
SUBJECT: ATA 03, 25, 26, 50 – CARGO TRANSPORTATION IN THE CABIN

OUR REF.: 999.0028/20 Rev 00 dated 30-MAR-2020

CLASSIFICATION: General information

APPLICABLE AIRCRAFT: This FOT is applicable to A300, A300-600, A310, A318, A319, A320, A321, A330, A340, A350, A380, AST

Notice: This FOT provides general flight operations information. It is left to each Operator’s discretion whether to distribute this FOT, or to distribute the information contained in this FOT, to all of their applicable flight crews for information.

0. REFERENCES

Regulations associated with transportation of cargo in the Cabin (Passenger compartment) are specified by the EASA in AMC2.CAT.OP.MPA.160 (carriage of cargo in the passenger compartment) and FAA 14 CFR 121.285.

The transportation of cargo on passenger seats using cargo seat bags is addressed by the EASA in CM–CS–003 Issue 01 (Installation of “Cargo Seat Bags” on Passenger Seats) and related Special Conditions (Proposed Special Condition on Installation of Cargo Seat Bags - Applicable to Large Aircraft)

The floor loading limits of the aircraft cabin floor are provided in the Weight and Balance Manual (WBM):

- Chapter CTL-LIM-CAB-FLL for A320, A330/340 and A350 families
- Chapter 1-10-80 and 1-10-90 for A380
- Chapter 1-10-04 for A300/A300-600

1. PURPOSE / INTRODUCTION

Due to the COVID-19 crisis, the passenger transportation by air has drastically decreased. In the meantime the demand for cargo transport rapidly increases. Combined with the natural cargo capabilities of the Airbus aircraft, the passenger compartments offer a significant additional loading capacity for pure cargo operations. This message is to provide operators with the Airbus position and general guidance on carrying cargo in the cabin (Passenger compartment).

It will be followed by webinars (see Section 3) in order to share the Airbus action plan for support of cargo operations on passenger decks.
2. DESCRIPTION

2.1 Transport of cargo in approved stowage locations of the cabin

In line with the referenced regulations, Operators may transport cargo in the cabin as long as the cargo is placed in the approved stowage locations within the passenger compartment as described below.

2.1.1 Stowage locations approved to transport cargo in the Cabin

The approved stowage locations to transport the cargo in the cabin are as follows:
- Overhead stowage bins,
- Stowage compartments,
- Floor mounted stowage (e.g. doghouses),
- Bulkheads that have a placard indicating maximum capacity,
- Under seat stowage areas.

2.1.2 Stowage locations not approved to transport cargo in the cabin

The following locations are not approved to transport the cargo in the cabin
- Lavatories,
- Crew Rest Compartments,
- Bulkheads that are incapable of restraining the items from movement,
- All locations that are identified with placards ‘No Stowage’.

2.1.3 Requirements to be met to transport cargo in the cabin

The following requirements shall be met for cargo to be transported in the cabin:

a) The cargo shall be placed only in the approved stowage locations (Section 2.1.1 of this memo) and the cargo shall NOT be placed in the stowage locations that are not approved (Section 2.1.2 of this memo).

b) As per the EASA AMC2.CAT.OP.MPA.160 the Operator should not transport dangerous goods in the cabin. The Operator must comply with the latest ICAO technical instructions and IATA dangerous goods regulations.

c) For the bulkheads that have a placard indicating maximum capacity, the cargo items stowed in these bulkheads shall not exceed the maximum capacity indicated in the placard.

d) The maximum capacity limitations in the placards (on or adjacent to the cargo approved stowage locations – Section 2.1.1 of this memo) shall not be exceeded. All stowage limits specified in the placards apply.

e) The mass of the cargo shall not exceed the structural loading limits of the floor or seats, published in the Limitation chapter of the Weight and Balance Manual (WBM).

f) The cargo placed in enclosed stowage areas shall not be of such size that they prevent latched doors from being closed securely.

g) The cargo items shall be stowed only in a location that is capable of restraining it.

h) The cargo stowage location shall be such that, in the event of an emergency evacuation, it will not hinder aisle access and egress.

i) The cargo shall not be placed where it can impede access to emergency equipment.

