

**Proposed Amendments to
Metropolitan Washington Airports Regulation
Regarding Dangerous Weapons**

At the public hearing on September 8 to receive comment on the proposal to amend the Authority's regulation to limit the prohibition on dangerous weapons to the terminals, the airfield, and those building opening onto the airfield, two other issues were raised. First, those traveling overseas with a weapon (e.g., on a hunting trip) must register it first with U.S. Customs and Border Protection in order to be able to bring it back into the United States without paying a duty or complying with other requirements for imports. This needs to be accomplished before the flight; however, many choose to do it several days in advance to be sure that last minute delays do not cause them to miss their flights. This is not provided for in the Authority's regulations.

Second, the Authority's regulation requires that the weapon be deactivated to the extent possible. Some commentators objected to having to completely disassemble their guns and questioned the meaning of "to the extent possible." Federal law no longer requires that the weapon be deactivated to be checked in baggage, only that it be unloaded and locked in a hard-sided container to which only the passenger has the key or combination

Accordingly, the Authority is considering addressing each of these issues through the following proposed amendments to its regulation (new language is underlined):

§ 8.4. Dangerous Weapons Prohibited.

(1) No person may possess a dangerous weapon within or bring any dangerous weapon into the Airports' terminals or the airfields or any building that opens onto the airfield on which signs are posted so as to give reasonable notice to the public unless:

~~(1) he is authorized by 49 CFR §1540.111 to carry a dangerous weapon aboard an airplane used in scheduled passenger or public charter passenger operations;~~

~~(2) the weapon is both unloaded and deactivated to the extent possible and is properly checked as baggage aboard an aircraft promptly upon arrival at the Airport;~~

(a) the person is a passenger of an airline and the weapon, if a firearm, is unloaded, carried in a locked, hard-sided container to which only that person retains the key or combination; and the person possesses the weapon in one of the Airports' terminals for the sole purposes of (i) presenting such weapon to U.S. Customs agents in advance of an international flight; (ii) checking such weapon with his luggage; or (iii) retrieving such weapon from the baggage claim area;

(b) the person is a passenger of an airline and the weapon is checked with his luggage or is in luggage retrieved from the baggage claim area; or

~~(3c) the weapon is both unloaded or and deactivated to the extent possible and (i) packaged for shipment as cargo in a container that is locked or otherwise secured and (ii) if a firearm, unloaded and is (iii) brought or possessed on Authority facilities for shipment by air or retrieval after shipment by air.;~~

(2) The provisions of this section shall not apply:

(a) to persons authorized by 49 CFR § 1540.111 to carry a dangerous weapon on his person or accessible property in the sterile areas of the Airports;

~~(4b) he is a to law enforcement officers required to carry a firearm while in the performance of his their official law enforcement duties while on the Airports; or~~

~~(5c) he is an to employees or agents of the Authority and the weapon is to be used under Authority direction for Authority purposes such as game control; or~~

(d) to persons who need the weapon is needed in performance of their duties for a legitimate airport purpose (such as armored car guards) and the Airport Manager has previously approved, in writing, that person possessing a weapon where he would otherwise be prohibited.