

Cross-border air transport of energy storage batteries





Overview

Are batteries a problem in air transport?

With the rapid growth in global demand for battery-powered products and the shift toward net-zero carbon emissions, air transport faces new challenges in handling and shipping batteries safely. From electric vehicles (EVs) to e-bikes, the increasing shipment of batteries poses potential risks not only to aircraft but also to passengers and crew.

What types of batteries can be transported by air?

You will encounter two main types when transporting lithium batteries by air: lithium ion batteries and lithium metal batteries. Lithium ion batteries, often used in consumer electronics like laptops and smartphones, are rechargeable and have a typical energy density of 160–270Wh/kg for NMC Lithium battery and 180–230Wh/kg for LCO Lithium battery.

Does IATA have a battery guidance document?

To assist shippers in understanding the complete requirements related to the transport of batteries including lithium and sodium ion batteries, IATA has prepared an updated Battery Guidance Document (pdf).

Are lithium batteries safe in air cargo?

Failure to comply may result in shipment rejection or legal action. These regulations help you safely ship lithium batteries and reduce fire risks in air cargo. Always use UN 38.3 certified lithium batteries and follow IATA packaging and labeling rules to ensure safe and legal air shipment.



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