



Dangerous Goods - Transporting Cars

Issue 6 - June 2014

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Breaches of Dangerous Goods Regulations

A medical goods supplier was recently fined £3,000 plus costs for breaching international dangerous goods regulations by trying to send four lithium manganese dioxide battery packs, to a customer without using an approved container or marking, or declaring the shipment as containing dangerous goods. Lithium batteries are a known DG and risk to safety when incorrectly packaged and have been responsible for several aircraft fires.

One of the more unusual items classified as Dangerous Goods are cars and despite the high cost of transporting them by airplane, many people across the world choose to transport their cars by air every year.

So just why is a everyday item like a car considered as Dangerous Goods when being flown on board any aircraft?



Remember at 35000ft and loaded in an 'inaccessible' hold (cannot be reached during flight) of an aircraft, there are parts of a car that can react totally different at high altitude compared to being on the ground. The pressure on all components is dramatically changed and if the relevant precautions / DG checks are not completed before flight there is a strong possibility there could be some sort of reaction. The car battery must be disconnected as this is one of the car's power source - the

Another company has also received a fine of £5,000 for sending an incorrectly packaged oxygen generator by air to the US. Like Lithium batteries, chemical generators have also been known to cause fatal crashes.

More information?

For comprehensive information from IATA on the Dangerous Goods Regulations visit their website:

www.iata.org



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petrol cap should be removed and petrol drained to avoid the chances of gases building inside the petrol tank causing possible explosion. Tyres too must be deflated as these can swell at altitude if considerable pressure is left in a tyre - it could explode. Brake fluid, power steering fluid are all liquids that could react if an incident occurs during flight.

Imagine the consequences too if other DG cargo is loaded in the same hold - any one of these could potentially create a major incident in the air. Nothing can be done until that aircraft lands - the nearest airport / landing space may be minutes, even hours away.

Once all these checks have been made the car is then built for the flight - remember - If cargo fits on an aircraft - airlines will fly it providing all the rules are adhered to - that means maybe 'floating a car over 2 positions - so not secured by standard lateral aircraft ULD positions because the car is too big and may damage the aircraft fuselage but instead secured by means of straps secured to floor of the aircraft in a longitude direction (facing forwards). These straps are secured against the what is known as 'Forces in the air' upward - sideways movements - downwards supported by floor of aircraft - Upwards is the greater force so double the lashing / straps are used for this compared to sideways. Once you know the gross weight of cargo and the breaking capacity of equipment used you can then calculate how many straps to use - it can be many depending on the weight of the cargo.

This is where training for cargo handlers is vitally important. If in any doubt - always over lash cargo - better to add one/two more straps to a load than not. There is specialised equipment available to be able to load any kind of cargo providing it fits on the aircraft. Here you see Automobile tie - down straps securing the car in all directions should the aircraft hit turbulence of any kind. This is the correct way to lash a car.



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Sadly there are instances where correct loading of such cargo has not been completed - there is simply not enough tie-down equipment used to stop these cars moving in flight.

Such 'Special loads' would be checked at aircraft side and offloaded immediately if the Pilot in Command was not happy as these loads now effectively become his responsibility.

About Hermes Logistics Technologies

inbuilt expertise
Hermes

HERMES is an IT Solution designed specifically for the Air Cargo industry. With over 200 years of combined Air Cargo Handling experience, the HERMES Cargo Team have developed a robust, comprehensive & flexible solution, currently used by Airlines, Hubs, Ground Handlers and Airports whose operations control cargo volumes from 10,000 to in excess of 1,500,000 metric tons per annum.