

NOTICE

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION

N 8900.563

National Policy

Effective Date:
10/6/20

Cancellation Date:
10/6/21

SUBJ: OpSpec A010 Nonmandatory Revision and Associated Order 8900.1
Guidance for Section 322 of the FAA Reauthorization Act of 2018 Compliance

1. Purpose of This Notice. This notice announces a nonmandatory revision to Operations Specification (OpSpec) A010, Aviation Weather Information, for Title 14 of the Code of Federal Regulations (14 CFR) part 135 certificate holders, including combined 14 CFR part 121/135 certificate holders, conducting operations under part 135. This notice provides information regarding these changes to OpSpec A010 and the associated guidance in Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Order 8900.1, Volume 3, Chapter 18, Section 3, Part A Operations Specifications—General, OpSpec A010; Volume 3, Chapter 26, Section 2, Safety Assurance System: Regulatory Sources of Aviation Weather Information and Aviation Weather Information Systems—Parts 91K, 121, and 135; and Volume 3, Chapter 26, Section 8, Safety Assurance System: Operations in Compliance with the FAA Reauthorization Act of 2018, Section 322—Part 135.

2. Audience. The primary audience for this notice is the Flight Standards Safety Assurance offices' aviation safety inspectors (ASI) assigned to part 135 operators and combined part 121/135 operators (operating under their part 135 authority) conducting instrument flight rule (IFR) operations in Alaska and Hawaii. The secondary audience includes Safety Standards and Foundational Business offices.

3. Where You Can Find This Notice. You can find this notice on the MyFAA employee website at https://employees.faa.gov/tools_resources/orders_notices. Inspectors can access this notice through the Flight Standards Information Management System (FSIMS) at <https://fsims.avs.faa.gov>. Operators can find this notice on the FAA's website at <https://fsims.faa.gov>. This notice is available to the public at https://www.faa.gov/regulations_policies/orders_notices.

4. Background. Section 322 of the FAA Reauthorization Act of 2018, Public Law 115-254 (October 5, 2018) (Title 49 of the United States Code (49 U.S.C.) § 44720 note), requires the Administrator to permit a part 135 air carrier to operate to a destination with a published approach, in a noncontiguous State under IFR and conduct an instrument approach without a destination Meteorological Aerodrome Report (METAR) if a current Area Forecast (FA), supplemented by noncertified local weather observations (such as weather cameras and human observations) is available, and an alternate airport that has a weather report is specified. In

addition, Section 322 requires the operator to have approved procedures for departure and en route weather evaluation.

5. Guidance. In compliance with Section 322, the FAA has amended/created the following:

a. OpSpec A010. OpSpec A010 has been revised to provide a means for recording the approvals of noncertified weather information techniques and weather evaluation procedures. This notice contains the following:

- Sample OpSpec A010 template in Appendix A that applies to part 135 operators that are utilizing specific Section 322 provisions.
- Section II of the sample OpSpec A010 template in Appendix B, which applies to combined part 121/135 operators that are conducting operations under part 135 and are utilizing the specific Section 322 provisions.

b. Order 8900.1. Changes to the guidance include:

(1) Volume 3, Chapter 18, Section 3, OpSpec A010. The revisions include explanatory information with respect to properly amending OpSpec A010 to reflect airports where noncertified local weather observations or weather camera image interpretations may be conducted, FAA-approved techniques and observer/interpreter training/evaluation procedures in the operator's General Operations Manual (GOM), and FAA procedures for evaluation of departure and en route weather information.

(2) Volume 3, Chapter 26, Section 2. The updates provide step-by-step instructions for an approval process in accordance with part 135, § 135.213(b). Section 135.213(b) generally requires weather observations to be made and given to pilots and operators from the destination airport being operated to under IFR. However, the Administrator may approve a deviation through issuance of OpSpecs allowing the use of weather observations taken at a location not at the airport where the IFR operations are conducted. The OpSpec is issued after an investigation by the National Weather Service (NWS) and the responsible Flight Standards office is able to determine that the standards of safety for that operation would allow the deviation from § 135.213(b). In general, operators should use the relief already available under § 135.213(b), if applicable. When an operator uses an approved alternative weather source under § 135.213(b), relief under Section 322 is not available because it is not necessary.

