



**U.S. Department
of Transportation
Federal Aviation
Administration**

SAFO

Safety Alert for Operators

SAFO 16013
DATE: 10/25/16

Flight Standards Service
Washington, DC

http://www.faa.gov/other_visit/aviation_industry/airline_operators/airline_safety/safo

A SAFO contains important safety information and may include recommended action. SAFO content should be especially valuable to air carriers in meeting their statutory duty to provide service with the highest possible degree of safety in the public interest. Besides the specific action recommended in a SAFO, an alternative action may be as effective in addressing the safety issue named in the SAFO.

Subject: Fuel Caps Separating from Aircraft

Purpose: This SAFO informs air carriers and airport fueling agents of a safety issue involving fuel caps separating from aircraft during operations.

Background: An increasing number of aircraft fuel caps have been found on taxiways and runways. The majority of the caps have been identified as parts manufacturer approval (PMA) parts used on Airbus aircraft. Airbus has studied the issue and issued recommendations to air carriers who choose to use PMA caps instead of the Airbus caps.

Discussion: A missing fuel cap on an aircraft does not normally affect its flight. However, a fuel cap lying on a ramp, taxiway, or runway creates a hazard that can result in foreign object ingestion. A fuel cap separating from an aircraft in flight can result in injury to persons and/or damage to property.

Recommended Action: All air carriers, in addition to those who operate Airbus aircraft, should inspect their aircraft fuel caps at their earliest convenience. The inspection should verify that fuel caps are of an approved type for that aircraft, functioning properly and adequately secured to the aircraft. Air carriers should also verify that their aircraft inspection programs include an inspection of the fuel caps and associated retaining lanyards or chains. Air carriers should discuss this issue with their airport fueling agents and verify fueling personnel have been trained for proper operation of the fuel caps in use by that carrier. Air carriers should also ensure fueling personnel know how to properly report damage or wear to caps, lanyards or chains. Finally, air carriers should monitor fueling operations to ensure fueling personnel are properly removing and replacing aircraft fuel caps.

Contact: Questions or comments regarding this SAFO should be directed to the Air Carrier Maintenance Branch, AFS-330, at (202) 267-1675.