SECTION 5. OPERATOR TRIP RECORDS INSPECTIONS (PTRS CODE 1628)

181. GENERAL. The primary objective of trip records inspections is for inspectors to ensure that operators meet the regulatory requirements of Part 121 or Part 135, as applicable, for the proper use, documentation, and retention of operational trip records. Inspectors can evaluate trip records to reconstruct a particular flight or a series of flights by examining flightplans, dispatch or flight releases, loading and weight documents, weather documents, and other related flight information retained by the operator. Trip record surveillance includes an evaluation of the quality of the recorded data, a check of the calculations for accuracy, and a check of the operator's compliance with the FAR's and company procedures. This section contains Part 121 and Part 135 requirements for operator trip records and also guidance to be used by inspectors when evaluating and conducting an inspection of an operator's trip records.

183. PART 121 OPERATOR TRIP RECORDS REQUIREMENTS. Inspectors should ensure that, in the subject areas that follow, Part 121 operators meet the following requirements:

A. *Load Manifests, Dispatch Releases, and Flightplans.* Part 121 domestic or flag operators are required by FAR 121.695 to retain for at least 3 months the originals, copies, or electronic versions of the completed load manifest (or information from it, except information concerning cargo and passenger distribution); the dispatch release; and the flightplan. Inspectors should review these records as follows:

(1) *Load Manifest.* Inspectors should ensure that the operator's load manifest contains the following information:

- *Individual* weights of the aircraft, fuel and oil, cargo and baggage, passengers, and crewmembers
- Maximum allowable takeoff weight: runway to be used, runway-limit, and climb limit, en route performance limits, destination landing weight limits, and destination or alternate landing distance limits
- Total aircraft takeoff weight (as computed under approved procedures)
- Documentation that the aircraft is properly loaded with the center of gravity within approved limits
- Passenger names (unless such information is maintained elsewhere by the operator)

(2) *Dispatch Release.* Inspectors should ensure that the operator's dispatch release contains the following information:

- Aircraft identification number ("N" number)
- Trip number
- Departure airport, intermediate stops, destination airports, and alternate airports
- A statement of the type of operation (IFR or VFR)
- Minimum fuel required
- Weather reports and forecasts for the destination airport, each intermediate stop, and any alternate airport that is the latest information available at the time the release is signed

(3) *Flightplan.* Inspectors must ensure that the operator's flightplan contains at least the following information (as required by FAR's 91.153 and 91.169):

- Aircraft identification number ("N" number)

- Type of aircraft
- Flight number
- Name of the pilot-in-command (PIC) (usually found on the dispatch release)
- Point and proposed time of departure
- Proposed route, cruising altitude (or flight level), and true airspeed at the cruising altitude
- Point of first-intended landing and the estimated elapsed time until over that point
- Amount of fuel on board (in hours)
- An alternate airport - if the first point of intended landing does not have a prescribed standard instrument approach procedure, or the weather at that airport for at least 1 hour before and 1 hour after the estimated time of arrival (ETA) indicates the ceiling will be at least 2000 feet above the airport elevation and the visibility will be at least 3 miles
- Number of persons in the aircraft, except where that information is otherwise readily available to the FAA
- Any other information that either air traffic control (ATC) or the PIC finds necessary for ATC purposes

B. *Types of Flights Requiring Dispatch Releases and Flightplans.* For Part 121 domestic and flag operators, a dispatch release must be signed and a flightplan must be executed by both the PIC and the aircraft dispatcher for the following types of flights:

- All scheduled flights
- All extra-section (unscheduled) flights
- All charter flights
- All ferry flights (except those ferry flights authorized under Part 91)
- All proving flights
- All flights undertaken to reposition an airplane after landing at an unscheduled airport

C. *Requirements for Part 121 Supplemental Operators.* Part 121 supplemental operators are required by FAR 121.697 to retain, for at least 3 months, originals, copies, or electronic versions of the load manifest; the flight release; the airworthiness release; the pilot route certification; and the flightplan. Inspectors should review these documents as follows:

(1) *Load Manifest.* Inspectors must ensure that the load manifest contains the information in previous subparagraph A (1).

