



**Agenda Item 2: Global and regional civil aviation requirements and challenges**

**ENHANCED USE OF PORTABLE ELECTRONIC DEVICES**

(Presented by the United States)

**SUMMARY**

This working paper provides details of the United States' Federal Aviation Administration's (FAA) efforts to safely expand passenger use of Portable Electronic Devices (PEDs) during all phases of flight.

**Action:** The Meeting is invited to note the information provided in this paper, and consider using FAA guidance to expand PED usage in other States.

**Reference:**

- <http://www.faa.gov/about/initiatives/ped>

**ICAO Strategic  
Objectives:**

*A - Safety*

*C - Environmental Protection and Sustainable  
Development of Air Transport*

**1. Introduction**

1.1 A Portable Electronic Device (PED) is any piece of lightweight, electrically-powered equipment. These devices are typically consumer electronic devices capable of communications, data processing and/or utility. Examples range from handheld, lightweight electronic devices such as tablets, e-readers, and smartphones to small devices such as MP3 players and electronic toys.

1.2 The FAA recognized the increasing consumer interest in the expanded use of personal electronic devices on airplanes and decided to reconsider when passengers can use the latest technologies safely during a flight.

1.3 On October 31, 2013, FAA Administrator Michael Huerta announced that the FAA has determined that airlines can safely expand passenger use of PEDs during all phases of flight, and is immediately providing the airlines with implementation guidance. Due to differences among fleets and operations, the implementation will vary among airlines, but the agency expects many carriers will prove to the FAA that their planes allow passengers to safely use their devices in airplane mode, gate-to-gate, by the end of the year.

## 2. **Discussion**

2.1 The PEDs Aviation Rulemaking Committee (ARC) began work on January 7, 2013, to determine if it is safe to allow more widespread use of electronic devices in today's aircraft. The group was also asked to review the public's comments in response to an August 2012 FAA notice on current policy, guidance, and procedures that aircraft operators use when determining if passengers can use PEDs. The group did not consider the use of electronic devices for voice communications during flight because Federal Communications Commission (FCC) regulations prohibit any airborne calls using cell phones.

2.2 The group was comprised of experts from stakeholder organizations including the airlines, aviation manufacturers, passengers, pilots, flight attendants, and mobile technology advocates/manufacturers. The group's goal was to determine whether the use of electronic devices in today's aircraft could safely be expanded, make sure tomorrow's aircraft designs are protected from interference, and make a recommendation to the FAA administrator based on that determination.

2.3 The PED ARC concluded most commercial airplanes can tolerate radio interference signals from PEDs. It recommended that the FAA provide airlines with new procedures to assess if their airplanes can tolerate radio interference from PEDs. Once an airline verifies the tolerance of its fleet, it can allow passengers to PEDs at all altitudes. In rare instances of low-visibility, the crew will instruct passengers to turn off their devices during landing. The group also recommended that heavier devices should be safely stowed under seats or in overhead bins during takeoff and landing.

2.4 The FAA is streamlining the approval of expanded PED use by giving airlines updated, clear guidance. This FAA tool will help airlines assess the risks of potential PED-induced avionics problems for their airplanes and specific operations. Airlines will evaluate avionics as well as changes to stowage rules and passenger announcements. Each airline will also need to revise manuals, checklists for crewmember training materials, carry-on baggage programs and passenger briefings before expanding use of PEDs. Each airline will determine how and when they will allow passengers broader use of PEDs.

2.5 The FAA did not consider changing the regulations regarding the use of cell phones for voice communications during flight because the issue is under the jurisdiction of the FCC. The ARC did recommend that the FAA consult with the FCC to review its current rules. Cell phones differ from most PEDs in that they are designed to send out signals strong enough to be received at great distances

## 3. **Conclusion**

3.1 The FAA is immediately giving airlines a clear path to safely expand PED use by passengers and the Administrator will evaluate the rest of the ARC's longer-term recommendations and respond at a later date. For more information on FAA's PED policy, please see FAA's website (<http://www.faa.gov/about/initiatives/ped/>).

## 4. **Suggested action**

4.1 The Meeting is invited to:

- a) note the information provided in this paper; and
- b) consider using FAA guidance if expanding PED use in other States.