U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION
National Policy

ORDER 8900.4

Effective Date:
7/8/19

SUBJ: Emergency Order of Prohibition Pertaining to "Doors-Off" Flight Operations for Compensation or Hire

1. Purpose of This Order. This order informs inspectors of the issuance of "Operators and Pilots of "Doors Off" Flights for Compensation or Hire" Emergency Order of Prohibition, Docket No. FAA-2018-0243, 83 FR 12856 (March 26, 2018) ("the Emergency Order"), which prohibits the use of supplemental passenger restraint systems (SPRS) that cannot be released quickly in an emergency during flight operations for compensation or hire with the doors open or removed ("doors-off flights" or "doors-off flight operations"). The Emergency Order is applicable to operators and pilots who conduct doors-off flights for compensation or hire. Additionally, the Emergency Order prohibits passenger-carrying doors-off flight operations for compensation or hire unless the passengers are at all times properly secured using Federal Aviation Administration (FAA)-authorized restraints. Correct use of FAA-approved SPRSs during flight meets this requirement. The Emergency Order became effective immediately upon issuance. This order provides updated guidance for resumption of doors-off flights for compensation or hire and supersedes the information conveyed in Notice N 8900.506, Emergency Order of Prohibition Pertaining to "Doors-Off" Flight Operations for Compensation or Hire, dated April 10, 2019, which is now canceled.

2. Audience. The primary audience for this order is principal inspectors (PI), aviation safety inspectors (ASI), and aviation safety technicians (AST) in the Flight Standards Service (FS) Safety Assurance offices. The secondary audience includes the FS Office of Safety Standards.

3. Where You Can Find This Order. You can find this order on the MyFAA employee website at https://employees.faa.gov/tools_resources/orders_notices. Inspectors can access this order through the Flight Standards Information Management System (FSIMS) at http://fsims.avs.faa.gov. Operators can find this order on the FAA's website at http://fsims.faa.gov. This order is available to the public at http://www.faa.gov/regulations_policies/orders_notices.

4. Background. Upon information derived from an initial investigation into a fatal March 11, 2018, helicopter accident on the East River near New York City, New York, the Acting Administrator has found that an emergency exists related to aviation safety and safety in air commerce and issued the Emergency Order on March 22, 2018. Based on an initial investigation and the reliable and credible evidence presently available, the Acting Administrator found that civil aircraft N350LH, an Airbus Helicopters AS350B2 helicopter, was operated "doors off" on a flight in the vicinity of New York City. All passengers on the flight wore operator-provided harness systems that allowed the passengers to move securely within the helicopter and sit in the doorsill while airborne. The SPRSs worn by the passengers, while intended as a safety measure when the aircraft was in flight, may have prevented the passengers'

quick egress from the aircraft after the accident. While this accident involved an aircraft that impacted the water, passengers could face a similar hazard in other emergency situations, such as an aircraft fire on the ground.

5. Action.

a. Letter of Authorization (LOA). All PIs, ASIs, and ASTs who have oversight responsibility of operators or pilots that conduct doors-off flights for compensation or hire are required to convey the information contained in the Emergency Order to those operators or pilots immediately. Operators and pilots must cease using SPRSs during doors-off flight operations for compensation or hire until the FS Office of Safety Standards, on behalf of the Acting Administrator, issues an LOA for those supplemental restraints. The LOA will be issued after determining that the restraints to be used can be quickly released by a passenger with minimal difficulty and without impeding egress from the aircraft in an emergency. The FAA will consider the design, manufacture, installation, and operation of the SPRS when reviewing all applications for an LOA. The ability of a passenger to quickly release the restraint with minimal difficulty must be inherent to the SPRS. An SPRS must not require the use of a knife to cut the restraint, the use of any other additional tool, or the assistance of any other person. An SPRS also must not require passenger training beyond what would be provided in a preflight briefing. The applicant bears the burden of clearly and convincingly demonstrating that the SPRS can be quickly released by a passenger with minimal difficulty and without impeding egress from the aircraft in an emergency.

> **Note:** The Emergency Order does not apply to parachuting operations and helicopter external-load operations under Title 14 of the Code of Federal Regulations (14 CFR) part 133. Additionally, the Emergency Order does not apply to operations conducted as public aircraft operations. Additional information regarding public aircraft operations is available in Advisory Circular (AC) 00-1.1, Public Aircraft Operations—Manned and Unmanned. This AC is available at https://www.faa.gov/regulations_policies/advisory_circulars/index.cfm/go/document.information/documentID/1034871.

b. Operator and Pilot Procedures. Additionally, PIs, ASIs, and ASTs must ensure that operator and pilot procedures are in place that ensure that all passenger-carrying doors-off flight operations for compensation or hire are prohibited unless the passengers are at all times properly secured using FAA-approved restraints. Correct use of FAA-approved SPRSs during flight meets this requirement.

c. Surveillance. If a PI, ASI, or AST discovers any additional doors-off flight operations for compensation or hire during the course of routine surveillance, he or she must convey the information contained in the Emergency Order to that operator or pilot.

6. Procedure for Obtaining an LOA for Use of an SPRS.

a. Complete Form. Operators, pilots, or individuals desiring authorization to use an SPRS should electronically complete FAA Form 7711-2, Certificate of Waiver or Authorization

Application, and save it for submission to the FAA. This form can be found at http://www.faa.gov/documentLibrary/media/Form/7711-2__[08-08].pdf.

