



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

# InFO

Information for Operators

InFO 19010  
DATE: 9/23/19

Flight Standards Service  
Washington, DC

**[http://www.faa.gov/other\\_visit/aviation\\_industry/airline\\_operators/airline\\_safety/info](http://www.faa.gov/other_visit/aviation_industry/airline_operators/airline_safety/info)**

*An InFO contains valuable information for operators that should help them meet certain administrative, regulatory, or operational requirements with relatively low urgency or impact on safety.*

**Subject:** Flight Deck Door Opening Procedures While Inflight.

**Purpose:** This InFO serves to emphasize the importance of following flight deck door opening procedures while inflight for the safety and security of Title 14 of the Code of Federal Regulations (14 CFR) part 121 Operations.

**Background:** It has been 18 years since the tragic events of 9/11, following which industry, the American public, the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) and the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) collaborated to put into place layers of security to prevent further tragedies. One of the most prominent and effective layers put into place is the hardened flight deck door.

**Discussion:** The flight deck door is designed to keep all unauthorized persons out of the flight deck while inflight. The only time the flight deck is potentially accessible during flight is when the door is opened. The three main reasons a door is opened during flight are for crew change outs, restroom breaks and meal service. To mitigate these vulnerabilities, airlines have approved flight deck door opening procedures. The regulatory basis for these procedures are found in §121.547 (Admission to flight deck), §121.584 (Requirement to view the area outside the flight deck door), and §121.587 (Closing and locking of flightcrew compartment door).

Repeated successful door operations and lack of nefarious breaches of the flight deck during flight operations since 9/11 could lead crews to be less attentive to their approved procedures. To address this concern, and in order to continue to prevent unauthorized access to the flight deck while inflight, the FAA is asking Part 121 operators to review established procedures and re-emphasize the importance of remaining vigilant while conducting flight deck door opening procedures.

Reinforced messaging on proper flight deck door security procedures is needed in light of continued passenger incidents in and around the cockpit door involving mistaking the flight deck door for the lavatory, intoxication incidents, or mental instability episodes. In addition, the anniversary of 9/11 serves as a good reminder that hostile actors present an ongoing safety and security risk to airline operations and these hostile actors may still pursue hijack planning involving an attempt to gain unauthorized entry to the flight deck. Each of the above-mentioned concerns can be deterred and mitigated by maintaining proper security procedures and remaining vigilant during the opening and closing of the flight deck door during flight operations.

**Recommended Action:** Directors of Operations and Safety for Part 121 operations should communicate this message and the importance of vigilance while conducting flight deck door opening procedures while inflight. In addition, ask crewmembers to review all company procedures for opening the flight deck door while in flight.

**Contact:** Questions or comments regarding this communication should be directed to the Air Transportation Division, at (202) 267-4147.