

Legislative amendments on air transport of dangerous goods to be gazetted on Friday

Legislative amendments which seek to implement the latest requirements of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) for the safe transport of dangerous goods (DGs) by air will be gazetted on Friday (December 6) and tabled in the Legislative Council on December 11.

A spokesman for the Transport and Housing Bureau said today (December 4) that the Air Navigation (Hong Kong) Order 1995 (Amendment of Schedule 16) Order 2019 and the Dangerous Goods (Consignment by Air) (Safety) Regulations (Amendment of Schedule) Order 2019 serve to incorporate the ICAO's latest requirements in the local legislation. Such requirements are set out in a new edition (i.e. the 2019-2020 edition) of the ICAO's Technical Instructions for the Safe Transport of Dangerous Goods by Air.

The major changes introduced by the new edition of the Technical Instructions include:

(a) The definition of DGs has been refined as "articles or substances which are capable of posing a hazard to health, safety, property or the environment and which are shown in the list of dangerous goods in the Technical Instructions or which are classified according to those Instructions". Consequent upon this change, aircraft and airport operators, shippers and freight forwarders shall review and update their DGs handling procedures and relevant manuals as appropriate;

(b) Passengers and crew are forbidden to carry DGs on board an aircraft unless the DGs are permitted and specified in the Technical Instructions. The Technical Instructions have incorporated new types of DGs introduced due to technological advancement, for example smart luggage with a built-in lithium battery; and

(c) The latest edition of the Technical Instructions has incorporated some changes to the technical requirements for the safe transport of DGs by air, including the classification, packing, marking and labelling of certain kinds of DGs, for example a new segregation requirement in packing lithium batteries such that no other flammable items should be packed together with the lithium batteries.

"The aviation industry has been consulted and generally supports the legislative proposals," the spokesperson said.

The target commencement date for the above legislative amendments is January 31, 2020.

DGs, in the context of air transport, include explosives, compressed

gas, flammable liquids, flammable solids, oxidising substances, toxic substances, infectious substances, radioactive materials and corrosives.