



U.S. Department  
of Transportation  
**Federal Aviation  
Administration**

# SAFO

Safety Alert for Operators

SAFO 15010  
DATE: 10/8/15

Flight Standards Service  
Washington, DC

[http://www.faa.gov/other\\_visit/aviation\\_industry/airline\\_operators/airline\\_safety/safo](http://www.faa.gov/other_visit/aviation_industry/airline_operators/airline_safety/safo)

*A SAFO contains important safety information and may include recommended action. SAFO content should be especially valuable to air carriers in meeting their statutory duty to provide service with the highest possible degree of safety in the public interest. Besides the specific action recommended in a SAFO, an alternative action may be as effective in addressing the safety issue named in the SAFO.*

**Subject:** Carriage of Spare Lithium Batteries in Carry-on and Checked Baggage

**Purpose:** This SAFO provides information to Title 14 of the Code of Federal Regulations (14 CFR) part 119 certificate holders and part 129 foreign air carriers on carriage of spare lithium batteries in passenger and crewmember personal carry-on and checked baggage including carry-on baggage checked at the gate or from on-board an aircraft.

Note: For this SAFO, “spare” refers to lithium batteries not installed in a portable electronic device.

**Discussion:** Lithium batteries present a risk of both igniting and fueling fires in aircraft cargo/baggage compartments. To reduce the risk of lithium battery fires, the U.S. Department of Transportation’s Hazardous Materials Regulations (HMR), and equivalent International Civil Aviation Organization’s Technical Instructions for the Safe Transport of Dangerous Goods (ICAO TI), prohibit spare lithium batteries from checked baggage (including baggage checked at the gate or on-board the aircraft). The HMR and ICAO TI provide limited exceptions for passengers/crewmembers who carry-on spare lithium batteries intended for personal use (refer to [49 CFR § 175.10](#)).

**Recommended Action:** The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) strongly urges certificate holders to consider the following actions:

- Ensure all crewmembers and ground personnel handling passengers and baggage understand that they must report incidents where fire, violent rupture, explosion, or heat sufficient to be dangerous to packaging or personal safety to include charring of packaging, melting of packaging, scorching of packaging, or other evidence, occurs as a result of a battery or battery-powered device (per 49 CFR §171.15/16).
- During ticket purchase and check-in processes, inform passengers that spare lithium batteries are prohibited from checked baggage (including checked baggage at the gate) and refer passengers to FAA’s *Pack Safe* website for additional information (<http://www.faa.gov/Go/Packsafe>).
- Evaluate training and communication protocols in operations with respect to lithium batteries, personal and medical electronic devices, and mobility aids.

- Prior to allowing a passenger or crewmember to offer their carry-on baggage to be checked from the gate or on-board the aircraft, verbally inform them to remove all spare lithium batteries from their carry-on baggage.
- For spare lithium batteries in carry-on baggage, ensure personnel understand the following:
  - o Each spare lithium battery must be individually protected so as to prevent short circuits (e.g., by placement in original retail packaging, by otherwise insulating terminals by taping over exposed terminals, or placing each battery in a separate plastic bag or protective pouch).
  - o Spare batteries must not come in contact with metal objects, such as coins, keys, or jewelry and take steps to prevent crushing, puncturing, or pressure on the battery.
  - o Batteries must not exceed the allowable quantity and size limitations (refer to [49 CFR § 175.10](#)).

**Contact:** Questions or comments regarding this SAFO should be directed to the FAA Office of Hazardous Materials, ADG-200 at 202-267-9432.