



CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

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Properly Regulate Lithium Batteries *Now!*

The Air Line Pilots Association, International has long advocated for improved transport requirements for bulk shipments of lithium-ion and lithium-metal batteries. This includes extending the ban of lithium-metal batteries on passenger airliners to all-cargo aircraft. Due to their unique nature, lithium batteries are more dangerous than many goods currently shipped as hazardous materials. They can self-ignite when damaged, defective, externally shorted, or exposed to heat. Furthermore, the fire they ignite cannot be suppressed by traditional fire-suppression systems, and the noxious gas they produce can explode under pressure. They also burn rapidly and at temperatures exceeding 2,000°F.

Lithium Batteries

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information and videos

Current U.S. regulations allow an unlimited number of lithium-metal or lithium-ion batteries as cargo on our aircraft. As a result, current regulations permit thousands of batteries to be transported without appropriate safety protocols, and without the knowledge of the flight crew. The Associated Press reports that it is not unusual for as many as 80,000 batteries to be carried as cargo on an airplane at one time.

LITHIUM BATTERIES CALL TO ACTION - CLICK HERE

Recent Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) testing shows that lithium batteries are much more dangerous than previously thought, which has resulted in a growing number of passenger airlines banning shipments of bulk lithium-ion batteries due to safety concerns. Major carriers including Delta and United have stopped accepting such shipments.

Additionally, Boeing issued a guidance document to its customers recommending that high-density packages of lithium-ion batteries and cells not be transported as cargo on passenger airplanes until safer methods of transport are established and followed.

Regarding the carriage of high quantities of lithium batteries as cargo, Airbus and Boeing recommend that operators conduct a full risk assessment, taking into account factors such as industry-available information and guidance.

The threat is very real! In 2010, a lithium battery fire contributed to the crash of a Boeing 747 freighter near Dubai, United Arab Emirates, killing both crew members. The heat from the fire disabled the crew's oxygen system, and smoke filled the cockpit within three minutes of the first smoke alarm, completely obscuring the captain and first officer's ability to see cockpit instrumentation. Let's work with Congress to inform them of this pressing hazmat safety issue now!

LITHIUM BATTERIES CALL TO ACTION - CLICK HERE

The news clip below includes an FAA video illustrating how quickly lithium-ion batteries can catch fire and explode.

<http://abcnews.go.com/GMA/video/video-shows-lithium-battery-shipments-airplane-fires-27330626>

You need to take action now! Congress is considering changes to the FAA reauthorization legislation, and it is imperative that provisions are included to improve the safety of lithium batteries being transported by air.

Congress must give the secretary of Transportation the authority to issue lithium battery safety regulations and not be superseded by international standards set by the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO). The 2012 version of the FAA bill restricted the FAA's ability to regulate to a standard higher than the ICAO.

The United States should be the world leader in aviation safety—not lagging behind the international community. We base our aviation safety rules on scientific findings and known facts, such as the FAA's fire testing results and the numerous safety incidents attributable to lithium batteries. To clarify, ALPA is not calling for new or additional restrictions on what passengers are permitted to carry onboard airliners in the cabin, but **we do want our pilots to be protected from the risks associated with shipments of hazardous materials.**

Many industries, including companies that manufacture household paint or dry ice, safely and profitably ship hazardous materials under the full scope of dangerous-goods regulations. Yet lithium batteries, which are more volatile than paint and dry ice, are not subject to the same regulations. Lithium batteries are known to be capable of self-initiating intensely hot fires that airline pilots and/or onboard fire-suppression systems may be incapable of extinguishing, which could lead to the loss of an aircraft and lives. Tell your representatives to promote aviation safety today!

LITHIUM BATTERIES CALL TO ACTION - CLICK HERE

Respectfully,



Charles W. Dyer

Captain Chuck Dyer
FedEx MEC Chairman



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Air Line Pilots Association, International
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