

DGCA warns Akasa air on dangerous goods safety

- A Monitor Desk Report

Date: 15 January, 2025



Mumbai: The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA), the aviation safety regulator, has instructed Akasa Air to conduct an internal audit of its cargo handling facilities.

The airline has also been warned to exercise greater caution in handling dangerous goods following the discovery of deficiencies.

This marks the latest in a series of regulatory warnings issued to the airline, which is less than two years old. In recent weeks, the DGCA has taken action against Akasa Air for various issues.

On Tuesday (Jan 14), sources informed news agency that the DGCA identified flaws in the handling of lithium batteries after an investigation in Ahmedabad on December 12. Following this, a warning letter was issued to Akasa Air.

He said that during the surveillance inspection, the Directorate General

of Civil Aviation (DGCA) found "significant irregularities" on the part of the airline. This also included accepting electronic devices containing lithium batteries without checking or verifying the power of the battery.

Sources said that apart from other deficiencies, the airline was found accepting consignments of lithium batteries weighing more than the approved limit for carrying on passenger aircraft. There was no immediate comment from Akasa Air on the DGCA's warning letter dated January 9.

According to sources, the airline has taken corrective measures after the regulator identified the deficiencies. For this, instructions have been issued to cargo agents and employees.

Also, a warning has been issued by issuing a letter to cargo acceptance staff. Given the severity of the non-compliance and corrective action, the DGCA has warned Akash Air to be more vigilant towards compliance for carriage of dangerous goods by air and ensure no violations in the future, people in the know of the matter said.

Akash Air has been asked to do internal audits of all its cargo acceptance and handling facilities regarding compliance within 30 days of receiving the warning, sources said. As per DGCA norms, there are certain items that are categorized as dangerous goods and which need extra compliance so that those items are safely carried.

More recently, last month, DGCA ordered the suspension of two of its senior officials - the Director of Operations and Director of Training - for six months for alleged lapses in pilot training.

Earlier this month, the regulator had relieved one of its pilots from training for a missed landing. In October 2024, the DGCA imposed a fine of Rs 10 lakh on Akasa Air for its failure to pay compensation in time to some passengers who were denied boarding at the Bangalore airport in September this year.

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