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**U.S. Department  
of Transportation**  
Federal Aviation  
Administration

# Advisory Circular

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**Subject:** Supplemental Information for the  
Creation of Operating Procedures  
and Pilot Training Subjects Related  
to OpSpec/LOA B048

**Date:** DRAFT

**AC No:** 136-B048

**Initiated by:** AFS-200

**Change:**

Operations Specification (OpSpec)/Letter of Authorization (LOA) B048, Commercial Air Tour Operations Below 1,500 Feet Above the Surface in the State of Hawaii, provides certificate holders (CH) and operators with an authorization to conduct commercial air tour operations under Title 14 of the Code of Federal Regulations (14 CFR) part [91](#), [121](#), or [135](#) in the State of Hawaii at altitudes below 1,500 feet above the surface, as set forth in 14 CFR part [136](#) appendix [A](#), section 6(a).

For the purpose of this advisory circular (AC), unless otherwise noted, CH refers to part 119 CHs who may conduct commercial air tour operations in the State of Hawaii under part 121, 135, or 121/135 combined CHs. These authorizations are granted with conditions and limitations to enable CHs or operators to remain in visual meteorological conditions (VMC) and avoid entering unforecasted instrument meteorological conditions (IMC). The authorization is not intended to be used for flight planning, and does not authorize a CH or operator to conduct a commercial air tour operation when the forecasted weather conditions would not permit the operation to remain in VMC at altitudes above 1,500 feet above the surface for the duration of the planned flight.

This AC describes a manner in which CHs or operators who wish to obtain the authorization given through the revised or reinstated OpSpec/LOA B048 may utilize as a tool to create their specific operating procedures and pilot training subjects, as they pertain to meeting the conditions and limitations of OpSpec/LOA B048.

The contents of this document do not have the force and effect of law and are not meant to bind the public in any way, and the document is intended only to provide information to the public regarding existing requirements under the law or agency policies.

Lawrence Fields  
Acting Executive Director, Flight Standards Service

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**CONTENTS**

<b>Paragraph</b>	<b>Page</b>
Chapter 1. General Information .....	1-1
1.1 Purpose of This Advisory Circular (AC).....	1-1
1.2 Audience .....	1-1
1.3 Where You Can Find This AC.....	1-1
1.4 Applicability .....	1-1
1.5 Related 14 CFR Parts.....	1-1
1.6 Related Reading Material (current editions).....	1-2
1.7 Definitions, Abbreviations, and Terms.....	1-2
1.8 AC Feedback Form .....	1-4
Chapter 2. Regulatory Requirement and Authorization .....	2-1
2.1 Regulatory Requirement .....	2-1
2.2 Authorization .....	2-1
2.3 OpSpec/LOA B048.....	2-1
2.4 Operations Over Units of the NPS.....	2-1
Chapter 3. Authorization Process .....	3-1
3.1 Process Overview.....	3-1
3.2 Step 1: CH or Operator Notification.....	3-1
3.3 Step 2: Application Package Submission .....	3-1
3.4 Step 3: FAA Application Package Review .....	3-3
3.5 Step 4: Changes to Application Package .....	3-3
3.6 Step 5: Decision for Authorization Issuance .....	3-3
Chapter 4. Operating Procedures .....	4-1
4.1 Design, Description, and Definition of Areas of Operations.....	4-1
4.2 Reporting Points, Radio Communications and Frequencies, Use of Aircraft Lights, and ADS-B Procedures .....	4-1
4.3 Minimum Flight Altitudes .....	4-2
4.4 Procedures for Flight Operations Below 1,500 Feet.....	4-2
4.5 Weather Minimums for Commercial Air Tour Operations Below 1,500 Feet Above the Surface.....	4-3
4.6 Weather Information and Resources.....	4-3

