



U.S. Department
of Transportation
**Federal Aviation
Administration**

800 Independence Ave., SW
Washington DC 20591

Dear Sir/Madam:

We would like to share with you safety information the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) has gathered from its gap analysis of a Boeing 747 in April 2013 at Bagram Airfield in Afghanistan. It was determined that this accident was the result of improper cargo loading and retention that resulted in a load shift.

The FAA team's analysis of the accident and subsequent ramp inspection of domestic and foreign cargo operators identified a number of findings. Among the findings identified, it was noted that Aircraft Flight Manuals (AFM) and operating manuals were not derived from or in accordance with the operating limitations of the applicable Type Certificate, Supplemental Type Certificate and or Mass and Balance Manual (MBM). As a result, some cargo loading procedures may contain safety risks which could lead to unsafe practices.

The FAA performed ramp inspections and identified the following findings:

1. AFM did not reflect or include aircraft loading limitations.
2. Aircraft Mass & Balance, and cargo loading programs were not available or procedures did not meet international standards.
3. Aircraft cargo compartments' loading limitation placards were not clearly identified.
4. Aircraft cargo compartments' loading diagrams were not included in the aircraft cargo manual, and/or not clearly identified.
5. Operators not following loading procedures in the aircraft cargo manual to include; cargo handling and restraining limitations and cargo compartment capacities.
6. Insufficient loading procedures in the aircraft cargo manual to include; cargo handling and restraining limitations and cargo compartment capacities.
7. Cargo manuals lacked procedures for; inspection, repair, use of cargo containers, pallets, restraining belts, straps or verification to an approved source or document.

The FAA advises that it would be beneficial for each Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) to verify that their air operators' current approved AFM and MBM and any other approved documentation relating to cargo loading can be traced back to a CAA approved source.

To ensure compliance and improve safety, the FAA will increase surveillance on domestic and foreign cargo operations focusing on approved documentation, loading, retention and special cargo.

The FAA looks forward to working with our CAA colleagues to ensure that all cargo operations in our respective States are being conducted in an approved and safe manner. If you have any questions or comments, please feel free to contact Flight Standards Service Aircraft Maintenance Division at (202) 267-1675.