> **Note:** Some information requested in FAA Form 7711-2 may not be applicable to all submissions. For instance, because there is no applicable FAR, item 6 should be left blank. After reading the certification statement, the applicant must date and sign item 17.

b. Complete Attachment. In addition to the information required on FAA Form 7711-2, submissions must also include a completed ATTACHMENT A, Request for FAA Letter of Authorization, Supplemental Passenger Restraint System—Supporting Information, found at the end of this order.

> **Note:** The submitter must upload at least one video to www.YouTube.com that shows an occupant demonstrating the method of release from the SPRS. When uploading each video, the submitter can change the privacy settings for that video to "Unlisted" so that only people who know the link to the video can view it. An "unlisted" video will not appear in any of YouTube's public spaces. "Unlisting" a video is not required, but is encouraged.

c. Submit Documents. The completed FAA Form 7711-2 and ATTACHMENT A should be uploaded and sent via email to the Air Transportation Division (AFS-200) at SPRS@faa.gov.

> **Note:** If the submitter cannot comply with the electronic submission requirement, please contact AFS-200 at (202) 267-8166 for instructions.

d. Issuance of an LOA. If authorized, AFS-200 will issue an LOA to the operator, pilot, or individual submitter.

e. Pilot/Operator with an LOA. If issued to a pilot or operator, the LOA must be carried on the aircraft whenever the SPRS is used on any doors-off flight operation for compensation or hire.

f. Individual with an LOA. If issued to an individual, the LOA may be used by the individual, at the discretion of the pilot/operator, on any doors-off flight operation for compensation or hire. The individual must provide a copy of the LOA to the pilot/operator prior to participating in the conduct of a doors-off flight operation.

7. Consequences of Failure to Comply with the Emergency Order. As in any situation involving noncompliance, PIs, ASIs, and ASTs are reminded to utilize the FAA Compliance Program as detailed in FAA Order 8000.373, Federal Aviation Administration Compliance Program. For operators or pilots that are unwilling or unable to comply with the Emergency Order, PIs, ASIs, and ASTs should be aware that those operators or pilots may be subject to a civil penalty or certificate action for each flight operated in violation of the Emergency Order.

8. Directive Feedback Information. Direct questions or comments to AFS-200 at (202) 267-8166. For your convenience, FAA Form 1320-19, Directive Feedback Information, is the last page of this order. Note any deficiencies found, clarifications needed, or suggested improvements regarding the contents of this order on FAA Form 1320-19.

ORIGINAL SIGNED by

/s/ Robert C. Carty
Deputy Executive Director, Flight Standards Service

ATTACHMENT A

Request for FAA Letter of Authorization
Supplemental Passenger Restraint System—Supporting Information

As noted in "Operators and Pilots of "Doors-Off" Flights for Compensation or Hire," Emergency Order of Prohibition, Docket No. FAA-2018-0243, 83 FR 12856 (March 26, 2018), operators and pilots may conduct doors-off flights for compensation or hire involving supplemental passenger restraint systems (SPRS) if the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) has determined that the restraints to be used can be quickly released by a passenger with minimal difficulty and without impeding egress from the aircraft in an emergency.

Specifically, the criteria includes that the ability of a passenger to quickly release the restraint with minimal difficulty must be inherent to the SPRS. Additionally, an SPRS must not require the use of a knife to cut the restraint, the use of any other additional tool, or the assistance of any other person. An SPRS also must not require passenger training beyond what would be provided in a preflight briefing.

I am submitting this information to request authorization for use of the specific SPRS listed below. I certify that the information submitted below is accurate and that the SPRS listed below meets the stated criteria and can be quickly released by a passenger with minimal difficulty and without impeding egress from the aircraft in an emergency.

I have included a link to a video (no more than 8 seconds) that shows how a passenger can quickly release the SPRS without assistance from any other individual, with minimal difficulty, and without impeding egress from the aircraft in an emergency. I understand that the file-sharing service provider should not require FAA personnel to create a user ID or password in order to open and view the video.

This completed form must be uploaded and sent via email to the Air Transportation Division (AFS-200) at SPRS@faa.gov.

> **Note:** If you cannot comply with the electronic submission requirement, please contact AFS-200 at (202) 267-8166 for instructions.

Submitter Name, Organization, Mailing Address, Email Address, Certificate Number/ Operator ID (if applicable)	**System Components, Including Manufacturer's Make and Model**	**Certification Standard for Each Component (e.g., OSHA ANSI Z359.1)**
Submitter Information	Submitter Information	Submitter Information
Text of preflight briefing or step-by-step instructions to SPRS user regarding release of SPRS from attachment point on the aircraft in preparation for egress		
Submitter Information		
Link to video (no more than 8 seconds) of an occupant demonstrating method of release of harness and/or lanyard from attachment point on the aircraft in preparation for egress		
Link to Video		

Directive Feedback Information

Please submit any written comments or recommendation for improving this directive, or suggest new items or subjects to be added to it. Also, if you find an error, please tell us about it.

Subject: FAA Order 8900.4, Emergency Order of Prohibition Pertaining to “Doors-Off” Flight Operations for Compensation or Hire

To: Flight Standards Directive Management Officer, AFB-140 Directives Mailbox (9-AWA-AFB-140-Directives@faa.gov)

(Please check all appropriate line items)

☐ An error (procedural or typographical) has been noted in paragraph _____ on page_____ .

☐ Recommend paragraph _____on page _____ be changed as follows: *(attach separate sheet if necessary)*

☐ In a future change to this order, please cover the following subject: *(briefly describe what you want added)*

☐ Other comments:

☐ I would like to discuss the above. Please contact me.

Submitted by: _____ Date: _____

Telephone Number: _____ Routing Symbol: _____

FAA Form 1320-19 (10-98)