4.7 Unforecasted Weather Procedures ..... 4-3

4.8 Safety Risk Analysis ..... 4-3

4.9 Prohibited Operations ..... 4-3

Chapter 5. Aircraft Equipment..... 5-1

    5.1 List of Instruments and Equipment..... 5-1

Chapter 6. Pilot Training..... 6-1

    6.1 New Hire/Initial/Recurrent Pilot Ground and Flight Training ..... 6-1

    6.2 Requalification for Ground and Flight..... 6-2

    6.3 Aircraft-Specific Training..... 6-2

    6.4 KSSA Familiarization Flights..... 6-3

    6.5 Initial or Annual Flight Observations ..... 6-3

    6.6 Instructor Qualifications ..... 6-4

    6.7 Pilot Training and Flight Observation Documentation and Recordkeeping..... 6-4

    6.8 Training Subjects ..... 6-5

        Table 6-1. Training Subjects and Standards ..... 6-6

    6.9 Courseware ..... 6-7

    6.10 Supplemental Courseware ..... 6-7

## CHAPTER 1. GENERAL INFORMATION

- 1.1 Purpose of This Advisory Circular (AC).** The information provided in this AC is intended to assist certificate holders (CH) and operators with the development of operational processes and procedures and the pilot training recommended as part of the Operations Specification (OpSpec)/Letter of Authorization (LOA) B048, Commercial Air Tour Operations Below 1,500 Feet Above the Surface in the State of Hawaii, application package. OpSpec/LOA B048 provides the CH or operator with authorization to conduct commercial air tour operations below 1,500 feet above the surface in the State of Hawaii in order to remain in visual meteorological conditions (VMC) and avoid entering unforecasted instrument meteorological conditions (IMC). The authorization is not intended to be used for flight planning, and does not authorize a CH or operator to conduct a commercial air tour operation when the forecasted weather conditions would not permit the operation to remain in VMC at altitudes above 1,500 feet above the surface for the duration of the planned flight.
- 1.1.1** The authorization is given through OpSpec B048 to Title 14 of the Code of Federal Regulations (14 CFR) part [119](#) CH applicants or through LOA B048 to operators who conduct commercial air tour operations under 14 CFR part [91](#) and in accordance with part 91, § [91.147](#). The contents of this document do not have the force and effect of law and are not meant to bind the public in any way, and the document is intended only to provide information to the public regarding existing requirements under the law or agency policies.
- 1.2 Audience.** The primary intended audience is the commercial air tour operators who conduct such operations in the State of Hawaii and wish to obtain OpSpec/LOA B048.
- 1.3 Where You Can Find This AC.** You can find this AC on the Federal Aviation Administration’s (FAA) website at [https://www.faa.gov/regulations\\_policies/advisory\\_circulars](https://www.faa.gov/regulations_policies/advisory_circulars) and the Dynamic Regulatory System (DRS) at <https://drs.faa.gov>.
- 1.4 Applicability.** This AC is applicable to the commercial air tour operators in the State of Hawaii who wish to obtain an authorization to operate below the regulatory minimum flight altitudes of 14 CFR part [136](#) appendix [A](#), section 6(a), which restrict any type of commercial air tour operations at an altitude below 1,500 feet above the surface in the State of Hawaii.
- 1.4.1** The authorization to deviate from the minimum flight altitudes in part 136 appendix A, section 6(a), is given through OpSpec/LOA B048. The authorization does not allow deviation from part 136 appendix A, section 6(b), and is not intended to authorize operations closer than 1,500 feet to any person or property.
- 1.5 Related 14 CFR Parts.** Parts [61](#), [91](#), [120](#), [121](#), [135](#), and [136](#) appendix [A](#).

## 1.6 Related Reading Material (current editions).

### 1.6.1 ACs:

- AC [91-73](#), Parts 91 and 135 Single Pilot, Flight School Procedures During Taxi Operations.
- AC [120-74](#), Parts 91, 121, 125, and 135 Flightcrew Procedures During Taxi Operations.
- AC [120-92](#), Safety Management Systems for Aviation Service Providers.

### 1.6.2 FAA Order 8900.1 Sections:

- Volume 3, Chapter 2, Section 2, Responsibility for Part 91 Letters of Authorization (LOA), Certificates of Waiver (CoW), and Letters of Deviation Authority (LODA).
- Volume 3, Chapter 18, Section 4, Part B Operations Specifications—En Route Authorization and Limitations.
- Volume 3, Chapter 19, Section 7, Safety Assurance System: Flightcrew Qualification Curriculum Segments.
- Volume 3, Chapter 19, Section 10, Safety Assurance System: Flightcrew Recurrent Training Curriculums.

### 1.6.3 Other Documents. [FAA-H-8083-2](#), Risk Management Handbook.

## 1.7 Definitions, Abbreviations, and Terms.

**1.7.1** Air Tour Management Plan (ATMP). As stated in Title 49 of the United States Code (49 U.S.C.) § [40128\(b\)\(1\)\(A\)](#), documents established by the Administrator, in cooperation with the Director of National Parks Service, for any national park or tribal land for which such a plan is not in effect whenever a person applies for authority to conduct a commercial air tour operation over the park.

**1.7.2** Commercial Air Tour Flight Profile. For the purposes of this AC and OpSpec/LOA B048, a flight profile defined by the CH or operator that highlights one or more Known Site Specific Area(s) (KSSA), en route and transition segments, island-specific weather patterns, units of the National Park System (NPS), prohibited areas, or restricted areas. Flight profiles may be offered to the public as an individual flight or as a package by the specific CH or operator. (National Park Service is commonly abbreviated as NPS; however, this AC uses NPS to refer to the National Park System.)

**1.7.3** Commercial Air Tour Operation. As defined under 14 CFR part [110](#), § [110.2](#) and part 136, § [136.1\(d\)](#), a flight conducted for compensation or hire in an airplane or helicopter where a purpose of the flight is sightseeing. The FAA may consider the following factors in determining whether a flight is a commercial air tour:

- Whether there was a holding out to the public of willingness to conduct a sightseeing flight for compensation or hire;
  - Whether the person offering the flight provided a narrative that referred to areas or points of interest on the surface below the route of the flight;
  - The area of operation;
  - How often the person offering the flight conducts such flights;
  - The route of the flight;
  - The inclusion of sightseeing flights as part of any travel arrangement package;
  - Whether the flight in question would have been canceled based on poor visibility of the surface below the route of the flight; and
  - Any other factors that the FAA considers appropriate.
- 1.7.4** Cue-Based Weather Training. For the purposes of this AC and OpSpec/LOA B048, training that enables the pilot to evaluate weather patterns based on visual cues, and to determine from those cues if it is appropriate to continue the flight as planned or if an alternate plan is necessary. This training may include, but is not limited to, PowerPoint presentations, video or pictorial examples, and actual flights to train and evaluate the pilot’s ability to evaluate visual cues.
- 1.7.5** Flight/Ground Observation. For the purposes of this AC and OpSpec/LOA B048, a flight or ground observation in which the candidate being observed (in this case, a commercial air tour pilot in command (PIC)) flies in an aircraft with the Administrator or a person approved by the Administrator for CH, or designated by the operator for part 91 operators, or, in the event of a ground observation, responds to a series of questions addressed by the Administrator, or a person approved by the Administrator for CH, or designated by the operator for part 91 operators, where the candidate should demonstrate competency in the knowledge and skills that are expected when conducting commercial air tour operations and the important safety- and administrative-related aspects of the conditions and limitations of the authorization given through OpSpec/LOA B048.
- 1.7.6** Interim Operating Authority (IOA). Interim authority that is granted upon application for operating authority by the Administrator under § [136.41](#) to a commercial air tour operator for commercial air tour operations over a national park or tribal land for which the operator is an existing commercial air tour operator, as defined by § [136.33\(b\)](#).
- 1.7.7** Known Site Specific Area (KSSA). For the purposes of this AC and OpSpec/LOA B048, an area designated by latitude and longitude coordinates and altitudes and designed by the commercial air tour operator where an aircraft may fly and/or maneuver for the purpose of conducting commercial air tour operations, as defined by § 136.1(d).
- 1.7.8** Park Unit. As designated by the National Park Service, a park unit is any area of land or water administered by the Secretary of the Interior through the National Park Service for park, monument, historic, parkway, recreational, or other purposes.

