety, speed,

and comfort. RVSM may seem to be a luxury for some pilots, but quality air ambulance services know the value of RVSM for their clients. The RVSM technology modification to aircraft allows the patient the utmost comfort possible during the flight.

Flying at higher altitudes saves considerable time, by avoiding refueling, extra touchdowns of the aircraft, and issues with turbulence. Clearly, selecting an air ambulance jet with RVSM is important when traveling by air ambulance for long distances. RVSM offers safety and convenience for passengers creating peace of mind during a stressful time.