Beat: Technology

U.S. bans Samsung Galaxy Note 7 smartphones from air travel

TECHNOLOGY NEWS

Seoul, South Korea, 15.10.2016, 03:24 Time

USPA NEWS - Samsung Galaxy Note 7 smartphone devices will be banned from aircraft in the United States starting on Saturday at noon EDT (1600 GMT) under an emergency order, regulators said on Friday after numerous reports of the devices catching fire.

Samsung Electronics Co Ltd scrapped its flagship Galaxy Note 7 smartphone on Tuesday because of incidents where the phones began smoking or caught fire, dealing a huge blow to its reputation. The decision came after reports of fires in replacement devices prompted a new round of warnings from regulators, phone carriers and airlines.

The order from the U.S. Transportation Department and other agencies bars owners from carrying on the devices or stowing them in checked baggage during flights.
"We recognize that banning these phones from airlines will inconvenience some passengers, but the safety of all those aboard an aircraft must take priority," said Transportation Secretary Anthony Foxx.

"We are taking this additional step because even one fire incident inflight poses a high risk of severe personal injury and puts many lives at risk."

The Transportation Department warned that passengers who packed the devices in checked luggage raised the risk of "a catastrophic incident."
"Anyone violating the ban may be subject to criminal prosecution in addition to fines," the department said in a press statement.

The agency said that the phones might be confiscated from passengers attempting to take them onboard, and that people found onboard with the phones might face fines.

In another statement issued late Friday, the department clarified that owners who attempt to travel by air with Samsung Galaxy Note 7 devices would only be "denied boarding."

The world's largest phone maker this week said it was also expanding a U.S. recall of the fire-prone model to a total of 1.9 million Note 7 phones, including the 1 million Galaxy Note 7s it recalled on Sept. 15.

The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission said on Thursday the Note 7's battery "can overheat and catch fire, posing serious fire and burn hazard to consumers."
It added that Samsung had received 96 reports of batteries in Note 7 phones overheating in the United States, including 23 new reports since the Sept. 15 recall announcement.

Article online:
https://www.uspa24.com/bericht-9543/us-bans-samsung-galaxy-note-7-smartphones-from-air-travel.html

Editorial office and responsibility:
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Official Federal Reg. No. 7442619