- 1.7.9 Transition Segment.** For the purposes of this AC and OpSpec/LOA B048, an area created, designed, and selected by the CH or operator that an aircraft may utilize for the purpose of transitioning from one KSSA, or a commercial air tour flight profile, to another while conducting commercial air tour operations, as defined by § 136.1(d).
- 1.8 AC Feedback Form.** For your convenience, the AC Feedback Form is the last page of this AC. Note any deficiencies found, clarifications needed, or suggested improvements regarding the contents of this AC on the Feedback Form.

## CHAPTER 2. REGULATORY REQUIREMENT AND AUTHORIZATION

### 2.1 Regulatory Requirement. Part [136](#) appendix [A](#), section 6, states:

“*Minimum flight altitudes.* Except when necessary for takeoff and landing, or operating in compliance with an air traffic control clearance, *or as otherwise authorized by the Administrator* [emphasis added], no person may conduct an air tour in Hawaii:

- a) Below an altitude of 1,500 feet above the surface over all areas of the State of Hawaii, and,
- b) Closer than 1,500 feet to any person or property; or,
- c) Below any altitude prescribed by federal statute or regulation.”

### 2.2 Authorization. In the interest of augmenting aviation safety among commercial air tour operators in the State of Hawaii, the FAA provides CHs and operators with the option of obtaining an authorization to deviate from part 136 appendix A, section 6(a), to conduct commercial air tour operations below 1,500 feet above the surface in order to remain under VMC, only for the purpose of avoiding entering unforecasted IMC. The authorization is given by the Administrator through OpSpec/LOA B048. The authorization is not intended to allow deviation from part 136 appendix A, section 6(b), and does not authorize operations closer than 1,500 feet to any person or property.

#### 2.2.1 If a CH or operator wishes to obtain such an authorization, the Administrator will consider each individual application in its entirety and recommend the inclusion of additional aircraft equipage and inspections, safety risk analysis, FAA approval of pilot training, and FAA acceptance of operating procedures (as they pertain to flight operations below 1,500 feet above the surface, as authorized through OpSpec/LOA B048) before such authorization is issued to each specific Hawaii commercial air tour operator.

### 2.3 OpSpec/LOA B048. An air carrier CH may apply for and may be issued OpSpec B048, and a noncertificated commercial air tour operator who conducts operations under part [91](#) may apply for and may be issued LOA B048. Both of these authorizations are issued through the Flight Standards (FS) office responsible for safety oversight of the CH’s or operator’s operations; however, due to the unique environment of the islands of Hawaii, each individual application package will be reviewed and approved by the Honolulu FSDO prior to the issuance of OpSpec/LOA B048. The provisions and limitations contained in the CH’s or operator’s specific authorization given through OpSpec/LOA B048 are only applicable to commercial air tour flights conducted below 1,500 feet above the surface in the State of Hawaii in order to remain in VMC and avoid entering inadvertent IMC.

### 2.4 Operations Over Units of the NPS. In accordance with 49 U.S.C. § [40128](#), as codified in 14 CFR part 136 subpart [B](#), commercial air tour overflights of national parks are subject to additional restrictions, as outlined in a park unit ATMP, an FAA-issued IOA, or FAA/National Park Service/Operator Air Tour Voluntary Agreements (VA). National park units subject to such additional restrictions in the State of Hawaii include, but are



not limited to: Kaloko-Honokōhau National Historic Park (NHP), Pu‘uhonua o Hōnaunau NHP, Pu‘ukoholā Heiau National Historic Site (NHS), the USS *Arizona* Memorial, Hawaii Volcanoes National Park (NP), Haleakalā NP, and Kalaupapa NHP.

**2.4.1** Independent from the authorization given through OpSpec/LOA B048, all commercial air tour operators must (per § [136.37](#)) be authorized by OpSpec/LOA B057, as applicable, if they wish to conduct, or are currently conducting, operations over a national park under an ATMP, an IOA, or a VA within half a mile outside the boundary of any national park unit, or over an abutting tribal land, during which the aircraft flies (except as provided in § [136.35](#)):

- Below 5,000 feet above the surface (except for the purpose of takeoff or landing, or to take action to ensure the safe operation of the aircraft), or
- Less than 1 mile laterally from any geographic feature within the park (unless more than half a mile outside the boundary).