(2) *Flight Release.* Inspectors must ensure that the flight release contains the following information:

- Company or organization name
- Make, model, and registration number of the aircraft being used
- Flight or trip number, and date of flight
- Name of each flight crewmember, flight attendant, and pilot designated as PIC
- Departure airport, destination airport, alternate airports, and route
- Minimum fuel supply
- A statement of the type of operation (IFR or VFR)
- Weather reports and forecasts for the destination airport, each intermediate stop, and any alternate airport that is the latest information available at the time the release is signed

(3) *Airworthiness Release.* Inspectors must ensure that the airworthiness release has been prepared in accordance with the procedures set forth in the operator's manual. The release must also include a statement of certification that the following conditions have been met:

- Any work performed on the aircraft was performed in accordance with the requirements of the operator's manual
- All items required to be inspected were inspected by an authorized person who determined that the work was satisfactorily completed
- No known condition exists that would make the aircraft not airworthy
- Concerning the work performed, the aircraft is in condition for safe operation

NOTE: The airworthiness release must be signed by an authorized certified mechanic, repairman, or an authorized official of a repair station that is responsible for the completed work. A certified repairman may sign the release or entry only for the work for which he is employed and certified to accomplish. Additionally, the operator may state in the operator's manual that the signature of an authorized certified mechanic or repairman constitutes certification that the preceding conditions have been met, thus making it unnecessary to include a restatement of all of the required conditions.

(4) *Pilot Route Certification.* Inspectors must ensure that the PIC has certified to having examined all applicable en route and destination information as required by FAR 121.697A (4). This information includes such items as: weather information, navigation facilities, communication procedures, terrain and obstructions, minimum flight levels, instrument approach procedures, airport diagrams, and NOTAM's. If the flight is to be conducted through an area or to an airport, either of which is designated as a "special airport" or a "special area" by the FAA, the PIC must be qualified to conduct the flight (as required by FAR 121.445).

(a) To meet the "special airport" qualification requirements, the PIC must have accomplished, within the preceding 12 calendar months, the following:

- Made an entry to that airport (including a takeoff and landing) while serving as a pilot crewmember (PIC or second-in command (SIC))
- Qualified by using pictorial means acceptable to the FAA for the airport

(b) To meet the "special area" qualification requirements, the PIC must have, within the preceding 12 months, become or remained qualified for the route to be flown by adequately demonstrating one of the following methods:

- Flying over the route or area as PIC using the applicable navigation system
- Flying over the route or area as PIC under the supervision of a check airman, using the applicable navigation system
- Completing an approved Class II navigation training program

(5) *Flightplan.* Inspectors must ensure that the flightplan includes the information in subparagraph A(3).

185. PART 135 OPERATOR TRIP RECORDS REQUIREMENTS. Part 135 operators who operate multiengine aircraft are required by FAR 135.63 to prepare a load manifest in duplicate for each flight conducted. Copies of these load manifests must be retained by the operator for at least 30 days at the operator's principal base of operations or at another location approved by the FAA. A load manifest must contain the following information:

- Total number of passengers
- Total weight of the loaded aircraft

- Maximum allowable takeoff weight for that flight
- Center of gravity limits
- Center of gravity of the loaded aircraft or an entry on the manifest that the aircraft center of gravity is within limits according to an approved loading schedule or method
- Aircraft registration number ("N" number) or flight number
- Origin and destination of the flight
- All crewmember names and position assignments

187. TRIP RECORDS INSPECTION AREAS. During a trip records inspection, the inspector should not consider any one inspection area to be more important than any other inspection area. Five general inspection areas have been identified as areas to be evaluated during trip records inspections (see figure 6.2.5.1. for job aid). These areas are: general; flightplan; dispatch/flight release; load manifest; and, other required documents. A definition of, and applicable guidance for, these inspection are as follows:

A. *General Inspection Area.* This inspection area refers to those inspection elements that are common to all trip records. Inspectors should evaluate such items as record availability, legibility, currency, and content, as they relate to regulatory recordkeeping requirements.

B. *Flightplan Inspection Area.* This inspection area refers to the flight planning requirements for Part 121 operators. Inspectors should evaluate such items as flightplan content, listing of alternate airports, and fuel loads. Many Part 121 operators incorporate the flightplan and the dispatch/flight release into one document. This is acceptable and reduces the duplication of information that may be required by both documents.

C. *Dispatch/Flight Release Inspection Area.* This inspection area refers to the Part 121 requirements for domestic and flag or supplemental operators, respectively.

D. *Load Manifest Inspection Area.* This inspection area refers to the regulatory requirements of both Parts 121 and 135. Inspectors must inspect and validate the operator's loading documents to ensure accuracy and compliance with the FAR's.

E. *Other Required Documents Inspection Area.* This inspection area refers to such items as pertinent weather forecasts, NOTAM's, fuel slips, and other documents that are issued to flight crewmembers before each flight.

