

Aviation Safety Bulletin

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Subject:

Smoke detector on cargo compartment alarmed due to moisture of tropical fresh fruit accumulated and the aircraft diverted.

Background:

An aircraft B747-400 diverted to KHH airport due to smoke detector on cargo compartment alarmed. The smoke sensor detected the accumulated moisture of tropical fresh fruit on cargo compartment. Captain triggered the fire extinguisher system and decided to divert to KHH airport.

Captain checked and confirmed no smoke or temperature raised on cargo compartment after landing and found there was no any potential danger to aircraft and passenger onboard, therefore, decided deplaning passengers through normal procedures instead of emergency evacuation which might cause passengers injured. But from a viewpoint of safety, airport fire fighters were immediately extinguishing when the door was opened and inside compartment was still full of smoke due to Hylon extinguishing.

Recommendation :

The similar cases occurred over the past decades worldwide. Airlines may consider installing heater for the pipe of smoke detector in order to prevent moisture false alarm according to the suggestion (SB 74-SL-26-020-E) of Boeing.

Maintenance should be advised after landing about the handling procedures taken such as fire extinguisher being activated for their awareness. Meanwhile, airport fire

fighters should be familiar with the in-flight layout and system in order to effectively fire fighting.

Fresh goods should be packed with special care in order to prevent from false detection alarm due to moisture raised.