**Note:** CHs and operators should consider including the following statement as a part of the commercial air tour operator’s accepted operating procedures to ensure pilots maintain compliance with part 136:

“With respect to the airspace over, and within ½ mile of the boundaries of the following national park system units: Kaloko-Honokōhau NHP, Pu‘uhonua o Hōnaunau NHP, Pu‘ukoholā Heiau NHS, the USS *Arizona* Memorial, Hawaii Volcanoes NP, Haleakalā NP, and Kalaupapa NHP, the information contained within this document or manual applies to all commercial air tour operators, as defined by 14 CFR part 136, in receipt of interim operating authority (IOA). After Air Tour Management Plans (ATMP) are developed for these parks units, if the Administrator revises applicable provisions and limitations for safety that are more restrictive than those in the ATMP, the more restrictive parameters will apply. If, after an ATMP is developed, the language of this document or manual is less restrictive than the ATMP, the ATMP will control and this document or manual will be updated within 180 days of the ATMP being developed to reflect the more restrictive parameters set forth in the ATMP. This document or manual will not supersede, circumvent, or otherwise change any aspect of, or implementation of the ATMP, when developed, for these parks and/or park units. Please refer to the map legends for any specific national park or park unit flight restrictions.”

### CHAPTER 3. AUTHORIZATION PROCESS

- 3.1 Process Overview.** A commercial air tour operator may apply for and receive from the Administrator an authorization to be able to conduct commercial air tour operations below 1,500 feet above the surface in the State of Hawaii through OpSpec/LOA B048, in order to remain in VMC and avoid entering unforecasted IMC. After each applicant’s submission of the complete application package, the FAA will review each individual application package and will discuss any necessary changes or additional necessary information with the applicant. After the Administrator has found the application package to be acceptable, the Administrator may issue OpSpec/LOA B048, as applicable.
- 3.2 Step 1: CH or Operator Notification.** The CH or operator notifies the Administrator of their interest to obtain the authorization given through OpSpec/LOA B048. The notification may be submitted through the Safety Assurance System (SAS) platform, via email, or in a paper form (as applicable for part [91](#) operators or CHs).
- 3.3 Step 2: Application Package Submission.** A CH or operator submits the OpSpec/LOA B048 application package to the Administrator. Steps 1 and 2 may be done simultaneously. The original application package and any future revisions or changes to any portion of it should be submitted in a manner acceptable to the Administrator. It is recommended that the application package includes:
- 3.3.1** A letter addressed to the Administrator explaining the CH’s or operator’s need for the authorization given through OpSpec/LOA B048 and the nature and scope of the intended operations.
- 3.3.2** The CH’s or operator’s specific operating procedures, considering the items described in this AC, including the manner in which the CH or operator intends to manage ground and flight operations, weather minimums and weather sources, recordkeeping, any prohibited operations, etc., as further described in Chapter [4](#), Operating Procedures.
- 3.3.3** The name and a description and definition of the KSSA, and the CH’s or operator’s specific tour flight profiles. These areas may be described and defined by latitude and longitude coordinates, altitudes, and distances from reference points (as applicable), and a pictorial description of the CH’s or operator’s air tour flight profiles that is depicted on the applicable sections of the version of the Visual Flight Rules (VFR) Hawaiian Islands Sectional Chart that is current at the time of the application submission, as further explained in Chapter 4.
- 3.3.4** The list of the instrumentation on the aircraft to be utilized when conducting commercial air tour operations in the State of Hawaii under the authorization given through OpSpec/LOA B048. The aircraft list should also include the aircraft’s make, model, and series (M/M/S); registration number; and instrument flight rules (IFR) equipment installed. It is recommended to include instrumentation as required by § [91.205\(d\)](#), instruments and equipment capable of conducting at least one instrument approach procedure (IAP), and an operable Automatic Dependent Surveillance-Broadcast (ADS-B) In and Out system. In addition, the CH or operator should submit any applicable

Supplemental Type Certificate (STC), minimum equipment lists (MEL), and instrument inspection and maintenance program, as further explained in Chapter [5](#), Aircraft Equipment.

**3.3.5** The CH’s or operator’s specific pilot training (as further explained in Chapter [6](#), Pilot Training) should include:

- Pilot ground and flight training,
- Training on each KSSA where the applicant intends to operate,
- Ingress and egress locations to the different KSSAs,
- Geographical areas and islands in the State of Hawaii,
- Areas of interest and commonly flown sightseeing locations, and
- Training for IMC operations on the specific aircraft to be utilized.

**3.3.6** The manner in which the CH or operator intends to integrate the use of safety risk analysis to their operations.

**3.3.7** The manner in which the CH or operator intends to perform recordkeeping of, at a minimum, the following:

- Completed performance plans,
- Flight and maintenance logs,
- Pilot training records, and
- Attendance to the formal commercial air tour safety meeting.

**3.3.8** The operating procedures and pilot training, which should be presented in an organized manner and include, at a minimum, the following:

- Effective date,
- Purpose,
- Distribution list,
- Revision date,
- Explanation of changes,
- List of effective pages,
- Record of revisions,
- Table of contents, and
- Definitions, abbreviations, and symbols.

**3.4 Step 3: FAA Application Package Review.** The Honolulu FSDO will review each submitted package and will consider each CH’s and operator’s individual operation, discuss any necessary changes to the application package with the CH or operator, and make a determination if the authorization will be issued. If the Honolulu FSDO is not the responsible Flight Standards office for the CH or operator applicant, the applicant will submit the application package to their responsible Flight Standards office, and that office will then forward the complete application package to the Honolulu FSDO for coordination, review, and concurrence.

**3.5 Step 4: Changes to Application Package.** If necessary, the CH or operator will make changes to the application package and will resubmit the revised version of the application package to the Administrator, via the Honolulu FSDO, for further review.

**Note:** Steps 3 and 4 might be repeated if the Administrator finds that additional changes are necessary to any part of the application package.

