DGP-WG/05-IP/6
14/4/05

DANGEROUS GOODS PANEL (DGP)

MEETING OF THE WORKING GROUP OF THE WHOLE

Montreal, 18 to 22 April 2005

Agenda Item 5: Discussion of miscellaneous dangerous goods issues

ADDITION OF LIGHTERS TO THE UNITED STATES PROHIBITED ITEMS LIST

(Presented by the Secretary)

This information paper deals with lighters on board aircraft presented at a recent AVSECP/17 meeting by the United States.

AVSECP/17-IP/4
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AVIATION SECURITY PANEL (AVSECP)

SEVENTEENTH MEETING

Montreal, 29 March to 1 April 2005

Agenda Item 5: Other business

ADDITION OF LIGHTERS TO THE UNITED STATES PROHIBITED ITEMS LIST

INFORMATION PAPER

(Presented by the United States)

Summary

On March 1, 2005, the United States added lighters to the list of prohibited items that are not allowed past the secure area at US airports or on flights to, from, or within the US. The ban is in response to a provision in the Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act of 2004 and is intended to improve aviation security.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act requires that "butane lighters" be prohibited from being carried onto airplanes flying to, from, or within the US. After carefully evaluating Congressional intent, as well as assessing the potential confusion to passengers and screeners resulting from different rules for different lighters, TSA (as the appropriate authority for aviation security within the US), decided that all lighters should be prohibited from being carried onboard airplanes flying to, from, or within the U.S. or past the sterile point at U.S. airports. The amendment to the list of prohibited items was published in the Federal Register on March 1, 2005.

2. DISCUSSION

2.1 The US understands that the ban constitutes a significant change in policy for air carriers and governments and is giving every opportunity for passengers to learn about and understand the ban before they get to the airport. The US has also emphasized that the ban is not being implemented out of public health concerns or as part of an anti-smoking campaign. In instances when passengers reach a TSA security checkpoint with a prohibited item, they are permitted to check the item in their luggage, take it back to their vehicles, or mail it back to

themselves. However, with regard to lighters, the U.S. Department of Transportation has classified lighters as hazardous materials and prohibits them from being stowed in checked baggage for safety purposes. In addition, and unlike other prohibited items, lighters cannot be mailed through the U.S. Postal Service.

2.2 There will be no change to the screening process in the United States under the new policy. Walk-through metal detector screening and secondary screening will continue according to current U.S. procedures. Lighters will be treated as any other prohibited item. Fines are generally reserved for individuals carrying weapons like guns, explosives, or illegal knives, such as switchblades or knives with a double-edge or razor-type blade. It is not the intent to fine passengers unless there is an attempt on the part of the passenger to artfully conceal a lighter, or there are other aggravating circumstances.

3. CONCLUSION

3.1 Communicating clearly to passengers presenting themselves at security checkpoints will be key to ensuring that passengers are responsible for knowing what is prohibited before coming to the airport. The lighter ban is a behavioral change, and the US expects it will take time for the public to adjust.

3.2 The lighter ban will fulfill Congress' intent as expressed in the Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act to reduce the security vulnerabilities associated with carriage of an ignition source onto an aircraft, and provide one more layer of security for travelers to, from, and within the United States.

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