

## CHAPTER 5. AIR AMBULANCE OPERATIONS

### SECTION 2. AUTHORIZATIONS FOR FAR PART 135 AIR AMBULANCE SERVICES

**1355. GENERAL.** This section contains guidance to be used by principal operations inspectors (POI) when evaluating a Federal Aviation Regulations (FAR) Part 135 operator's request to be issued operations specifications paragraph A21a, "Air Ambulance--Helicopter" or paragraph A21b, "Air Ambulance--Airplane."

**A. Certification of New Operators** A district office may receive a request from an individual who does not currently hold an air carrier certificate to be certified as an air carrier with an air ambulance authorization. In this case, inspectors must follow the policies, direction, and guidance in volume 2, chapter 2, of this handbook. Inspectors should refer to sections 3 and 4 of this chapter to obtain policies, direction, and guidance for evaluating an air ambulance operator during phases two, three, and four of the certification process

**B. Existing Operators Initiating Air Ambulance Operations.** Existing operators may request that POI's issue operations specifications paragraph A21a or A21b. POI's should consider a request to conduct air ambulance operations a potentially significant change in the certificate holder's operation.

**C. Relevant Documents.** The inspector conducting a certification or recertification of an air ambulance operator should become familiar with the contents of the following documents and should bring these documents to the attention of the operator:

- Volume 2, of this handbook, "Air Operator Certification"
- Volume 3, chapter 1, section 7, of this handbook, "Amendment, Surrender, and Suspension of Operations Specifications"
- Advisory Circulars (AC) 135.14A and 135.15, "Emergency Medical Services /Airplane or Helicopter"
- "Air Ambulance Guidelines" published by both the U.S. Department of Transportation, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration; and the American Medical Association, Commission on Emergency Medical Services
- AC 120.49, "Certification of Air Carriers"
- Volume 3, chapter 2 of this handbook, "Flightcrew Training and Qualification Programs"
- Volume 3, chapter 15, of this handbook, "Manuals, Procedures, and Checklists"

**1357. EXISTING OPERATORS INITIATING AIR AMBULANCE OPERATIONS.** POI's shall use the following direction and guidance when issuing paragraphs A21a or A21b of the operations specifications to existing operators:

**A. Initial Phase.** In the initial phase, the POI and the operator should meet to decide what documents the operator must create or modify and what proving or validation tests the operator must conduct. The POI must coordinate with the principal maintenance and avionics inspectors (PMI/PAI) when scheduling this meeting.

(1) The POI shall inform the operator of the requirement to prepare a new compliance statement. The operator should review each rule of FAR Part 135 and indicate those rules under which changes in the operator's compliance procedures will be required while conducting air ambulance operations. For those rules requiring no change, the POI may accept a simple statement such as "No change."

(2) The POI shall review the applicable air carrier certification job aids (see figures 2.1.1.1. through 2.1.1.3.), to determine the actions required. The "Date item accomplished/ ready for FAA insp." column of the job aid should be marked "N/A" for those items that will not be required. The POI should retain a copy of the job aid, and one should be given to the operator. The principal inspectors should coordinate informally with the regional flight standards division (RFSD) at this stage to ensure that all requirements have been identified. The RFSD should coordinate with AFS-500 for additional guidance, if required.

(3) The POI and the operator should come to a mutual agreement on the documents listed in volume 2, paragraph 85, that the operator will be required to provide or modify.

(4) Specific areas that should be reviewed include the following:

- Development of the air ambulance procedures section of the operator's general operations manual (GOM)
- Development of a flight manual and checklists appropriate to air ambulance operations
- Development of the air ambulance section of the operator's training and qualification program
- Equipment installation; medical oxygen, suction, and stretcher, isolette, or other patient restraint/containment device
- Exploration of the requirement for OST Form 4507, "Air Taxi Operator and Commuter Air Carrier Registration and Amendments Under Part 298 of the Regulations of the Department of Transportation"

B. *Formal Application Phase.* The operator must submit a letter requesting issuance of the appropriate operations specifications paragraphs, the new compliance statement, and those attachments listed in volume 2, paragraph 85, which have been determined to be applicable in the previous phase.

C. *Document Compliance Phase.* Prior to conducting this phase, inspectors should review the contents of volume 2, section 3. Inspectors should also

refer to the direction and guidance of sections 3 and 4 of this chapter while conducting the required evaluations.

D. *Demonstration and Inspection Phase.* In this phase, only the applicable events of the job aid have to be accomplished. Inspectors should review volume 2, section 4, of this handbook for guidance when accomplishing this phase. Since unique circumstances surround each recertification, the POI shall informally coordinate with the RFSD before closing this phase. Specific criteria and procedures for inspectors to use when evaluating an operator's demonstrated ability are located in sections 3 and 4 of this chapter. These demonstrations include but are not limited to the following:

- Training in air ambulance procedures
- Emergency evacuations
- Air navigation under air ambulance operating procedures
- Operational control procedures

E. *Certification Phase.* Inspectors should review the contents of volume 2, section 5, before concluding the certification phase.

**1358.-1368. RESERVED.**

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