j) The cargo shall be checked to ensure proper stowage in the following instances (at the minimum):
   - Before take-off,
   - Before landing,
• Under orders of the Pilot in command.

k) The aisles shall remain free of cargo to enable access to the seats and the goods in case of smoke or fire.

l) Trained crew shall be on-board to survey and access all areas of the cabin during all flight phases. Any smoke/ fire within the cabin must be easily detected and effectively managed using the existing emergency equipment. Specific details must be coordinated with local regulatory authorities.

m) For ‘Under seat stowage’, the seat shall be equipped with a restraint bar system and the cargo items shall be placed fully underneath the seat. The loading of the cargo under each seat should not exceed 9 kg (20 lbs).

n) The cargo packaging shall be able to equalize the pressure so that it can handle the Delta Pressure (DP) during the flight.

o) All smoke and fire detectors shall be maintained as per Maintenance Manual instructions.

p) The Air Conditioning system shall be configured according to the nature of the cargo and/or crew member on board.

q) The calculation of the aircraft weight & center of gravity must be adapted according to the cargo loaded in the cabin.

2.2 Transport of cargo on the passenger seats

The EASA does not provide any Certification Specifications for the transportation of cargo on passenger seats. The EASA considers this as a Major Change and approval is required.

Airbus is currently working on an approved fast-track solution, including applicable procedures and documentation. More information, including date of availability, will be provided during upcoming webinars (See section 3).

Operators willing to proceed before the Airbus solution is available must coordinate with their local regulatory authority to ensure the compliance with the applicable regulatory restrictions (cargo type, fire suppression, smoke detection, etc.).

Note: The EASA has published a guidance material on the installation of cargo seat bags in the CM–CS–003 Issue 01 (Installation of “Cargo Seat Bags” on Passenger Seats) and related Special Conditions (Proposed Special Condition on Installation of Cargo Seat Bags - Applicable to Large Aircraft).

All of the following requirements shall be met for cargo to be transported on the passenger compartment seats:

a) The Operator must comply with the requirements defined in sections 2.1.3 b) to q).

b) The load should be evenly distributed across the seat row. The loading on each seat should not exceed 77 kg (170 lbs) in the case of cargo transportation.

c) The vertical center of gravity (CG) of the cargo must be equal to or lower than the passenger CG of the seat, provided by the current seat supplier.

d) The cargo shall be adequately restrained and the restraints must be attached to the existing seat belt or to the seat itself.

e) All other safety requirements (regulatory, flammability, fire suppression, flight operations, payloads, etc.) shall be met.

2.3 Transport of cargo on the passenger compartment floor after removal of the seats

The EASA does not provide any Certification Specifications for the transportation of cargo stowed on the passenger cabin floor after removal of the seats. The EASA and Airbus consider this as a Major change and approval is required.
Airbus is currently working on an approved fast-track solution, including applicable procedures and documentation. More information, including date of availability, will be provided during upcoming webinars (See section 3).

Operators willing to proceed before the Airbus solution is available must coordinate with their local regulatory authority to ensure the compliance with the applicable regulatory restrictions (cargo type, fire suppression, smoke detection, etc.).

2.4 Ad-Hoc operation considerations

The carriage of cargo in the cabin is not currently deemed as “normal operation” and therefore falls into the category of “ad-hoc operations” (e.g. Ferry flights) which require specific procedures that can only be defined by each individual operator and requires final approval by the local airworthiness authority.

It is the Operators responsibility to implement procedures that must be included in flight operations manuals and adhered to by the operating crew. Airbus is not in a position to provide specific rules, regulations and procedures on such ad-hoc operations.

Operators may operate the carriage of cargo in different ways, which cannot be individually addressed by Airbus, and therefore should only be addressed by the local aviation authority.

3. FOLLOW-UP PLAN

This FOT will be followed by webinars in order to share the Airbus action plan for support of cargo operations on passenger decks:
- Thursday 2nd April 2020 at 07:00 UTC time
- Thursday 2nd April 2020 at 14:00 UTC time

Note: Further details and electronic invitations will be sent shortly

For any questions about the operational content of this FOT, please use TechRequest on AirbusWorld.

Best regards,

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