

217. AIR CARRIER OPERATIONS BULLETIN NO. 1-94-16

FIRE PREVENTION

(Formerly Air Carrier Operations Bulletin Nos. 1-77-1, Use of Lower Lobe Galley Ovens as Space Heaters, and 1-76-1, In-Flight Lavatory Fires).

This bulletin addresses the need for certificate holders to review their approved training programs and flight attendant manuals to ensure that the procedures used by individual operators properly address the concerns expressed in this bulletin.

- a. Crewmember emergency training requires certificate holders to give instruction in the handling of emergency situations which includes potential fire problems related to electrical equipment and circuit breakers.
 - (1) On some aircraft, electrical equipment and related circuit breakers are located in cabin areas including all galleys, service centers, lifts, lavatories, and movie/video centers.
 - (2) Training on the location, function, and related safety procedures for electrical equipment and circuit breakers should focus on eliminating a problem before it becomes a safety hazard.
- b. Some inflight fire incidents have been reported involving the storage of paper products, napkins, plastic or styrofoam cups, plastic stir sticks, or manuals in galley ovens. The use of galley ovens for other than designated purposes poses a potential safety hazard.
 - (1) Paper, plastic, or cloth products stored in ovens may easily ignite and are difficult to extinguish. Galley ovens used in this manner have been turned on and caused a fire and dense smoke.
 - (2) Many types of plastic or styrofoam cups and glasses are virtually fireproof; however, some are easily ignited and difficult to extinguish. Since many certificate holders serve beverages in throwaway plastic or styrofoam cups and glasses, inflight fire hazards can be reduced by discouraging use of the highly flammable types.
- c. The use of galley ovens as heaters has been reported and one incident resulted in a wide-body aircraft diversion due to a cockpit indication of a lower lobe galley fire.
 - (1) Post landing inspection by maintenance personnel revealed no evidence of a fire and no malfunction of the smoke detection system. Further investigation indicated that all ovens were on and that the oven doors were open in an attempt to heat the lower lobe galley area. Some food particles which had been left in one of the ovens started to smoke and activated the alarm in the cockpit. In addition to the

unnecessary diversion, schedule disruption and consequent public inconvenience, the open oven doors and exposed hot ovens presented unnecessary safety hazards.

- d. A number of inflight fires and smoke detector activations have been attributed to persons dropping smoking materials into lavatory waste containers. Parts 121 and 135 of the Federal Aviation Regulations (FAR) were amended in 1988 affecting smoking aboard aircraft. Some of the changes to these rules are:
 - (1) Smoking is prohibited in any aircraft lavatory at all times;
 - (2) Aircraft lavatories must have placards which notify passengers that tampering with smoke detectors is prohibited by Public Law;
 - (3) The required passenger briefing must include detailed instructions on smoking bans; and
 - (4) Certificate holders should have procedures in their crewmember manuals and training programs to ensure that all crewmembers are aware of the requirements and of what actions to take regarding the smoking ban regulations.

- e. Principal operations inspectors (POI) should assure that their assigned certificate holders are aware of the potential safety hazards involved in the areas discussed in this bulletin. POI's should review their assigned certificate holders flight attendant training programs to assure that all crewmembers receive practical training in firefighting techniques and that the operator manuals contain adequate procedures for these subjects.