IPA Position on Lithium Battery Transportation

IPA recommends the following measures as the next steps in the process of addressing the issue and developing methods for safely transporting Lithium-ion batteries by air.

1). Repeal the 2012 language in the FAA Reauthorization Act prohibiting FAA from implementing new regulations exceeding ICAO regulatory language/standards.

2). The US Senate should incorporate report language into upcoming legislation directing the FAA to develop in partnership with a 3rd party entity with expertise in battery science; processes to:

- Analyze and document specific battery chemistries for the likelihood of preventing cell-to-cell propagation (e.g. ICAO 30% state of charge)

- Observe the manufacturing process to ensure that bulk shipments of cells are manufactured at the proper state of charge.

- Label those packages with a unique RFID tag that will identify the manufacturer, date produced and battery cell state of charge.

- Enter information from the RFID label into a secure database accessible to airlines, customs and law enforcement.

- Report back within 1 year.

(Note: the process described above identifies batteries safe for transport by air, provides quick identification of counterfeit products and provides solid useable data for airlines to use in their Safety Management System Risk Assessment Program.)

3). Develop technologies necessary to permit the exclusive use of Fire Resistant Containers (FRC) with integrated suppression/detection systems for all cargo aircraft.

4). Prohibit bulk shipments of lithium-metal batteries onboard aircraft. (Create an approval process for small quantity medical device exceptions.)