



International Civil Aviation Organization

Tel.: +1 (514) 954-8220/8221 Fax: +1 (514) 954-6376

Website: www.icao.int

ICAO NEWS RELEASE

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ICAO ISSUES RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE SCREENING OF LIQUIDS TAKEN ON BOARD AIRCRAFT

Montreal, 11 December 2006 – The Council of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) has issued new interim security control guidelines for the screening of liquids, gels and aerosols that may be used in improvised explosive devices on board an aircraft.

- All liquids should be carried in containers with a capacity not greater than 100 ml, or the equivalent in other volumetric measurements. Liquids carried in containers larger than 100 ml are not to be accepted, even if the container is only partially filled.
- Containers should be placed in a transparent re-sealable plastic bag of a maximum capacity of one litre. The containers must fit comfortably within the transparent plastic bag, which should be completely closed.
- The plastic bag should be presented for visual examination at the screening point. Only one transparent plastic bag per passenger should be permitted.
- Exemptions should be made for medications, baby milk/foods and special dietary requirements. An appropriate and proportionate means of verifying the nature of such liquids will need to be available.

The ICAO Council further suggested to its 189 Contracting States, who are responsible for establishing their own lists of prohibited items based on ICAO guidance to ensure global harmonization, that they may also wish to consider the exemption of liquids purchased either at airport duty free shops or on board aircraft. They would have to be packed in a sealed plastic bag that is both tamper-evident and displays satisfactory proof of purchase at airport duty free shops, or on board aircraft, on the day(s) of the journey for both departing as well as transfer passengers.

Finally, to facilitate screening and avoid a cluttered x-ray image, it is recommended that the plastic bags holding liquid containers should be presented apart from other cabin baggage, coats and jackets or laptops for separate x-ray screening.

The recommendations are based on the reports of the Aviation Security (AVSEC) Panel and the International Explosives Technical Commission of ICAO concerning the alleged terrorist plot of 9 August 2006 in the United Kingdom, and are to be implemented not later than 1 March 2007.

While fully endorsing the work of the AVSEC Panel, the Council requested that it continue revising the recommended overall list of prohibited items as part of a Secretariat Study Group, also consisting of members from ICAO's Dangerous Goods and Facilitation Panels, with participants from industry. The target date for review by Council of these latest guidelines is June 2007.

An ICAO Ad Hoc Group of Specialists on the Detection of Explosives is currently working on the development of technologies and operational procedures for the detection of liquids, gels or aerosols with certain physical properties that could be used in explosive devices. The AVSEC Panel Working Group on Training is developing new interim guidance material for screeners.

“Success in mitigating and eliminating all threats to civil aviation can only be achieved through the concerted effort of everyone concerned and a close working relationship between national agencies and aviation security regulators of all Contracting States”, emphasized Mr. Roberto Kobeh González, ICAO Council President.

“We must continually monitor and reassess the worldwide security regime to ensure that it is effective, practicable and sustainable, and that it takes into account the best practices of States and other stakeholders,” he added.

A specialized agency of the United Nations, ICAO was created in 1944 to promote the safe and orderly development of international civil aviation throughout the world. It sets standards and regulations necessary for aviation safety, security, efficiency and regularity, as well as for aviation environmental protection. The Organization serves as the forum for cooperation in all fields of civil aviation among its 189 Contracting States.

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