

The FAA has banned recalled MacBook Pros from all flights – like any other bad battery



This might seem like common sense: if your 2015 MacBook Pro with Retina Display is a fire risk, you can't bring it on an airplane. But *Bloomberg* is reporting that the FAA is taking the extra step of explicitly banning select recalled MacBook Pros from being brought aboard as cargo or carry-ons – seemingly singling out these devices like it did with the infamous Samsung Galaxy Note 7 phone.

In a statement to *The Verge*, though, an FAA spokesperson suggested that its actions here were actually pretty routine – a reminder to airlines that *any* device with a recalled lithium-based battery, including the MacBook Pro, isn't allowed on planes:

The FAA is aware of the recalled batteries that are used in some Apple MacBook Pro laptops. In early July, we alerted airlines about the recall, and we informed the public. We issued reminders to continue to follow instructions about

recalls outlined in the 2016 FAA Safety Alert for Operators (SAFO) 16011, and provided information provided to the public on FAA's Packsafe website: <https://www.faa.gov/hazmat/packsafe/>

That makes more sense, because a specific ban on the MacBook Pro could be mighty hard to enforce, and the FAA's aforementioned Safety Alert doesn't require any specific kinds of enforcement.

Unlike Samsung's Note 7, which at least had some distinct design characteristics to set it apart from other phones, there's no easy way to tell at a glance which laptops should be stopped: a 15-inch 2015 MacBook Pro that has a problematic recalled battery looks just like a 15-inch 2015 MacBook Pro that doesn't. In June, Apple said only a limited number of units were affected.

That's probably why *Bloomberg* writes that "It's unclear what efforts will, if any, be made at U.S. airports." But it also writes that at least one European conglomerate, TUI Group Airlines, will be making specific announcements about the MacBook Pro "at the gate and before takeoff."

When we asked for comment, Apple directed us to its support page, where you can type in your laptop's serial number to see if your machine is affected. Perhaps that's something the TSA could do in an airport screening, but it seems like a lot.

Update, 9:08 PM ET: Added FAA statement, which suggests the MacBook Pro isn't necessarily being singled out here.

<https://www.theverge.com/2019/8/13/20804745/faa-macbook-pro-ban-recalled-battery-fire-risk-cant-fly>