**STATEMENT FROM THE FAA**

The Federal Aviation Administration grants waivers to certain regulations only when an operator can assure the agency it is maintaining the highest levels of safety. Over the years, the FAA has allowed certain air carriers to fly some aircraft more than 50 nautical miles offshore without specific equipment. These waivers are granted only after a thorough evaluation of the operator’s safety plans. The FAA ensures that airlines comply with federal regulations by conducting oversight of their operations and audits of their records.

**ADDITIONAL BACKGROUND INFORMATION ABOUT THE WAIVERS**

* The FAA issues these waivers for geographic areas, not for airport to airport routes.
* The FAA grants these waivers to airlines for specific models of aircraft, not for all aircraft in a carrier’s fleet.
* Aircraft that fly under these waivers are required to have a life vest for every seat on the plane, and must fly at an altitude of at least 25,000 feet so they would be able to reach shore in case of an emergency.
* Almost all aircraft operating under these waivers have emergency evacuation slides, which function as life rafts in case of a water landing.
* Aircraft flying with these waivers are in constant communication with air traffic control during flight.

The waivers specify that:

* Off the south and east coasts of the United States, below 35 degrees latitude and in the Gulf of Mexico and Caribbean Islands: Carriers can fly up to 30 minutes from the nearest shoreline in still air with one engine inoperative, or 162 miles, whichever is least.
* On the east coast of the United States, above 35 degrees latitude: Carriers can fly 30 minutes from the nearest shoreline in still air with one engine inoperative, or 100 miles, whichever is least.
* On the west coast of the United States: Carriers can fly 30 minutes from the nearest shoreline in still air with one engine inoperative, or 100 miles, whichever is least.