NOTICE

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION

N 8900.456

National Policy

Effective Date:
03/23/18

Cancellation Date:
03/23/19

SUBJ: Emergency Order of Prohibition Pertaining to "Doors-Off" Flight Operations for Compensation or Hire

1. Purpose of this Notice. This notice informs inspectors of the issuance of the Emergency Order of Prohibition, Order No. FAA-2018-0243, which prohibits the use of supplemental passenger restraint systems that cannot be released quickly in an emergency during flight operations for compensation or hire with the doors open or removed (hereinafter, "doors-off flights" or "doors-off flight operations"). The order is applicable to operators and pilots who conduct "doors-off" flights for compensation or hire. Additionally, the order prohibits passenger-carrying "doors-off" operations for compensation or hire unless the passengers are at all times properly secured using Federal Aviation Administration (FAA)-approved restraints. The order was effective immediately upon issuance.

2. Audience. The primary audience for this notice is principal inspectors (PI), aviation safety inspectors (ASI), and aviation safety technicians (AST) in Safety Assurance offices. The secondary audience includes Flight Standards Service (FS) branches and divisions in Safety Standards.

3. Where Can I Find This Notice? You can find this notice on the MyFAA employee website at https://employees.faa.gov/tools_resources/orders_notices. Inspectors can access this notice through the Flight Standards Information Management System (FSIMS) at http://fsims.avs.faa.gov. Operators can find this notice on the FAA's website at http://fsims.faa.gov. This notice is available to the public at http://www.faa.gov/regulations_policies/orders_notices.

4. Background. Based on the reliable and credible information derived from an initial investigation into a fatal March 11, 2018 helicopter accident in the East River near New York City, New York, the Acting Administrator has determined an emergency exists related to safety in air commerce. The investigation has found that while operating a "doors-off" flight, all passengers were wearing a non-FAA-approved supplemental passenger restraint system provided by the operator of the flight. While intended as a safety measure when the aircraft was in flight, these supplemental passenger restraint systems may have prevented the passengers' ability to quickly egress from the aircraft after the accident. While the accident on March 11, 2018 involved an aircraft ditching in water, passengers could face a similar hazard in other emergency situations, such as an aircraft fire on the ground.

5. Action.

a. All ASIs and ASTs who have oversight responsibility of operators or pilots that conduct "doors-off" flights for compensation or hire are required to immediately convey the information contained in the Emergency Order of Prohibition, Order No. FAA-2018-0243, to those operators or pilots. Pilots and operators must cease the conduct of "doors-off" operations for compensation or hire with the use of supplemental passenger restraint systems, unless the supplemental passenger restraint system has been installed on the aircraft pursuant to an FAA approval, including a Type Certificate, Supplemental Type Certificate, or as an approved major alteration using FAA Form 337.

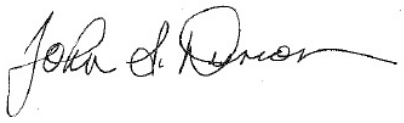
b. If an approval was previously granted by an FAA Form 337 or if an operator requests a new approval, the inspector or technician must coordinate with the Aircraft Certification Service to ensure the restraint system is properly evaluated prior to use. Please coordinate with the FAA Aircraft Certification Service, Policy and Innovation Division at (817) 222-5100.

c. Additionally, inspectors and technicians should ensure that procedures are in place to ensure that all passenger-carrying "doors-off" operations for compensation or hire are prohibited unless the passengers are at all times properly using FAA-approved restraints.

d. If an ASI or AST discovers any additional "doors-off" operations for compensation or hire during the course of routine surveillance, he or she must convey the information contained in the Emergency Order of Prohibition, Order No. FAA-2018-0243, to that operator or pilot.

6. Consequences of Failure to Comply with this Order. As in any situation involving non-compliance, inspectors and technicians are reminded to utilize the FAA Compliance Philosophy as detailed in FAA Order 8000.373. For operators or pilots that are unwilling or unable to comply with the Emergency Order of Prohibition, inspectors and technicians should be aware that those operators or pilots may be subject to a civil penalty or certificate action for violation of this order, as stated in the "Consequences of Failure to Comply with this Order" section of the order.

7. Disposition. We will incorporate the information in this notice into FAA Order 8900.1 before this notice expires. Direct questions concerning the information in this notice to the Air Transportation Division (AFS-200) at (202) 267-8166.



John S. Duncan
Executive Director, Flight Standards Service