**3.6 Step 5: Decision for Authorization Issuance.** The Administrator notifies the CH or operator in writing of the decision to issue or amend OpSpec B048, or issue LOA B048, and the addition of such to OpSpec A005, as applicable. If the CH’s or operator’s application is denied, the CH or operator may petition for reconsideration of that decision under 14 CFR part [119](#), § [119.51\(d\)](#).

**Note:** Steps 2 through 4 above should be repeated any time the CH or operator proposes to amend any documents that were relied upon in the determination of the issuance of the CH’s or operator’s original OpSpec/LOA B048, prior to the change or as requested by the Administrator. The Administrator will respond with acceptance/approval or a denial following the final submission of the CH’s or operator’s amendments to the documents submitted as part of the application package. The CH’s or operator’s utilization of an amendment to the documents that were relied upon in the determination of the issuance of the CH’s or operator’s OpSpec/LOA B048 that changes the FAA determination could lead to initiation of removal of the authorization through the § 119.51 process. Additionally, a CH or operator who has been issued the authorization via OpSpec/LOA B048 who requests amendment to the terms of that OpSpec should follow the amendment procedures in § 119.51.

**3.6.1** For CHs, the operating procedures document or manual accepted by the Administrator should be made an appendix to the CH’s required General Operations Manual (GOM), and any additional training approved by the Administrator will be included in, or made an appendix to, the CH’s required approved training program. As for part 91 operators, the operating procedures document or manual accepted by the Administrator, and the training document or manual approved by the Administrator, should be kept by the operator in a paper or electronic file to be utilized, as stated as a condition of LOA B048.

## CHAPTER 4. OPERATING PROCEDURES

- 4.1 Design, Description, and Definition of Areas of Operations.** The CH or operator may present to the Administrator for acceptance the following information in their operating procedures package:
- 4.1.1 KSSAs.** These areas may be designed by each specific CH or operator who applies for OpSpec/LOA B048 by the use of latitude and longitude coordinates, flight altitudes, and distances from reference points. The KSSAs may also include special restrictions applicable to each area that may be presented as a pictorial description over the specific applicable areas of the VFR Hawaiian Islands Sectional Chart in a manner acceptable to the Administrator.
- 4.1.2 Commercial Air Tour Flight Profiles.** The commercial air tour flight profiles may include specific flight altitudes, areas to be flown, areas to be avoided, identification of air traffic restricted or prohibited areas, flights in the general vicinity of specific landmarks or KSSAs, national park units, and transition segments, as defined and designed by the specific commercial air tour operator. Commercial air tour flight profiles may be presented as a pictorial description over the specific applicable areas of the VFR Hawaiian Islands Sectional Chart in a manner acceptable to the Administrator.
- 4.1.3 Transition Segments.** The commercial air tour transition segments should include specific altitudes and areas to be flown and/or flights in the general vicinity of specific landmarks or KSSAs, as defined and designed by the specific CH or operator. Transition segments may be presented as a pictorial description over the specific applicable areas of the VFR Hawaiian Islands Sectional Chart in a manner acceptable to the Administrator.
- 4.1.4 Island-Specific Weather Patterns.** The CH or operator should describe the climate tendencies of specific areas within each island in which they propose to operate under this authorization while conducting commercial air tour operations.
- 4.2 Reporting Points, Radio Communications and Frequencies, Use of Aircraft Lights, and ADS-B Procedures.** The CH or operator may present to the Administrator for acceptance the following information in their operating procedures package. The information may be presented in a similar manner as described in this AC or in any other manner acceptable to the Administrator. Additionally, it is recommended that the CH’s or operator’s commercial air tours operations manual or document emphasize the use of all installed lights, including landing, navigation, and anticollision lights, when operating below 1,500 feet above the surface and should encourage their use when operating above 1,500 feet above the surface.
- 4.2.1** In order to enhance safety, strict radio phraseology procedures should be considered for inclusion in the CH’s or operator’s procedures and should be adhered to. Specific radio frequencies for each KSSA are recommended to be established and monitored while conducting operations in and around the KSSA until it is necessary to switch frequencies. The CH or operator is recommended to have established position reports, as outlined in each of their specific island and operator-designed KSSAs.

- 4.2.2** The CH or operator may also present established procedures for entering, transiting, or exiting a KSSA. Absent any recommended KSSA-specific position reporting point, these procedures should consider including that all pilots will communicate the following in the interest of safety: area of flight, call sign, position (using cardinal directions), altitude, and intentions.
- 4.2.3** The CH or operator should ensure that installed ADS-B In and Out systems are operable and in transmit mode at all times.
- 4.3 Minimum Flight Altitudes.** The CH or operator should present to the Administrator the minimum flight altitudes at which it projects to operate under the authorization, which will not be authorized lower than the following:
- Flights over areas that are neither populated nor congested: No flights will be conducted at any altitude lower than 500 feet above the surface.
  - Flights over populated or congested areas, unless instructed by air traffic control (ATC): No flights will be conducted at any altitude lower than 1,500 feet above the surface.
- 4.4 Procedures for Flight Operations Below 1,500 Feet.** The CH or operator should present to the Administrator established communication procedures and actions to be taken by the pilot that explain the manner in which the flight may be continued in the event that there is a need to continue the flight operation at an altitude below 1,500 feet above the surface to avoid entering IMC. The communication procedures should include: area of flight, call sign, position (using cardinal directions), altitude, and intentions. It is recommended that communication procedures state that pilots not use call signs that have not been accepted by the Administrator and that use of any unnecessary conversation and/or “chatter” on accepted or published frequencies is highly discouraged while conducting commercial air tours (to include cruise flight). The CHs or operators should have established procedures to ensure that the pilots are knowledgeable of the following PIC responsibilities:
- 4.4.1** If an in-flight deviation necessitates immediate action or deviation from any of the CH’s or operator’s accepted operating procedures, the PIC may deviate to the extent necessary to meet that circumstance and in the interest of the safety of the flight.
- 4.4.2** The PIC of an aircraft is directly responsible for, and is the final authority as to, the safe operation of that aircraft.
- 4.4.3** In the event the pilot has to deviate from the CH’s or operator’s accepted operating procedures or regulatory requirements, the pilot should report the deviation event to the Chief Pilot or designated supervisor within 24 hours of such deviation.
- 4.4.4** Each person must comply with the requirements of § [91.3](#) and/or part [135](#), § [135.19](#), as applicable.

