

MODEL AERONAUTICAL ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA



TRAVELLING WITH MODEL AIRCRAFT ADVISORY

MOP033

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This Advisory forms part of the MAAA Manual of Procedures. This entire document is for the use of all classes of members of the MAAA in the conduct of activities associated with the MAAA and is not be used for any other purpose, in whole or in part, without the written approval of the MAAA Executive.

The MAAA acknowledges the assistance received from the Qantas Dangerous Goods department in producing this advisory.

TRAVELLING WITH MODEL AIRCRAFT ADVISORY

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 With the introduction of more stringent world-wide security measures for airline travel in recent years, associated difficulties have increased for members travelling with their model aircraft and equipment, when attending both international and domestic competitions.
- 1.2 This document aims to assist MAAA members with information and assistance in an effort to reduce some of the difficulties that may be encountered when travelling with model aircraft on full size aircraft.
- 1.3 This document holds no official status with any airlines. All it does is to try to identify areas where advice may be of assistance to members. The final decision will be made by the Airline and their security.
- 1.4 The MAAA is not in a position nor does it have the expertise, to provide definite procedures in the case of Dangerous Goods.
 - IATA deems that some items of equipment contained within model aircraft airframes can be Dangerous Goods and need to be dealt with in accordance with the Dangerous Goods regulations.
 - The requirements within the Dangerous Goods regulations are constantly changing.
 - The Dangerous Goods Regulations appear not to be available for general viewing on the internet without purchasing them, although Dangerous Goods permitted to be carried by Passengers and Crew are listed on the various airline websites.
 - The airline being used should be contacted and will provide guidance in all aspects of shipping models by air with them. Each airline varies with what they will or will not allow to be moved as checked baggage and carry on luggage.
- 1.5 The information contained in this document is accurate to the best of our knowledge. However, airline security procedures continue to change regularly, based on security alerts, so no amount of advice will work in every case.

2. DEFINITIONS

Affiliate Member	A person properly affiliated with a Club that is properly affiliated with an MAAA Ordinary Member.
Dangerous Goods.....	Items listed within the IATA Dangerous Goods Manual
IATA	The <i>International Air Transport Association (IATA)</i> is an international industry trade group of airlines headquartered in Montreal, Canada.
MAAA	Model Aeronautical Association of Australia Inc.
MAAA Ordinary Member...	A State Association properly affiliated with MAAA Inc.

3. ADVICE FOR TRAVELLING WITH MODEL AIRCRAFT ON AIRLINES

- 3.1 Once you know the carrier that you are proposing to use contact them, either in person or through their web site, to determine the regulations that might be applicable to the items that you will be carrying.
- 3.2 Contact your carrier well in advance of your travel date, explaining what you desire to transport, the size and any other information they may require. Their reply should contain details of how it will be handled and packed as well as the specific contact for the airline. Ask them to put something in writing that pre-approves the transportation of your models and equipment. If obtained, carry several copies of the letter with you at all times. Be sure to let them know that you agree to have the containers hand inspected at any time. At times, it will be difficult to find the right person to do this for you, but be persistent (nicely though) and you should get to the right person eventually. This will normally be someone in the airline's Dangerous Goods Department.
- 3.3 If at all possible ship your models and equipment in advance. While more expensive and cumbersome, this eliminates having to travel with them and worrying about security and possible delays.
- 3.4 Models should be packed in strong, but light shipping containers. Many members have built or had built custom containers such as those used to transport electronic equipment. Handles should be built into the case. You don't want to give handlers a reason to use a forklift or something like that if at all possible. Make the cases easy to open for inspection. Do not screw the lid down. The lid should be hinged and hasps designed for this purpose used to secure the lid. 'Travel Locks' which Security can access are available.
- 3.5 Make your shipping/transportation container (and models) as small as possible. Break the model down into its smallest possible size. If building new, construct the model to break down (yes, we know that is easier said than done, but consider the alternatives). Build a smaller model if at all possible. Airlines are now very vigilant about excess baggage charges and you could face high costs to transport your equipment. You are not going to get a coffin size model box on an aircraft any longer! If, by some quirk of fate you do, you will pay a huge sum of money for the privilege. Extra time spent during construction will save you money and lots of

headaches later on. All checked baggage will be subject to explosive detection screening. Large model boxes may not fit inside the x-ray or EDS (Explosive Detection Systems) machines. Again this will mean hand inspection, which can raise more questions. Our best information at the time of drafting this document is that most EDS equipment can handle items less than one metre wide.