(3) Volume 3, Chapter 26, Section 8. This new section explains the evaluation and approval requirements for noncertified supplemental weather information and for approval of a departure and en route weather evaluation as afforded by Section 322.

6. Action. This is a nonmandatory revision to OpSpec A010 for part 135 certificate holders, including combined part 121/135 certificate holders, conducting operations under part 135.

a. Principal Operations Inspectors (POI). POIs with part 135 certificate management responsibility for certificate holders operating IFR in noncontiguous States should review the revised Order 8900.1 guidance listed above for approving noncertified weather information and weather evaluation procedures, and for reissuing OpSpec A010, if applicable. If the certificate holder does not serve destinations for which Section 322 applies, or if the POI does not receive a

request from a part 135 certificate holder to conduct an instrument approach without a destination METAR under Section 322, there is no need to reissue a certificate holder's A010. POIs should provide the information contained in this notice to certificate holders conducting part 135 operations for whom they have oversight responsibility, alerting them to their options to provide IFR part 135 on-demand and scheduled service to destination airports that are not served by METARs.

b. Flight Standards Offices. Air Transportation Division (AFS-200) personnel will conduct a teleconference with all affected Flight Standards offices immediately after publication of this notice and associated guidance/OpSpecs to review the policies and procedures that will be recorded in the guidance listed above, OpSpec A010, and Advisory Circular (AC) 135-45, Use of Noncertified Weather Observations in Noncontiguous States. Any inspector who receives a request from a part 135 operator to conduct an instrument approach without a destination METAR under Section 322 and needs further assistance should contact the Flight Standards office where their certificate is managed, at their discretion.

7. Disposition. We will incorporate the information in this notice into FAA Order 8900.1 before this notice expires. Direct questions or comments concerning the information in this notice to the Air Transportation Division (AFS-200) at 9-AFS-200-Correspondence@faa.gov.



Robert C. Carty
Deputy Executive Director, Flight Standards Service

**Appendix A. Sample OpSpec A010, Aviation Weather Information:
14 CFR Part 135**

- a. The certificate holder conducting 14 CFR Part 135 operations is authorized to use weather reporting facilities operated by the National Weather Service (NWS), a source approved by the NWS, or a source approved by the Administrator.
- b. The Administrator approves the certificate holder to use the following sources of aviation weather information:
- See Table 1.
 - The NWS or a source approved by the NWS (within the 48 contiguous United States and the District of Columbia).
 - The National Weather Services for those United States and its territories located outside of the 48 contiguous States.
 - U.S. and North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) military observing and forecasting sources.
 - Members of the World Meteorological Organization (WMO).
 - Active meteorological offices operated by a foreign State that subscribe to the standards and practices of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) conventions.
 - A meteorological station, or automated observation weather product, authorized by an ICAO Member State.
 - For reports of adverse weather phenomena: Pilot Weather Reports (PIREP) provided by aircraft of the same, or similar, type and size.
 - For reports of adverse weather phenomena: Aircraft Reports (AIREP) provided by aircraft of the same or similar type and size.
 - For operations in a noncontiguous State under instrument flight rules (IFR) to conduct an instrument approach to a destination with a published approach without a destination Meteorological Aerodrome Report (METAR) if a current Area Forecast (FA), supplemented by noncertified local weather observations (such as weather cameras and human observations) is available, and an alternate airport that has a weather report is specified, in accordance with the limitations and procedures in subparagraph e of this operations specification.
- c. The certificate holder is approved to use an Enhanced Weather Information System (EWINS) to obtain and disseminate aviation weather information for the control of flight operations.