- 4.5 Weather Minimums for Commercial Air Tour Operations Below 1,500 Feet Above the Surface.** The CH or operator should present to the Administrator their weather minimums when conducting commercial air tour operations as part of their operating procedures for acceptance. These weather minimums must not be lower than those set under any regulatory requirement.
- 4.6 Weather Information and Resources.** The CH or operator may present to the Administrator the following weather-related information as part of their operating procedures for acceptance:
- 4.6.1** Prior to departure on each individual commercial air tour flight, and in addition to any other regulatory requirement, when weather conditions are marginal or available weather information is minimal prior to departure, pilots should obtain updated weather information while en route.
- 4.6.2** When weather conditions are encountered that a significant deviation from a commercial air tour flight profile is necessary, the PIC should use their best judgment to safely circumnavigate the weather. In doing so, the following should be accomplished:
- Cease performing commercial air tour duties, and only perform pilot duties necessary for aircraft maneuvering and continuation of the flight.
  - Transmit a radio report to an ATC facility, the FAA, or another aircraft of the intended route and a description of the weather conditions encountered.
  - When potentially hazardous meteorological conditions are encountered, reporting those conditions in accordance with § [135.67](#) is mandatory.
- 4.7 Unforecasted Weather Procedures.** The CH or operator should include in their operating procedures and training the procedures to be followed when unforecasted weather below the allowable minimums is encountered.
- 4.8 Safety Risk Analysis.** Risk analysis is a multistep process aimed at mitigating the impact of risks on flight operations. Performing risk analysis prior to each flight minimizes the vulnerability of the flight operations and enhances safety.
- 4.8.1** The CH or operator should present to the Administrator the method they will utilize to analyze, mitigate, and manage risks while conducting commercial air tour operations under the authorization.
- 4.9 Prohibited Operations.** The CH or operator should include a description of their specific prohibited operations, if any.

## CHAPTER 5. AIRCRAFT EQUIPMENT

**5.1 List of Instruments and Equipment.** As part of the application package, the CH or operator should present to the Administrator a list of instruments and equipment installed on each aircraft to be utilized when conducting commercial air tour operations under the authorization given through OpSpec/LOA B048. It is recommended that the CH or operator include the following:

- All equipment required under § [91.205\(d\)](#);
- Instrument navigation equipment capable of conducting at least one type of IAP;
- ADS-B In and Out system that provides visual and audible traffic warnings;
- STC, as applicable; and
- MEL, as applicable.



## CHAPTER 6. PILOT TRAINING

- 6.1 New Hire/Initial/Recurrent Pilot Ground and Flight Training.** As part of the application package, CHs who wish to obtain OpSpec B048 must (per 14 CFR part [135](#), § [135.329\(e\)](#)) include pilot training subjects to support the conditions and limitations stated in OpSpec B048. Similarly, as part of the application package, operators who wish to obtain LOA B048 should include pilot training subjects to support the conditions and limitations stated in LOA B048. (This section applies to both part [91](#) operators and all CHs, including those who use only one pilot in the CH’s operations.)
- 6.1.1** The new hire/initial/recurrent (as applicable) pilot ground and flight training should demonstrate that the CH or operator will provide pilots with the necessary knowledge and skills to conduct the CH’s or operator’s specific commercial air tour flights and should include operations below 1,500 feet, as authorized by OpSpec/LOA B048. If a CH has incorporated training subjects into their training, a pilot trained in accordance with such approved training may receive credit for such training in order to comply with the parameters set forth in the operator’s accepted operating procedures.
- 6.1.2** The training subjects should include the following, as it pertains to the authorization given through OpSpec/LOA B048:
1. The manner in which the CH or operator intends to conduct pilot evaluations and observations (recommend 12 calendar-months);
  2. The manner in which the CH or operator intends to train and evaluate the operator’s flight instructors;
  3. The manner in which the CH or operator intends to conduct pilot training and evaluations, including the procedures utilized on each specific aircraft that considers the flight characteristics of each aircraft; and
  4. The manner in which the CH or operator intends to evaluate their pilots on a representative number of KSSAs during recurrent flight evaluations. The flight training prior to recurrent flight evaluations should be detailed in the CH’s or operator’s specific commercial air tour operator approved training subjects.
- 6.1.3** For CHs, ground training must be conducted by an instructor who is qualified by the CH to provide ground instruction. For part 91 operators, ground training should be conducted by an instructor who is qualified by the operator and listed on the operator’s LOA B048, as a person qualified to provide ground instruction. (In the case of operators and CHs who use only one pilot in their operations, the ground training may be self-taught, and a record kept and made available to the Administrator.)
- 6.1.4** The hours credited for meeting the minimum hours for ground training, as per the CH’s or operator’s designated training, should be administered by a CH or operator qualified instructor in a formalized classroom format or via web-based training (WBT) that is capable of tracking the pilot’s unique user name and password, online training hours, and final completion scores. Any training conducted online may also be evaluated verbally

and documented in the pilot’s training record by a company-approved ground instructor, flight instructor, or the Administrator.

