



Un3480 battery instructions

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Shipping lithium batteries compliantly can be a complicated task, regulations differ and can be difficult to decipher. Here we have summarised the different types of lithium batteries and the main rules around shipping these batteries.

We have provided a helpful table to display UN numbers and their relevant packing instructions as a quick reference guide. If you are ready to ship your batteries, check out our range of lithium battery packaging.

These are secondary batteries (rechargeable) where the lithium is only present in an ionic form in the electrolyte. Lithium polymer batteries are also included in this category.

It is worth remembering there are different stages in a lithium battery's lifecycle and these come with different packing instructions. Generally, cells and batteries must be tested in accordance with the UN Manual of Tests and Criteria Part III Subsection 38.3. There are however, other types of batteries including; prototypes, damaged or defective and waste batteries requiring disposal/ recycling.

Below we have provided a summary of UN numbers and their corresponding Packing Instruction for each mode of transport. Shippers must refer to the relevant transport regulations for detailed regulations, including applicable Special Provisions for each UN number.

Lithium-ion cells and Batteries shipped by themselves – UN3480 (not contained in or packed with equipment) are forbidden for transport as cargo on passenger aircraft. They can be shipped on cargo aircrafts when packed in accordance with Packing Instruction 965.

Lithium-ion Cells and Batteries (UN3480) must be shipped at a state of charge (SoC) not exceeding 30% of their rated capacity. Cells and batteries at a SoC of higher than 30% can only be shipped with the approval of the State of Origin and the State of the Operator, see Special Provision A331.

Lithium Metal Cells and Batteries shipped by themselves – UN3090 (not contained in or packed with equipment) are forbidden for transport as cargo on passenger aircraft. They can be shipped on cargo aircrafts when packed in accordance with Packing Instruction 968.

Pre-production prototypes of lithium batteries or cells that have not been tested to the requirements of 38.3 of the UN Manual of Tests and Criteria, may be transported on cargo aircraft if approved by the appropriate authorities of the State of Origin and the State of the Operator. Packing Instruction 910 of the Supplement to the Technical Instructions must also be met, see Special Provision A88.

Lithium batteries identified by the manufacturer as being defective or damaged, with the potential of



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producing a dangerous evolution of heat, fire or short circuit are forbidden for air transport. This also applies to lithium cells or batteries installed inside equipment where the device has been recalled because of safety concerns of the cell or battery installed in the device, see Special Provision A154.

Unless approved by the appropriate authority of the State of Origin and the State of the Operator, waste batteries and batteries being shipped for recycling or disposal are forbidden from air transport, see Special Provision A183.

Also, to consider, the introduction of Sodium ion batteries (not to be confused with Lithium-ion) but emerging as new technology that may have improved environmental benefits.

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