



AIRCRAFT MECHANICS FRATERNAL ASSOCIATION

National Office: 14001 E. Iliff Avenue, Suite 217 • Aurora, CO 80014
Tel: 303.752.AMFA (2632) • Fax: 303.362.7736

Compliance Reminder: TSA Directives

November 2, 2015

There have been policy changes with the TSA in the past two months, and I wanted to clarify these changes for our members to prevent misunderstandings. I would first like to start with lithium ion batteries, especially the ones we carry in our tools such as drills, ratchets, and screw guns.

The newly revised 49 CFR 175.10 states that you can have lithium ion batteries in checked or carry on baggage, however, all *spare* batteries are prohibited from checked baggage. Spare batteries must be carried on and placed in original retail packaging or by otherwise insulating terminals by taping over exposed terminals or placing in a separate plastic bag or pouch. An individual may carry only two spare batteries and they must not exceed 12 volts.

Alaska Airlines considers these batteries as hazmat and must be shipped as such. Be careful to observe your company policies and adhere to them, especially when going downline. Southwest Airlines (SWA) takes this procedure a step further. In SAM 854A, the AMT Field Trip Checklist, it states that lithium ion batteries are unauthorized hazmat and instruct for them to be carry on only; lithium ion batteries cannot travel in your toolbox as checked baggage, only as spares that are carried on. This also means that if you sign this SAM Form and do not adhere to what you are signing, it could be indicated as falsification of records and you could be subject to termination. This falsification has already happened with a member and concluded in termination. Keep in mind that the FAA does allow you to check these batteries installed in the tools, but not spares. SWA policy prohibits this to employees going downline so be aware of and follow your company policies.

Please also keep in mind that you cannot take tools over seven (7) inches long onboard the aircraft as a carry on. It does not matter if you are a mechanic, you will be instructed to check these tools. If you have any issues at different stations with any of these policies, ask to see a supervisor to achieve a solution. Do not argue as not all stations are aware of the policy or adhere to it.

The TSA has also recently changed the rules with reference to the sterile area. All airline employees who are traveling as passengers must go through a TSA screening checkpoint with any accessible property they intend to carry onboard the aircraft regardless of whether you are on company business or personal travel. While on a downline trip you must go through the TSA security screening checkpoint after leaving your tools planeside and prior to boarding. No employee can use the jet bridge from the ramp to board an aircraft as a passenger. Keep in mind that this does not apply for test flights or ferry flights. The TSA has also been increasing random inspections in the aftermath of some incidents, to include a gun smuggling event.

After passing through the screening checkpoint and entering the sterile area, any employee who leaves the sterile area for any reason must be re-screened prior to boarding the flight as a passenger. An employee is permitted to exit the sterile area, go to the Security Identification Display Area (SIDA), and return to the sterile area without being re-screened prior to boarding a flight **only** as a

crewmember. A crewmember is defined as a person assigned to perform duties onboard an aircraft during flight time. A mechanic on a downline trip is not a crewmember.

Pay attention to your company policies on travel, whether on duty or off. Keep in mind that if TSA decides to pull your SIDA badge, you cannot work and it takes a lot of paperwork to get it back. Also companies are very serious about hazmat because of the dangers and the fines associated with it. Be informed and pass along the information to other members. Remember that you do not need to rush while being re-screened. If you miss a connection because of this, it is the world we now live and it must be accepted. As passengers we are accustomed to being able to bring our tools and a bottle of whiskey on board; however, circumstances have changed, our cheese has definitely been moved, but this is today's norm. Continue performing your duties as knowledgeable and skilled technicians. Above all, stay safe!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David A. Brooks". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

David A. Brooks
National Safety & Standards Director