- 6.1.5** Current and qualified ground and flight instructors may take credit for the ground and/or flight training for which they teach. All instructors should remain current on the latest developments to impart this information to their students.
- 6.1.6** The Administrator, or a person approved by the Administrator, should perform the ground and flight observations of CHs who use only one pilot in the CH’s operations.
- 6.1.7** For pilots who were qualified and operating under authorizations issued through OpSpec B048 (HQ Revision: 020), with the specific CH, prior to its archiving effective date, credit may be given for previous training and observations toward the provisions and limitations set forth under the revised OpSpec B048 (HQ Revision: 030). Similarly, for pilots who were qualified and operating under authorization issued through LOA B548 (HQ Revision: 000), with the specific operator, and prior to its decommissioning and archiving effective date, credit may be given for previous training and observations toward the provisions and limitations set forth under the reinstated and revised LOA B048 (HQ Revision: 030). To receive credit for this training and observation, there should be documentation of successful completion under the previous authorization that includes all aspects of the revised authorization given through OpSpec/LOA B048. These records should be kept by the CH or operator and available to the Administrator for review and inspection.
- 6.2 Requalification for Ground and Flight.** It is recommended that the CH or operator consider including that if a pilot’s currency, as per the CH’s or operator’s specific approved training curriculum of the operator’s accepted operating procedures and of part [136](#), lapses for any reason as per the CH’s or operator’s set timelines (i.e., 12 calendar-months), they should be requalified. The requalification may depend on how long the pilot has been noncurrent as per the CH’s or operator’s authorized or accepted operational or training procedures.
- 6.2.1** Consider including that, if there is a currency lapse of less than 24 calendar-months, the pilot should complete recurrent ground training and satisfactorily complete a recurrent flight observation/evaluation before using the authorization given through OpSpec/LOA B048.
- 6.2.2** Consider including that, if there is a currency lapse of 24 calendar-months or more, the pilot should complete all training subjects for initial qualification before using the authorization given through OpSpec/LOA B048.
- 6.3 Aircraft-Specific Training.** Ground and flight training should specify that each pilot receive training and demonstrate proficiency in the following maneuvers specific to each aircraft the pilot will operate under the authorization:
- Aircraft-specific performance computation (Ground (G)),
  - Aircraft systems (G/Flight (F)),

- Abnormal and emergency procedures (G/F),
- Autorotation (F),
- Hover autorotation (G/F), and
- IMC recovery procedures (G/F).

**6.4 KSSA Familiarization Flights.** The pilot training subjects should specify that all pilots complete a commercial air flight profile and KSSA familiarization flights for each KSSA that they will be authorized to fly. The familiarization flight should include:

- 6.4.1** At least two complete commercial air tour flight profile familiarization flights to each authorized KSSA should be done as part of the initial KSSA familiarization process. The familiarization flights should be completed prior to the initial flight observation.
- 6.4.2** All familiarization flights should be conducted under the direct supervision of a KSSA-qualified instructor, as designated by the CH or operator, or the Administrator.
- 6.4.3** When a KSSA-qualified instructor is conducting a commercial air tour flight profile familiarization flight, they should occupy a pilot seat and be designated by the CH or operator as PIC of the flight.
- 6.4.4** Pilots receiving instruction during a KSSA familiarization flight should be the sole manipulator of the aircraft flight controls.
- 6.4.5** For initial familiarization flights, CHs or operators may, at the CH’s or operator’s discretion and per the accepted or approved operating and training procedures, reduce the two familiarization flights to one if the pilot who is being familiarized has previously been familiarized on the same KSSA with another CH or operator within the past 12 calendar-months. (See paragraph [6.7](#) for records.)
- 6.5 Initial or Annual Flight Observations.** The training should specify that, after successfully completing all the training as outlined in the CH’s or operator’s specific training approved by the Administrator, each pilot should receive a KSSA flight observation, and the following should be emphasized:
- 6.5.1** All pilots should have satisfactorily passed a KSSA flight observation since the beginning of the 12th calendar-month before that service. This observation should consist of:
- Satisfactory completion of a written or oral test, and
  - Satisfactory completion of a flight observation that includes at least one representative KSSA (an attempt should be made to rotate KSSA locations).
- 6.5.2** KSSA flight observations should be conducted by the Administrator or a person approved by the Administrator.
- 6.5.3** Upon satisfactory completion of a KSSA flight observation, all events should be recorded on a CH- or operator-produced form accepted by the Administrator. The recording of

tasks, as per the CH’s or operator’s FAA-approved training and FAA-accepted operating procedures, should be completed by the person conducting the flight observation.

**6.6 Instructor Qualifications.** The CH’s or operator’s training should specify that the Administrator will conduct an initial observation of each CH or operator flight instructor over a representative number of flights before authorizing the instructor to conduct flight instruction.

**6.6.1** All pilot training and evaluation records (ground and flight) should be maintained by the holder of OpSpec/LOA B048 for the period of the pilot’s employment, at the CH’s or operator’s principal base of operations as registered on the CH’s or operator’s issued OpSpec/LOA A001.

**6.7 Pilot Training and Flight Observation Documentation and Recordkeeping.**

**6.7.1** The training should specify that KSSA training and flight observations should be documented and include the following information:

**6.7.1.1** Ground Training:

- Name of pilot receiving training,
- Date of completion,
- Total training hours received, and
- Instructor certification.