Table 1 – EWINS

Name of Weather Source	Name of Manual Containing EWINS	Date of Initial Approval of EWINS	Date of Latest Revision of EWINS

d. In accordance with Part 135, § 135.213(b), the certificate holder is authorized to deviate from § 135.213(a) in accordance with A005 of these operations specifications and Table 2 of this operations specification.

Table 2 – Deviation in Accordance with § 135.213(b)

Location of Operation	Location of Weather Observation	Date of National Weather Service Concurrence	Conditions and Limitations	Revision Date of Conditions and Limitations

e. If authorized in subparagraph b, the certificate holder may operate to destinations listed in Table 3 below with a published approach in a noncontiguous State under IFR and conduct an instrument approach without a destination METAR in accordance with the approved departure and en route weather evaluation procedures contained in section _____ of the operator’s General Operations Manual (GOM).

Table 3 – Airports Served by FAA-Approved Noncertified Supplemental Weather Information

Airport ID	FAA-Approved Weather Info Techniques	GOM Reference	REV.

**Appendix B. Sample OpSpec A010, Aviation Weather Information:
14 CFR Part 121/135**

SECTION I. Part 121 Aviation Weather Information

a. The certificate holder conducting 14 CFR Part 121 operations shall use the sources of aviation weather information described in this operations specification.

b. In accordance with Part 121, § 121.101, a certificate holder conducting domestic or flag operations is authorized to use the following sources of aviation weather information:

(1) For operations within the 48 contiguous United States and the District of Columbia, use weather reports and forecasts prepared by the U.S. National Weather Service (NWS) or a source approved by the U.S. NWS in accordance with § 121.101(b)(1).

(2) Except as provided in subparagraph b(3) or d of this operations specification, for operations outside the 48 contiguous United States and the District of Columbia, the Administrator approves the certificate holder to use the following source(s) of weather reports in accordance with § 121.101(b)(2):

- See Table 2 (Section I).
- The National Weather Services for those United States and its territories located outside of the 48 contiguous States.
- U.S. and North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) military observing and forecasting sources.
- Members of the World Meteorological Organization (WMO).
- Active meteorological offices operated by a foreign State that subscribe to the standards and practices of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) conventions.
- A meteorological station, or automated observation weather product, authorized by an ICAO Member State.
- For reports of adverse weather phenomena: Pilot Weather Reports (PIREP) provided by aircraft of the same or similar type and size.
- For reports of adverse weather phenomena: Aircraft Reports (AIREP) provided by aircraft of the same or similar type and size.

(3) The certificate holder is approved to use the Adverse Weather Phenomena Reporting and Forecast System(s) referenced in Table 1 (Section I) below. If the certificate holder is approved to use an Enhanced Weather Information System (EWINS) in Table 2 (Section I) of this operations specification, select “See Table 2 (Section I)” in the first column of Table 1 (Section I) below.

Table 1 – Adverse Weather Phenomena Reporting and Forecast System

Name of Weather Source	Name of Manual Containing the Adverse Weather Phenomena Reporting and Forecast System	Date of Initial Approval of the Adverse Weather Phenomena Reporting and Forecast System	Date of Latest Revision of the Adverse Weather Phenomena Reporting and Forecast System

(4) In accordance with § 121.101(c): When using forecasts to control domestic and flag flight movements, the certificate holder will use weather forecasts prepared from the weather reports provided by a source listed in subparagraph b(1), b(2), or b(3) of this operations specification.

c. In accordance with § 121.119, a certificate holder conducting supplemental operations may use the following sources of aviation weather information:

(1) Within the United States, use weather reports prepared and released by the U.S. NWS or a source approved by the Weather Bureau in accordance with § 121.119(a). For the purpose of this operations specification, the “Weather Bureau” is represented by the U.S. NWS.

