Regulators to study rules for electronics on planes

(Reuters) - The U.S. will take a look at the rules governing which electronic devices travelers can use during flights to help airlines decide if they should allow wider use of the gadgets, the Federal Aviation Administration said on Monday.

A group that will be formed this fall will study the testing methods airline operators use to decide which new devices passengers can safely use and when, as well as other issues, the FAA said in a statement.

Airlines often tell travelers not to use iPods, laptops and other devices while planes are taking off and landing.

Under current rules, aircraft operators must determine that personal electronics do not cause dangerous radio frequency interference in order to approve them for use during flights.

The study group will not consider allowing cell phone calls during flights, according to the statement.

"We're looking for information to help air carriers and operators decide if they can allow more widespread use of electronic devices in today's aircraft," acting FAA Administrator Michael Huerta said.

"We also want solid safety data to make sure tomorrow's aircraft designs are protected from interference," he said.

The group will meet for six months and will include representatives from the mobile technology and aviation manufacturing industries, pilot and flight attendant groups, airlines and passenger associations. It will report its findings to the FAA, the agency said.

(Reporting By Emily Stephenson; editing by Andrew Hay)

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