

SUBJ: **CONFORMITY INSPECTION NOTIFICATION PROCESS**

1. PURPOSE. This order provides all offices of the Aircraft Certification Service a streamlined type certification (TC) conformity inspection notification process. It authorizes a procedure for TC conformity inspection notifications between the applicant's Designated Engineering Representative (DER) and its designated inspection representative when the inspections are to take place in the United States. In this order, a designated inspection representative means a Designated Manufacturing Inspection Representative (DMIR), Designated Airworthiness Representative (DAR), or an Organizational Designated Airworthiness Representative (ODAR), in the applicant's geographic area.

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2. DISTRIBUTION. Distribute this order to the branch level in the Aircraft Certification Service; to the branch level in the Aircraft Certification Directorate offices; to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Academy and the Regulatory Support Division; to all Flight Standards District Offices; to all International Field Offices, the Brussels Aircraft Certification Division, International Area Offices; to Aircraft Certification Field Offices; and to Manufacturing Inspection District and Satellite Offices.

3. BACKGROUND. The information in this order originally appeared in Notice 8110.76, "DER to Designated Inspection Representative Notification Process," dated September 25, 1998, which has expired. All the information in that notice has been incorporated into this order.

4. USING APPLICANTS' IMPROVED PROCESS.

a. During TC programs, an experienced applicant's DER typically sends a conformity request to the Aircraft Certification Office (ACO) for approval. The ACO then sends the approved conformity request to the Manufacturing Inspection District Office (MIDO) principal inspector (PI) for review. In some locations, the request is forwarded by the ACO to the manufacturing specialist for tracking and then routed to the MIDO. Finally, if the MIDO chooses to delegate the inspection, they send the request to the designated inspection representative to perform the inspection. The return of the completed conformity request and conformity inspection record is usually processed in reverse through the same personnel before final closure.

b. Several ACOs and MIDOs streamlined their process for certain applicants per FAA Order 8110.4, Type Certification. This speeded up the notification of conformity inspections to designated inspection representatives. It also made better use, in the FAA, of our personnel and designees.

c. We now offer that streamlined process as a standard for requesting conformity inspections. For this to work, the FAA and applicant must:

(1) Define the most effective conformity notification process before the TC board meetings;
and

(2) Define criteria for determining ACO, MIDO, and designee involvement.

d. This order is not intended to cancel, revoke, or modify existing agreements, approved by the applicant's ACO and MIDO, that meet the intent of this order.

5. NOTIFICATION PROCESS ELIGIBILITY. This process applies to applicants with FAA certification experience who use DERs for TC services. Limitations we impose on using this process are based on the applicant's ability to schedule and perform conformity inspections identified with the ACO and MIDO. Additionally, those who use this process must adhere to procedures in the current Order 8110.4.

6. UPFRONT TC BOARD CONFORMITY PLAN.

a. The most important component for a successful conformity notification is the up-front conformity plan. The conformity plan allows both the applicant and us to better coordinate conformity inspections. The plan will detail the areas of direct involvement for the ACO, manufacturing specialist, and MIDO, as well as those areas the applicant is authorized to use direct notification of conformity requirements.

b. One of the expected benefits of using the conformity plan is identifying which parts or tests are acceptable for the DERs to directly produce an FAA Form 8120-10, Request For Conformity.

c. If the applicant and ACO previously agree, the applicant's DER may generate this form and the applicant's inspection representative may perform the conformity inspection without prior ACO review. Also defined in the plan will be those Form 8120-10s which the ACO will still need to review before a conformity inspection. Lastly, the MIDO would assist in determining which conformity inspections are eligible for direct DER notification to the designated inspection representative.

d. It is important for success that the applicant address details of conformity delegation early in the certification program. The FAA project manager should notify the applicant at the earliest possible opportunity of the need for upfront planning and development of the conformity plan, ideally before the initial TC board meeting. The applicant must write the plan and have it authorized by the ACO and MIDO representatives before issuing the first conformity request. The applicant also should know that if they do not ask to use the direct conformity notification process early in the program and don't do any upfront planning, they won't be able to use this process.

e. The applicant needs to identify by name a DER coordinator (not necessarily a DER) in the early stage of the certification program. The primary purposes of the DER coordinator are to ensure efficient scheduling of the designated inspection representatives, and to be a focal point with the ACO. Depending on scheduling and locations of the conformity inspections, the DER coordinator may identify the designated inspection representatives who will receive conformity requests. Based on criteria in paragraph 6.g. of this order, we will approve specific DERs and designated inspection representatives for the process.

f. The applicant needs to generate a matrix and schedule for conformity inspection requirements as part of the overall certification plan. As a minimum, the matrix will list:

- (1) The proposed conformity activities,
- (2) When each proposed activity is to take place (to the extent possible,) and
- (3) Whether the activity will have ACO and/or MIDO direct involvement.

Note: The ACO must also authorize the method for resolving unsatisfactory conformity findings.

g. The conformity plan shall identify the ACO and MIDO authorized communication flow. Designee involvement identified in the conformity plan is based mainly on the following conditions:

- (1) The applicant's upfront planning with the ACO and MIDO.
- (2) The designee's technical and regulatory expertise.
- (3) Criticality of the part or component.
- (4) The applicant's and designee's working history with the FAA.