**6.7.1.2** Initial KSSA Familiarization Flight:

- Name of pilot receiving KSSA familiarization;
- Date of flight;
- Flight time (for each flight);
- KSSA and Hawaiian island(s) flown;
- Aircraft registration number;
- Name, title, and signature of person providing the KSSA familiarization flight; and
- CH or operator certification.

**6.7.1.3** KSSA Flight Observation (CH’s or Operator’s Part 136 Form).

**6.7.1.3.1** A statement should be entered in the remarks section indicating the pilot is authorized to operate below 1,500 feet above the surface, as per authorization given through OpSpec/LOA B048, as applicable.

- 6.7.1.3.2** Each CH's or operator's recordkeeping system for training and flight observations should comply with the pilot recordkeeping set forth under § [135.63](#). It is recommended that part 91 operators follow the same recordkeeping practices as those required for CHs.
- 6.7.2** All pilot and instructor training and evaluation records (ground and flight) should be maintained by the CH or operator and holder of OpSpec/LOA B048.
- 6.8 Training Subjects.** Training should specify the following for all pilots conducting commercial air tour flights below 1,500 feet above the surface in the State of Hawaii in order to remain in VMC and avoid entering IMC, as authorized through OpSpec/LOA B048 (see Table 6-1, Training Subjects and Standards).
- 6.8.1** Each CH's or operator's part 136 new hire/initial/recurrent training should include training on each of the following subjects:
- Mountain flying techniques and high density altitude;
  - Controlled flight into terrain (CFIT) avoidance;
  - Performance planning;
  - Cue-based, island-specific weather training;
  - Go/no-go procedures;
  - Operations inside the boundaries of a unit of the NPS under an ATMP, a VA, or an IOA;
  - Hawaii commercial air tour accident review;
  - KSSAs, ingress and egress to each KSSA location, radio communications protocol, common traffic advisory frequencies (CTAF), and position reports;
  - Operations over water, ditching procedures appropriate to equipment being operated;
  - Height velocity diagram and raw terrain descriptions (helicopter only);
  - Preflight safety risk analysis and weather factors affecting operations;
  - Inclement weather, IMC avoidance, escape, and recovery procedures;
  - Transition to IFR/IMC, if inclement weather avoidance is unsuccessful;
  - Aircraft-specific equipment and related IFR limitations;
  - Familiarization flights;
  - Abnormal and emergency procedures;
  - Autorotation; and
  - Hover autorotation.

**Table 6-1. Recommended Training Subjects and Standards**

Module	Initial Ground Training (2 Hour Minimum)	Initial Flight Training	Recurrent Ground Training (1 Hour Minimum)	Recurrent Flight Training	Initial Flight Observations	Recurrent Flight Observations	Requalification	
							Ground	Flight
Mountain Flying Techniques and High Density Altitude	X	X	X	X**	X	X	X*	X*
Performance Planning	X		X		Oral	Oral	X*	
CFIT Avoidance	X		X		Oral	Oral	X*	
Cue-Based, Island-Specific Weather Training	X		X		Oral	Oral	X*	
Inclement Weather, IMC Avoidance, Escape, and Recovery Procedures	X	X	X	X	X	X	X*	X*
Go/No-Go Procedures	X		X		Oral	Oral	X*	
Familiarization Flights	X	X	X	X	X	X	X*	X*
Preflight Safety Risk Analysis and Weather Factors Affecting Operation	X		X				X*	
Operations Inside the Boundaries of a Unit of the NPS Under an ATMP, a VA, or an IOA	X	X	X	X**	X	X	X*	X*
Hawaii Commercial Air Tour Accident Review	X		X		Oral	Oral	X*	
KSSAs, Ingress and Egress to Each KSSA Location, Radio Communications Protocol, CTAF, and Position Reports	X	At least 1 rep site	X	X**	X At least 1 rep site	X At least 1 rep site	X*	At least 1 rep site*
Operations Over Water, Ditching Procedures Appropriate to Equipment Being Operated	X		X		Oral	Oral	X	
Height Velocity Diagram and Raw Terrain Descriptions (Helicopter Only)	X				Oral	Oral	X*	

Module	Initial Ground Training (2 Hour Minimum)	Initial Flight Training	Recurrent Ground Training (1 Hour Minimum)	Recurrent Flight Training	Initial Flight Observations	Recurrent Flight Observations	Requalification	
							Ground	Flight
Transition to IFR/IMC, if Inclement Weather Avoidance is Unsuccessful	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Abnormal and Emergency Procedures	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Aircraft-Specific Equipment and Related IFR Limitations	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Autorotation		X		X	X	X		X
Hover Autorotation	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

\*\* Recurrent flight training for pilots should include, at least flight training in the procedures relative to each KSSA, except that satisfactory completion of a recurrent flight evaluation, evaluating all training elements above, conducted within the previous 12 calendar-months, may be substituted for recurrent flight training.

\* Items of recurrent training that were not completed when due for requalification or eligibility should be completed within 12 calendar-months of the last tour flight.

**6.9 Courseware.** The CH or operator should include and present to the Administrator, at a minimum, the training courseware to support the training listed in paragraph [6.8.1](#) above.

**6.10 Supplemental Courseware.** The CH or operator should include and present to the Administrator the following supplemental courseware, which is dependent on the geographic area and scope of operation. Supplemental courseware may vary greatly among CHs and operators depending on their specific area of operation, as applicable.

- ATC letter(s) of agreement and procedures;
- National Park Service ATMPs;
- IOA, OpSpec/LOA B057, and OpSpec/LOA B048; and
- VAs.