

PED Technical Note

Context

1. The increasing use of Portable Electronic Devices (PEDs) such as mobile phones, electronic readers, tablet, Personal Computers (PCs), laptops, MP3 players etc. in the day to day life has led the Agency to re-assess its current PED policy. The Agency is committed to ensure a safe and harmonised approach on the extended use of PEDs by European airlines.

Agency Publications

2. The Agency has published on *9 December 2013* an Executive Director (ED) Decision, complemented by a Safety Information Bulletin (SIB).

3. The ED Decision (2013/028/R) now foresees that an operator may allow the use of non-transmitting PEDs during any phase of flight. Non-transmitting PEDs include all devices for which the transmitting functions (e.g. WLAN, mobile phone, Bluetooth) are disabled.

4. The SIB (2013-21) describes the elements to be considered by operators and authorities if envisaging an extended use of non-transmitting PEDs during all flight phases.

Applicability

5. Formally the ED Decision is linked to regulation which allows the EU Member States to opt out from harmonised EU rules until 18 October 2014. Therefore Member States may choose not to apply it until that date.

Process to allow the expanded use of non-transmitting PEDs

6. To be authorised to expand the use of PEDs, an **airline must follow the EASA guidance** as provided in the SIB and update its operational procedures in coordination with the Civil Aviation Authority having oversight of that airline. Before allowing the expanded use of non-transmitting PEDs on board, the SIB provides an number of **safety aspects to be considered**:

a) Interferences

The spurious emissions from PEDs and received by the aircraft antennae could potentially lead to misleading information. In particular, the following is explicitly recommended:

Passengers are currently required to **switch off the T-PED or to disable its transmitting functions** at the start of the flight when the passengers have boarded and all doors have been closed, until a passenger door has been opened at the end of the flight.

Low visibility operation interference risk should also be considered, if such operation is foreseen. PED use could lead to misleading undetected failures and EASA recommends not to allow PED operation during those phases unless a safety assessment has been made and dedicated mitigation strategies are in place.

b) PED stowage

PED Stowage should be considered during critical phases of flight (take-off, approach and landing) and taxiing to prevent possible injuries from projectiles and to allow for egress from the aircraft. Operators should clearly identify the phases of flight in which PEDs are to be stowed and determine suitable stowage locations, taking into account the PED's size and weight. Heavier PEDs should always be stowed during critical phases of flight and taxiing.

c) Passenger Briefing

The **passenger briefing** is important for providing information to passengers on the safety aspects, such as egress from the aircraft in case of an evacuation, demonstrations of safety and emergency equipment and aircraft systems, etc. It is recommended that PED distraction during the passenger safety briefing is avoided so that passengers' attention concentrates on the safety briefing and crew instructions.

Operators should provide general information on their PED policy to passengers before the flight. Communication to passengers should be clear and concise.

d) Operators procedures

Operators should reflect their changed procedures in the operations manual and brief or train flight crew, cabin crew and technical crew before an expanded use of PEDs is implemented. Such **procedures and crew members briefing** or training should specify:

- 1) PEDs that can/cannot be used on-board;
- 2) at which times PEDs are to be switched-off, can be turned on or can be in non-transmitting mode;
- 3) at which times PEDs can/cannot be used;
- 4) if, when, where and how PEDs are to be stowed;
- 5) to which aircraft/fleet this policy applies
- 6) continuous update on the PED market development as far as it concerns the operators PED policy.

e) Reporting

To monitor the application of the expanded use of PEDs, EASA recommends, that operators should **report PED events** to their competent authority. Such events could be linked to suspected or confirmed PED interference, passenger handling, smoke or fire caused by a PED.

Transmitting PEDs (T-PEDs):

7. Some aircraft are equipped with systems that enable controlled use of T-PEDs. The authorisation of these systems is outside the scope of the SIB.

8. It becomes more and more difficult to distinguish between devices being transmitting, having transmitting functions disabled or being non-transmitting at all. Therefore, EASA recommends to commercial air transport operators to **evaluate** their **aircraft as being T-PED resistant** considering the most commonly used transmitting technologies or to clearly communicate to passengers that T-PED use is still restricted.

9. The Agency reminds the airlines to **consider the applicable telecommunication regulations** before allowing the use of transmitting functions on-board aircraft.

Next steps

10. The Agency will start collecting feedback on the implementation of its new PED policy, with a view of updating the policy and the guidance material where necessary, by 4Q 2014. The possible use of T-PED during taxiing is also being assessed. In this perspective, an experimental trial phase is being conducted by the UK Civil Aviation Authority.