



**FROM**  
GCAA Regulations and Investigation Dept

**DATE**  
20 October 2010

**GCAA REFERENCE:**  
26030/50659/10

**TO**  
GCAA - DASI, DAS.  
All Ground Handling Agents in the UAE  
All UAE A.O.C. holders  
All cargo operators transiting through the  
UAE

**PURPOSE:**  
**NOTIFICATION OF GCAA SAFETY RECOMMENDATIONS**

**SUBJECT:**  
**PROMPT SAFETY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE TRANSPORTATION OF LITHIUM BATTERIES**

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

Following an accident involving a Boeing 747-400F on September 03<sup>rd</sup> 2010, 9 nm south of Dubai International Airport, the General Civil Aviation Authority has reviewed the initial accident findings of the investigators and determined that these immediate Safety Recommendations are to be distributed and adhered to by all UAE A.O.C. holders, freighter and passenger operators, ground handling companies, including all third party contractors directly and indirectly associated with the loading, storage and handling of freight either originating in, or in transit through the UAE.

The probable cause of the accident is not yet known; however, what has been established is that a fire on the main deck of the B747-400 was not extinguished following the standard operating procedures and that the crew acknowledged difficulties in handling the B747-400 during the emergency.

It is also been established from the cargo manifest that various consignments of lithium batteries and lithium-ion battery operated devices were included in the cargo onboard the B-747-400.

Based on the above, and through consultation with other civil aviation safety entities concerning empirical data from previous in-flight fires involving lithium batteries and/or lithium-ion battery operated devices in the cargo, the following four Prompt Safety Recommendations are released:

**SUPPORTING INFORMATION:**

As a reminder to all Operators/Ground Handling Agents, the following information is provided:

- Identified and declared Dangerous Goods must be accepted from a GCAA Dangerous Goods Certified Freight Forwarding agency (Ref. State Variations, ICAO TI AE 2 and IATA DGR AEG-02).
- The declared Dangerous goods must be handled in accordance with GCAA CARs Part VI Chapter 2 – “Transport of Dangerous Goods by Air”.
- The USA Federal Aviation Administration’s Safety Alert for Operators (SAFO) number 10017, dated 8<sup>th</sup> October 2010. The FAA SAFO is attached, or alternatively it is available here:

[http://www.faa.gov/other\\_visit/aviation\\_industry/airline\\_operators/airline\\_safety/safo/all\\_safos/media/2010/SAFO10017.pdf](http://www.faa.gov/other_visit/aviation_industry/airline_operators/airline_safety/safo/all_safos/media/2010/SAFO10017.pdf)

The GCAA R&I realizes that it is crucial for all UAE Ground Handling Agents and AOC holders operating to/from/via the UAE to enhance their procedures for assuring safer and securer transportation of lithium batteries by air, hence the following is recommended:

In view of this, all involved are also advised to:

- Increase the level of surveillance during loading to include the identification and reporting of any damaged packages, pallets or cargo containers, in particular, reporting any signs or indications of smoke or fire damage, or possible fire event initiation.
- It is imperative for all personnel of the operators or ground handlers that the reporting of any damage or suspected damaged is part of a comprehensive 'no blame culture', in line with accepted SMS practices.
- Educate all those who carry out activities related to Class 9 hazardous materials, including lithium batteries on the best practice to identify Lithium Batteries in particular in "Items/ shipments carried by Passengers, in Cargo, in Courier and in Mail modes" in/to/via UAE so that they are conversant with these new recommendations.
- Perform a risk assessment of their own practices for transporting lithium batteries.

Adhere, understand and cooperate in this regard, which will be highly appreciated. This will go a long way in improving transport of Dangerous Goods and batteries containing Lithium in particular, within the UAE towards achieving safer and securer operational standards.

Further information: A Dangerous Goods Panel – Working Group meeting will convene in Abu Dhabi, UAE, during November 2010. On the basis of the outcome of this working group meeting further guidance material will be available regarding the transport of dangerous goods by air, including lithium batteries.

#### **SAFETY RECOMMENDATIONS:**

##### **Safety Recommendation 1 (SR20/10):**

- Customers are requested to identify bulk shipments of currently excepted lithium batteries by information on airway bills and other documents provided by shippers offering shipments of lithium batteries.

##### **Safety Recommendation 2 (SR21/10):**

- Where feasible and appropriate, stow bulk shipments of lithium batteries in Class C cargo compartments or in locations where alternative fire suppression is available.

##### **Safety Recommendation 3 (SR22/10):**

- Evaluate the training, stowage, and communication protocols in your operation with respect to the transportation of lithium batteries in the event of an unrelated fire.

##### **Safety Recommendation 4 (SR23/10):**

- Pay special attention to ensuring careful handling and compliance with existing regulations covering the air transportation of Class 9 hazardous materials, including lithium batteries.

Kind regards,

  
Ismail Abdul Wahid  
Chief Regulation and Investigation

