Lessons Learned: Case Studies of Recent In-flight Battery-related Incidents

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Thirty four battery-related incidents have been reported to the FAA since February 2007. Often resulting in fires, the National Transportation Safety Board has investigated or assisted in the investigation several of these incidents. Through investigation of these events, battery types and battery package handling seem to play a large role in the causation of these events. In this presentation, three general types of battery-related incidents and resultant fires will be discussed: passenger cabin incidents, baggage and baggage hold incidents, and cargo incidents. In one case, battery handling associated with audio equipment in an overhead bin caused an in-flight fire on a Jet Blue Boeing 737 in February 2007. Other recent battery incidents will also be discussed. The presentation will highlight the following issues: 1) common types of batteries involved in these incidents; 2) common initiating events; 3) crew response; and 4) lessons learned from these incidents.

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