189. GENERAL INSPECTION PRACTICES AND PROCEDURES. Trip records inspections are usually conducted at the operator's principal base of operations. Some operators have established a system where line stations forward all trip record information to one central location where the information is retained for the required time period. Some operators have most of their trip record information stored in a computerized format. Inspectors should use the following general, procedural guidelines when conducting an inspection of an operator's trip records.

A. *Pre-Planning Inspection.* Before conducting the actual inspection, inspectors should familiarize themselves with the operator's trip records procedures, formats, and means of disseminating information to flightcrews. Inspectors should pre-plan the inspection by deciding which specific areas should be concentrated upon, such as listing alternate airports, accurate fuel loads, dispatch release time versus actual blockout time, and accurate and timely weather information.

B. *Initial Contact With Operator.* Inspectors should con-tact the operator's personnel responsible for maintaining trip record files and advise them that an inspection shall be conducted. Upon arriving at the recordkeeping location, the inspector should properly identify one's self and request records for a specific series of trips. This ensures that the operator has an effective means of storing record information and is capable of retrieving specific trip information at the FAA's request. Inspectors should also request space at the operator's facility to conduct the inspection.

NOTE: If an operator uses electronic records, it is important that the inspector become familiar with the system before conducting the surveillance.

C. *Examination of Documents.* During the conduct of the actual inspection, inspectors should examine all of the available documents for each flight and cross-check the information between the trip records. For example, the fuel

load on a dispatch release for a domestic Part 121 operator should be the same as the fuel load on the load manifest, the flightplan, and the fuel slip within the operator's specified tolerance.

191. SPECIFIC INSPECTION PRACTICES AND PROCEDURES. When conducting trip records inspections, inspectors should use the Air Carrier Trip Records Inspection Job Aid (see figure 6.2.5.1.). This job aid contains all of the required trip record information for each type of air carrier. Items annotated with an asterisk (*) on the job aid provide additional guidance to the inspector for the evaluation of specific trip records items, such as the information that must be contained in an airworthiness release. For all trip records inspections, the inspector should, as a minimum, evaluate the operator's records for the following:

A. *Accuracy and Completeness.* Inspectors should ensure that each trip record package they examine contains all of the required information according to the job aid (figure 6.2.5.1.) and also pertaining to the actual flight it represents. Each document should have a flight number or a trip number and an aircraft identification number ("N" number) which clearly identifies the applicable flight.

B. *Aircraft Weight Information.* Each trip records package, regardless of the type of operator, must contain aircraft weight, balance (CG), and loading information. Passenger and cargo weight information must be accurately reflected on the load manifest. When evaluating this information, inspectors should take into account the following:

(1) Many operators have approved systems which result in weight and balance "finals" being transmitted to the flightcrew via air-ground passive communication systems (ACARS) or company radio frequencies after the aircraft has departed the gate or ramp area. This information, which normally consists of adjusted takeoff gross weight and trim settings, is critical to the crewmembers for the accurate determination of the takeoff data. Inspectors should ensure that the information contained on the load manifest accurately portrays the actual passenger and cargo weights.

(2) Load manifests must contain, as a minimum, two weight and balance notations:

- The maximum allowable takeoff weight
- The actual takeoff gross weight for the particular flight

NOTE: Inspectors should ensure that these two weight figures are clearly annotated on the load manifest document.

C. *Minimum Fuel Required.* Inspectors should examine Part 121 operator trip records to ensure that they include an annotation of the minimum fuel required to conduct the flight. Although not specifically required by regulation, many operators will provide a breakdown of fuel loads, such as trip fuel, alternate fuel, reserve fuel, and holding fuel. When examining fuel figures, inspectors should cross-check the dispatch or flight release fuel quantity (or weight in pounds) with the load manifest fuel quantity (or weight in pounds) to ensure that the figures are the same. Addition-ally, inspectors must ensure that the operator's flightplan includes the amount of fuel on board (in hours), and that this figure matches, within the operator's allowable tolerance, the fuel figures shown on the flight release and the load manifest.

NOTE: Inspectors may obtain a close estimate of hourly fuel burn information from the cruise control charts in the applicable aircraft operating manual.

D. *Dispatch/Flight Release Information.* FAR 121.593 requires a domestic operator to issue a new dispatch release if the flight is delayed for more than 1 hour from the intermediate airport. FAR's 121.595 and 121.597 require that flag or supplemental operators re-issue a dispatch or flight release respectively, if the flight is delayed on the ground for more than 6 hours. To ensure that the operator is re-releasing flights as required, inspectors should determine the actual departure times from company logs, ATC tower logs, or some other means, and then compare those times with the dispatch or flight release times (as applicable). This requirement is often observed during operations in adverse weather conditions.

