

Non-Federally-Employed Maintenance Technicians

Requirements for Receiving FAA-Issued Verification Authority

v.2.16.21

Updated versions of this document will be posted to the
“Technician of Record” page at www.FAA.gov/Go/NonFed

Who Should Read this Guide & its Companion FAQ?

- Anyone interested in working as a non-federal maintenance technician.
- FAA personnel involved with Non-Federal Program inspections.

Contact the Non-Federal Program Before Pursuing Verification Authority.

Technicians should [contact their Non-Federal Program Liaison](#) (also known as Non-Federal Program Implementation Managers, or “PIMs”) *before* investing time and resources pursuing verification authority. Contact information is available via the link above, and at www.FAA.gov/Go/NonFed.

What is “Verification Authority?” The FAA has rigorous standards for maintaining non-federally-owned systems. Individuals who want to maintain these systems must first prove that they are qualified to do so. Once they have satisfied the FAA's requirements, the agency will issue a "Verification Authority Letter." (The title refers to the fact that the FAA is authorizing a technician to officially *verify* that a system is being operated and maintained in accordance with FAA standards.) Technicians need an FAA-issued Verification Authority Letter for *every* individual system and site that they maintain.

The Four Basic Requirements for Acquiring Verification Authority:

(1) Complete An FAA-Approved Training Course or Theory-Of-Operations Exam.

- Non-federal technicians must successfully complete a training course administered by either the FAA Academy or system’s manufacturer/vendor.
 - The training must be specific to the system type, make, and model.
 - Note that the FAA Academy does not offer courses for every system type.
- After successfully completing the course and its corresponding exam, the technician will receive a certificate of completion, or similar documentation. It will be issued by the manufacturer/vendor that provided the training, or the FAA Academy.

- There may be times when a training course is no longer available. In such case, a theory-of-operations exam may be used, subject to two requirements:
 - First, the theory-of-operations exam must be on the approved list in Appendix 3 to [FAA Order 3000.57](#), *Air Traffic Organization Technical Operations Training and Personnel Certification Programs*.
 - Second, the exam must be administered by FAA personnel who are certified on the system, or familiar with it.
- (2) **Complete a “Hands-On” Performance Exam.** This is required for each type of system or sub-system for which a technician seeks verification authority.
- (3) **Acquire an FCC License.** A *General Radio-Telephone Operator’s License* (GROL) is required before a technician may perform any work on non-federal systems that have a radio transmitter. The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) will issue a GROL after an applicant passes an FCC-administered exam. Although an FAA-issued verification authority letter is required for each site that a technician maintains, they only need a single GROL. The license applies to all non-federal systems with transmitters and is valid for the holder's lifetime.
- (4) **Receive a Verification-Authority Letter.** Before an FAA District Office will issue a verification authority letter to a technician, it must receive proof that the technician has:
 - Successfully completed the appropriate training course(s);
 - Passed the appropriate theory-of-operation exam(s), if applicable;
 - Passed the appropriate performance exam(s); and
 - Holds a GROL, if applicable.

Scope of a Technician’s Verification Authority:

- **Verification Authority is “Site Specific,” for a Single Type, Make, & Model.**
Technicians may only maintain the system named in their verification-authority letter. The system will be identified by the system type, make, model, and the site (location) at which maintenance is to occur. In order to maintain other systems, the Technician must obtain additional verification authority letters.
- **Verification Authority Letter May Expedite Authorization for Other Sites.** A Technician that holds verification authority for one site may want to maintain the same system type, make, and model at multiple locations. In that case, the relevant FAA District Office(s) that have jurisdiction will usually issue the technician a verification authority letter after receiving:

- A copy of the previously issued Verification Authority Letter.
 - Copies of the following documents, which prove that the technician:
 - Successfully completed the appropriate training course(s);
 - Passed the appropriate theory-of-operation exam(s), if applicable;
 - Passed the appropriate performance exam(s); and
 - Holds a GROL if applicable.
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FAQ

1. May non-federal technicians substitute on-site exams for an *existing* training course?

E.g., could the technician take an FAA-administered on-site theory-of-operations exam and a performance exam, instead of an off-site training course?

No. If an FAA-approved course exists, the non-federal technician must take it.

2. Are there FAA-approved "concept-bypass exams" for non-federal systems?

It Depends. The FAA's AWOS advisory circular prohibits the use of bypass exams for AWOS. However, the FAA Academy may have bypass exams for certain, older model NavAids. Your Non-Federal Program liaison can provide more information.

3. Are there apprenticeship programs for any non-federal systems? No.

4. Must manufacturer/vendor-employed technicians be used maintain non-federal systems?

No. It may be possible to hire a third-party technician. (I.e., a person who has completed the training and verification requirements described in the guidance document that accompanies this FAQ.)

5. Does the FAA offer AWOS training courses?

No. The only way to complete an FAA-approved theory-of-operation course is to take a course provided by the vendor or manufacturer. Some manufacturers and vendors do not provide training to anyone but their own employees.