(2) Except as provided in subparagraph d of this operations specification, outside of the United States, or at U.S. military airports, where U.S. NWS-issued or approved reports are not available, the Administrator approves the certificate holder to use the following source(s) of weather reports in accordance with § 121.119(a):

- See Table 2 (Section I).
- The National Weather Services for those United States and its territories located outside of the 48 contiguous States.
- U.S. and North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) military observing and forecasting sources.
- Members of the World Meteorological Organization (WMO).
- Active meteorological offices operated by a foreign State that subscribe to the standards and practices of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) conventions.
- A meteorological station, or automated observation weather product, authorized by an ICAO Member State.
- For reports of adverse weather phenomena: Pilot Weather Reports (PIREP) provided by aircraft of the same or similar type and size.
- For reports of adverse weather phenomena: Aircraft Reports (AIREP) provided by aircraft of the same or similar type and size.

(3) In accordance with § 121.119(b): When using forecasts to control supplemental flight movements, the certificate holder will use weather forecasts prepared from the weather reports provided by a source listed in subparagraph c(1) or c(2) of this operations specification.

d. The certificate holder is approved to use an EWINS to obtain and disseminate aviation weather information for the control of flight operations.

Table 2 – EWINS—Part 121

Name of Weather Source	Name of Manual Containing EWINS	Date of Initial Approval of EWINS	Date of Latest Revision of EWINS

SECTION II. Part 135 Aviation Weather Information

a. The certificate holder conducting 14 CFR Part 135 operations is authorized to use weather reporting facilities operated by the National Weather Service (NWS), a source approved by the NWS, or a source approved by the Administrator.

b. The Administrator approves the certificate holder to use the following sources of aviation weather information:

- See Table 1 (Section II).
- The NWS or a source approved by the NWS (within the 48 contiguous United States and the District of Columbia).
- The National Weather Services for those United States and its territories located outside of the 48 contiguous States.
- U.S. and North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) military observing and forecasting sources.
- Members of the World Meteorological Organization (WMO).
- Active meteorological offices operated by a foreign State that subscribe to the standards and practices of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) conventions.
- A meteorological station, or automated observation weather product, authorized by an ICAO Member State.
- For reports of adverse weather phenomena: Pilot Weather Reports (PIREP) provided by aircraft of the same or similar type and size.
- For reports of adverse weather phenomena: Aircraft Reports (AIREP) provided by aircraft of the same or similar type and size.

For operations in a noncontiguous State under instrument flight rules (IFR) to conduct an instrument approach to a destination with a published approach without a destination Meteorological Aerodrome Report (METAR) if a current Area Forecast (FA), supplemented by noncertified local weather observations (such as weather cameras and human observations) is available, and an alternate airport that has a weather report is specified, in accordance with the limitations and procedures in subparagraph e of this operations specification.

c. The certificate holder is approved to use an Enhanced Weather Information System (EWINS) to obtain and disseminate aviation weather information for the control of flight operations.

Table 1 – EWINS—Part 135

Name of Weather Source	Name of Manual Containing EWINS	Date of Initial Approval of EWINS	Date of Latest Revision of EWINS

d. In accordance with Part 135, § 135.213(b), the certificate holder is authorized to deviate from § 135.213(a) in accordance with A005 of these operations specifications and Table 2 (Section II) of this operations specification.

Table 2 – Deviation in Accordance with § 135.213(b)

Location of Operation	Location of Weather Observation	Date of National Weather Service Concurrence	Conditions and Limitations	Revision Date of Conditions and Limitations

e. If authorized in subparagraph b, the certificate holder may operate to destinations listed in Table 3 below with a published approach in a noncontiguous State under IFR and conduct an instrument approach without a destination METAR in accordance with the approved departure and en route weather evaluation procedures contained in section _____ of the operator’s General Operations Manual (GOM).

Table 3 – Airports Served by FAA-Approved Noncertified Supplemental Weather Information

Airport ID	FAA-Approved Weather Info Techniques	GOM Reference	REV.