E. *PTRS Input.* Inspectors should record the evaluation of an operator's trip records as an activity using PTRS activity code 1628.

192. - 200. RESERVED.

FIGURE 6.2.5.1.

AIR CARRIER TRIP RECORDS INSPECTION JOB AID

PTRS ACTIVITY: 1628 DATE:	AIR CARRIER:	PT 121 DOMESTIC/FLAG:O PT 121 SUPPLEMENTAL: O	PT 135 COMMUTER:O PT 135 NONSCHED:O
RECORDS LOCATION:	RECORDS MANAGER:	PHONE NUMBER:	HB REF: VI.2.14

U = UNACCEPTABLE; P = POTENTIAL; I = INFORMATION; E = EXCEEDS

GENERAL	
RETENTION	301
PROCEDURES	303
CONTENT/INFO	307
CURRENCY	309
AVAILABILITY	311
LEGIBILITY	--
OTHER/REMARKS	399
FLIGHTPLANS	763
A/CIDENTIFICATION#	--
A/C TYPE	--
FLIGHT NUMBER	--
NAME OF PIC * May be listed on dispatch/flight release (as applicable)	--
POINT OF DEPARTURE	--
TIME OF DEPARTURE	--
PROPOSED ROUTING	--
CRUISE ALTITUDE/FL	--
TAS AT ALTITUDE	--
POINT OF 1ST LNDG AND ESTIMATED ELAPSED TIME UNTIL OVER THAT POINT	--
AMOUNT OF FUEL ON BOARD (HRS): _____	
DISPATCH RELEASE: PT 121 DOM/FLAG OPERATR	765
AIRCRAFT ID NO.	--
TRIP NUMBER	--
DEPARTURE AIRPORT	--
INTERMEDIATE STOP	--
DESTINATION AIRPT	--
ALTERNATE AIRPORT (IF REQUIRED) TYPE OF OPERATION (IFR OR VFR)	
MIN FUEL REQ: ___	--
* Trip Fuel	--
* Alt Fuel	--
* Holding Fuel	--
* Reserve Fuel	--
* Taxi Fuel	--
* Contngcy Fuel	--
* No Alternate Available Fuel (Flag Carriers)	--
* Tankered Fuel	--
WEATHER REPORTS AND NOTAM's	757
* Destination	--
* Intermediate Stops	--
* Alternates	--
FIGHT RELEASE: PART 121 SUPPL. OPERATORS	765
COMPANY NAME	--
A/C MAKE, MODEL, & REGISTRATION NO.	--
FLIGHT/TRIP NO.	--
DATE OF FLIGHT	--
CREWMEMBER NAMES * PIC	--
* EACH OTHER CREW MEMBER NAME	--
DEPARTURE AIRPORT	--
DEST. AIRPORT	--
ALTERNATE AIRPORT	--
ROUTE OF FLIGHT	--
MIN FUEL REQ: ____	--
* Trip Fuel	--
* Alt Fuel	--
* Holding Fuel	--
* Reserve Fuel	--
* Contngcy Fuel	--
* No Alternate Available Fuel	--
* Tankered Fuel	--
TYPE OF OPERATION: (IFR OR VFR)	--
LOAD MANIFEST: ALL PART 121 OPERATORS	613
INDIVIDUAL WEIGHTS	--
* Aircraft	--
* Fuel and Oil	--
* Cargo/Baggage Weight (With Compartment Location)	
* Passenger Weight	
MAX ALLOWABLE T/O WEIGHT * Runway-Limited * Climb-Limited * For En route Climb/Cruise Requirements * For Destination Landing Limits	
ACTUAL TOTL A/C WT	
CG WITHIN LIMITS	
TRIM SETTING	
PAX LIST OF NAMES (Unless a list is retained elsewhere)	
OTHER PART 121 SUPP REQUIRED DOCUMENTS	729
AIRWORTHINESS REL	--
* Work Performed/ Inspection Items	--
* Authorized Sig	--
PILOT ROUTE CERT	--
PART 135 LOAD MANIFEST	613
TOTAL NUMBER OF PAX	[ ]
TOTAL GTOW	[ ]
MTOW FOR THAT FLT	[ ]
AIRCRAFT CG LIMITS	[ ]
CG FOR THAT FLIGHT (Or Statement That The Aircraft is Loaded According To An Approved Loading Schedule)	[ ]
A/C REGISTRATION # OR FLIGHT #	
FLIGHT ORIGIN	--
FLIGHT DESTINATION	--
CREWMEMBER NAMES AND DUTY POSITIONS	--

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