

**SECTION 16. PART 121 PILOT-IN-COMMAND (PIC) OPERATING
EXPERIENCE OBSERVATIONS (PTRS CODES 1356 AND 1631)**

419. GENERAL. This section contains direction and guidance to be used by operations inspectors for conducting operating experience (OE) observations as required by FAR 121.434(c) (1)(ii). An FAA inspector must observe a pilot who is qualifying as a PIC in an initial new-hire, initial equipment, or an upgrade curriculum which contains a simulator course of training. The inspector must observe the pilot while the pilot is performing the prescribed duties of a PIC before serving the prescribed duties of a PIC before serving unsupervised in revenue service. This observation is conducted while the candidate is acquiring OE and is only required before the pilot initially assumes command in Part 121 service. The purpose of this observation is to ensure that the transfer of learning from simulator to aircraft has occurred and that the candidate has acquired the skills and judgement necessary to effectively perform command responsibilities.

421. SCHEDULING POLICIES. The following policies apply to scheduling FAR 121.434(c)(1)(ii) observations:

A. Geographic Responsibility. The flight standards district office (FSDO) having responsibility for the area in which the airman to be observed is domiciled is responsible for conducting the observation or arranging for an inspector from another office to accomplish the observation.

B. Inspector Qualifications. The inspector must be qualified in the category, class, and group of aircraft to be used, but does not need to be qualified in the aircraft type. An inspector must be type rated in an airplane which has a passenger capacity of 30 seats or more or a payload capacity of more than 7,000 pounds to conduct the observation on an airplane of these capacities.

C. Scheduling Prerequisites. The FAA observation is not the line check required by FAR 121.440; therefore, the inspector does not have to observe a line check being administered by the check airman. The preferred procedure for an FAA inspector to observe the PIC's performance during the latter stages of OE. Earlier observation, though allowed, may result in a need for additional observation. The POI should coordinate with the operator for effective scheduling of OE observations to preclude the

need for follow-up observations. Before assigning an inspector to accomplish an observation, the supervising geographic inspector shall obtain assurance from the operator that a candidate will be ready for observation.

423. PRACTICES AND PROCEDURES. The following practices and procedures shall be observed by inspectors while observing PIC candidates.

A. Introduction. The inspector shall meet the crew and gain access to the aircraft through the normal procedures for conducting en route inspection. In addition, the inspector shall discuss the conduct of the flight with both the check airman and the candidate and shall review the candidate's progress to date. During the discussion, the inspector should ensure that the check airman and the candidate understand the following information:

(1) The FAA recognizes that the check airman is the PIC. The candidate, however, is expected to perform all of the duties of the PIC. The check airman is expected to act as a qualified second-in-command (SIC) and, if necessary, as an instructor.

(2) As the actual PIC, the check airman is ultimately responsible for the safety of the flight. Should a situation arise that involves in-flight safety, the check airman must take charge of the situation.

B. Conduct of the Observation. The inspector who performs the observation should evaluate the items specified in volume 6, chapter 2, section 4, "Cockpit En Route Inspections." The inspector should be as unobtrusive as possible during the flight and avoid intruding into the interaction between crewmembers. The inspector should not conduct oral examinations during the flight. Should an event occur that raises a question about the candidate's knowledge, the inspector should take notes and make inquiries after the flight.

C. Post-Flight Procedures. After the flight, the check airman and the inspector should conduct a debriefing. The check airman's comments are beneficial as the check airman is more familiar with specific company procedures.

(1) If the candidate's performance during the flight meets the required standards, the inspector shall inform the candidate and the check airman that the observation is complete. If the candidate's performance does not yet meet required standards, the inspector shall indicate the areas in which the candidate's performance needs to improve and that another observation has to be made before the candidate can enter revenue service as a PIC. The inspector should inform the candidate that, before the next observation, the candidate must receive further training, and a check airman must again certify that the candidate is ready for the observation.

(2) The inspector should report an incomplete observation in the Program Tracking and Reporting Sub-system (PTRS) as an en route inspection (code 1624) with appropriate comments. Inspectors should record complete observations by using PTRS code 1631.

(3) If the inspector has indicated to the candidate that the observation is incomplete, because the candidate's

performance has not yet reached required standards, the inspector should contact the POI by telephone and provide a description of the candidate's performance so that the POI can take follow-up action.

425 PTRS INPUT. The observation of a check airman conducting OE for a flight crewmember, in conjunction with the requirement of FAR 121.434(c)(1)(ii), is recorded in the PTRS by using activity code 1631 (check airman surveillance), with 1356 in the tracking field. When the 1631 activity code is used, the check airman shall be entered in section I. A separate PTRS entry shall be made by using the activity code 1356, with 1631 in the tracking field. When the 1356 activity code is used, the qualifying PIC shall be entered in section I. This method of using two PTRS entries is unique to the OE observation activity. Because there is no activity time associated with the 1300 series of PTRS activity codes, "Organizational Technical Administration." this method is not considered to be "double logging."

426. - 436. RESERVED

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