- (5) Common parts versus unique parts (or materials/processes).
- (6) Certain training completion (such as training for designated inspection representatives).
- (7) Confidence in the applicant's quality systems (such as production and prototype).

h. The ACO will define the method for tracking all conformity requests and maintaining a master list during conformity plan development. The DER coordinator will control any tracking by the applicant for the FAA.

i. Included in the conformity plan will be procedures for the applicant's designated inspection representative to perform conformity inspections outside the managing MIDO's geographic area. Paragraph 8 of this order covers this. Both the managing MIDO and designated inspection representative should ensure satisfactory communication with the geographic MIDO where the inspection is performed.

j. Where the ACO or MIDO limits or denies applicant participation in the conformity notification process, the applicable office should provide sufficient information to the applicant explaining the reasons for limitation or denial. This explanation should help the applicant prepare better for future participation in the conformity notification process.

k. Valid criteria for determining ACO and MIDO involvement in requests for conformity inspections are in FAA Order 8110.4. These include previous designee performance, applicant experience, designee expertise, part criticality, and the history of unsatisfactory/satisfactory findings. Existing designee supervision requirements remain in effect.

7. NOTIFICATION PROCEDURES.

a. If authorized in the conformity plan by the ACO and MIDO, the most direct flow for a conformity request is the DER generating and forwarding Form 8120-10 to the DER coordinator. This person then sends the form to the designated inspection representative, with a copy to the ACO. It is important that the designated inspection representative receives SUFFICIENT NOTIFICATION to plan for the inspection. The DER coordinator should try to make the conformity schedule available to all participating designated inspection representatives. Appendix 1 to this order, "DER to Designated Inspection Representative Notification Process" is a flowchart of the conformity notification process.

b. Throughout the TC program, we require the applicant to perform conformity inspections. The ACO determines whether the Form 8120-10 requires ACO review BEFORE performing the conformity inspection (hereafter called an "ACO pre-inspection review.")

c. If a DER has permission to generate a specific Form 8120-10 WITHOUT the ACO pre-inspection review, the DER completes the form and sends it to the DER coordinator. The DER

coordinator sends an information copy to the ACO, and notifies any other involved ACOs of the request.

d. If a DER has permission to generate a specific Form 8120-10 WITH the ACO pre-inspection review, the DER generates a DRAFT form and sends it to the DER coordinator. The DER coordinator forwards the draft Form 8120-10 to the ACO for review before performing the inspection. During the initial planning stage, the MIDO may request copies of all DER-produced Form 8120-10s. If the ACO agrees, the DER coordinator also will issue a tracking number for Form 8120-10.

e. Once a Form 8120-10 is ready for distribution to an inspector, the appropriate reviewer must determine if the MIDO has authorized direct submittal of the form to a designated inspection representative. If so, the DER coordinator or ACO (depending on who did the final form review) sends it to the designated inspection representative to perform the conformity inspection. If not, the DER coordinator or ACO (depending on who did the final form review) sends it to the managing MIDO's manufacturing specialist or PI within two business days of approval. Then the manufacturing specialist or PI forwards Form 8120-10 to the appropriate designated inspection representative within four business days.

f. If the conformity inspection is outside the managing MIDO's geographic area, Form 8120-10 is forwarded per paragraph **8.** of this order.

g. There are times during a TC program when we determine the MIDO inspector, rather than an agreed-to designated inspection representative, should perform a particular conformity inspection. Here, we will tell the applicant of the reason, such as designee supervision or special process review.

h. If the inspection designee determines unsatisfactory findings, they should contact the DER as soon as possible. The ACO or DER will disposition unsatisfactory findings as agreed to in the conformity plan. Periodically, the ACO and MIDO should review designated inspection representative unsatisfactory findings, and DER dispositions of those findings.

i. When all unsatisfactory findings are closed, the conformity paperwork is sent to the appropriate office (the designee's MIDO/MISO, ACO, or DER coordinator) per the conformity plan. Finally, the paperwork is sent to the organization responsible for tracking FAA Form 8120-10 for closure.

8. NON-LOCAL CONFORMITY REQUEST.

a. Applicants use this procedure when the conformity inspection will be outside the managing MIDO's geographic area. The managing MIDO may authorize the designated inspection representative to perform these types of conformity inspections on a trip-by-trip basis, or for a specific time, as defined in FAA Order 8100.8, Designee Management Handbook.

b. The DER coordinator or ACO, depending on who performed the Form 8120-10 final review, sends it to the managing MIDO within two business days of final review. The sender simultaneously notifies the designated inspection representative to submit FAA Form 8130-13, Designee Geographic Expansion Authorization, to the managing MIDO for approval.

c. The managing MIDO coordinates with the geographic MIDO where the inspection will be performed and, if authorized by the geographic MIDO, sends Forms 8120-10 and 8130-13 to the designated inspection representative within four business days. The managing MIDO also sends a copy of Form 8130-13 to the geographic MIDO where the inspection will be performed. The designated inspection representative is now authorized to travel, and do the conformity inspection.

Note: Any designated inspection representative planning to perform a conformity inspection in another geographic area must comply with the requirements in Order 8100.8 BEFORE traveling.

d. After satisfactorily completing the conformity inspection, the designated inspection representative sends the complete conformity package to the managing MIDO's manufacturing specialist or MIDO/MISO PI for review. The managing manufacturing specialist or MIDO/MISO PI forwards the package to the appropriate office (the ACO or DER coordinator) as defined in the conformity plan. Finally, the ACO or DER coordinator sends the package to the organization responsible for tracking Form 8120-10 for closure.

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APPENDIX 1. DER TO DESIGNATED INSPECTION REPRESENTATIVE NOTIFICATION PROCESS

