

International shipments of lithium batteries

Background

Effective January 1, 2013, new rules impacting international shipments of lithium batteries became effective in Packaging Instructions 965 and 968 of the [ICAO Technical Instructions for the Safe Transport of Dangerous Goods by Air](#). As a result of these new rules, pilots may see an increase in the number of battery cargo shipments listed on pilot notification forms.

Changes to ICAO technical instructions

Newly created Section IB in [ICAO Packaging Instructions 965 and 968](#) requires that many of the ICAO dangerous goods regulatory provisions be applied to previously exempted, large international shipments of lithium-ion and lithium metal batteries, such that:

- ▶ The shipments must be documented on the pilot notification form
- ▶ The packages must bear a Class 9 hazard label
- ▶ Shippers must receive training in packaging, labeling and handling

Operators must perform acceptance checks and inspect packages before and after loading and unloading.

Packing Instruction 965 addresses lithium ion batteries and is applicable to passenger and cargo-only aircraft. Packing Instruction 968 addresses lithium metal batteries and is applicable to cargo-only aircraft and non-U.S. passenger aircraft operating outside the United States. Batteries in or with equipment are unaffected by the new rules.

Recommendations

Pilots should follow their airline's current procedures, training and guidance material regarding the carriage of Dangerous Goods.

Pilots should be aware that the inclusion of these declarations on pilot notification forms does not necessarily indicate an increased number of shipments of lithium batteries. Rather, the declarations are evidence that enhanced safety measures have been taken by shippers and airlines, which includes informing flight crewmembers of the presence of these shipments on the aircraft. Awareness of this critical information will allow pilots and emergency personnel to more effectively respond to an onboard emergency.