- 3.6 Fuel tanks, engines fuel lines and batteries are items that are usually important considerations within Dangerous Goods regulations.
- 3.7 Be sure you do not have anything with you that could be considered a weapon. The list of these items change regularly but the airlines are serious with security. Scissors, nail clippers and other normally benign items have all been confiscated by airport security personnel. Refer to the information provided by the airline you are travelling with.
- 3.8 Clearly mark the outside of all your shipping containers with your name and address. Also mark the container "Fragile Model Aircraft", "This Way Up" etc. If travelling to, or transiting through, a non-English speaking country, it is highly recommended that the messages are also in the language of these countries. The use of the international symbols is also recommended.
- 3.9 Give the transportation officials all of the information they ask for willingly. Be open and honest about your containers and what they contain.
- 3.10 Do not make any kind of fuss or become irate with airline or security personnel. They have the final say and a 'No' could be almost impossible to change. It can also be considered "suspicious behaviour", making you subject to arrest or armed escort off airport property. Airlines are serious about security. Models, while not illegal, are just strange enough that they could be considered a risk, making it easy for a screener or gate agent to simply say it cannot go, rather than making a hard decision which could be criticised severely after the event.
- 3.11 Be aware that agreements on special shipping deals for your model boxes made when purchasing your tickets, will be generally unknown when returning home. It is quite possible that you will be handled by personnel from a different airline to the one you booked with. If you are able to get special deals for excess baggage etc. make every effort to get documentation (as official as possible) from the airlines that you are travelling on or booked with.
- 3.12 Include a "Statement by the Owner of the Equipment in this Baggage" in the model box so that it is easily seen if the box is opened for inspection. A suggestion as to the format and content of such a statement is shown in Appendix "B". It is essential that you are aware of what you are saying in this document so that you can reply sensibly to questions if asked about the regulations you are saying you understand. This information is available on the Internet or can be obtained from the airlines directly. Please make up your own letter based on this suggested text.
- 3.13 Alternatively, for large boxes, shipping by sea well in advance as an alternative could prove to be cheaper but have similar Dangerous Goods requirements applying.
- 3.14 Obtain from the MAAA Federal Secretary a letter that describes who you are, where you are going and why, and that you are transporting model aircraft for this purpose. Contact the MAAA Secretary with this request at least thirty days prior to travelling. An example of this letter is shown in Appendix "A".

MAAA Letterhead & Contact Details

To Whom It May Concern:

The person presenting this letter to you,, is a member of the Australian Model Aircraft Team travelling either to, or returning from the held in over the period

This contest is conducted under the auspices of the Federation Aeronautique Internationale (FAI), the world sport aviation organisation with headquarters at: Avenue Mon-Repos 24, CH-1005 Lausanne Switzerland. Their phone number is +41 21 345 1070 and web site www.fai.org

In his possession (as checked baggage) is a model aircraft used for competition, various small tools and accessories and other associated items. Please find below a statement by the owner of this equipment that he is aware of the regulations involving the transportation of equipment on aircraft and that none of the items in his possession are hazardous.

The Model Aeronautical Association of Australia (MAAA) is the sole representative for aeromodelling activities in Australia and is recognized by the Australian Civil Aviation Safety Authority (CASA) as an Approved Aviation Administration Organisation (AAAO) to administer model aviation activities in Australia. MAAA is a member of the Australian Sport Aviation Confederation (ASAC) the National Aeroclub of Australia. Through ASAC, MAAA is recognised by the Federation Aeronautique Internationale (FAI), the world governing body of all aviation sporting activity, as the only organization, which may direct Australian participation in international aeromodelling activities.

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MAAA Federal Secretary

Appendix "A"

Team Member's Contact Details

Statement by the Owner of the Equipment in this Baggage.

To Whom It May Concern:

I, AUS xxxx _____, being a Member of the Model Aeronautical Association of Australia, their office being at _____, phone number _____ and web site www.maaa.asn.au, present this letter to you as a Member of the Australian Team travelling either to, or returning from, the Model Aircraft _____ World Championships conducted in _____ over the period _____.

This championship is conducted under the auspices of the Federation Aeronautique Internationale (F.A.I.), the world sport aviation organisation with headquarters at Avenue Mon-Repos 24, CH-1005 Lausanne Switzerland. Their phone number is +41 21 345 1070 and web site www.fai.org

I am aware of the regulations involving the transportation of goods on aircraft. I hereby state that I am aware of the transport regulations of the airline and have read the conditions on their relevant documentation. The items in my possession do not contravene those conditions.

.....
AUS xxxx Team Member

Appendix "B"