



U.S. Department  
of Transportation

**Federal Aviation  
Administration**

# Advisory Circular

---

**Subject:** U.S. AIRWORTHINESS CERTIFICATES AND AUTHORIZATIONS FOR OPERATION OF DOMESTIC AND FOREIGN AIRCRAFT      **Date:** 7/08/04      **AC No.:** 20-65A  
**Initiated by:** AIR-200      **Change:**

---

**1. PURPOSE.** This advisory circular (AC) offers general information on issuing—

- Standard and special airworthiness certificates for U.S.-registered aircraft, and
- Special flight authorizations (SFA) for operating in the United States of foreign aircraft not having standard airworthiness certificates issued by the country of registry.

This AC describes an acceptable way, but not the only way, to comply with Title 14 of the Code of Federal Regulations (14 CFR). However, if you use the AC, you must follow it in all important aspects.

**2. WHO THIS AC AFFECTS.** This AC affects Production Approval Holders (PAHs) or individual owners of civil aircraft who need to obtain an airworthiness certificate or a special flight authorization from the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA). To better understand the process, you should also review FAA Order 8130.2, Airworthiness Certification of Aircraft and Related Products, before requesting an airworthiness certificate or special flight authorization.

**3. DOCUMENT THIS AC CANCELS.** This AC cancels AC 20-65, U.S. Airworthiness Certificates and Authorizations for Operation of Domestic and Foreign Aircraft, dated August 11, 1969.

**4. PRINCIPAL CHANGES FROM THE PREVIOUS VERSION OF THIS AC.** We have updated this AC to incorporate current requirements and reference applicable orders, ACs, and regulations. We have also edited it for clarity.

**5. GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT AIRWORTHINESS CERTIFICATES AND SPECIAL FLIGHT AUTHORIZATION.**

**a. Standard airworthiness certificate.** Under 14 CFR 21.175(a), an FAA Form 8100-2, Standard Airworthiness Certificate, is issued for an aircraft that fully complies with all requirements applicable to normal, utility, acrobatic, commuter, or transport category aircraft, manned free balloons, or any other special classes of aircraft designated by the FAA. If you are a PAH or an individual owner of civil aircraft, you must request a standard airworthiness certificate under the provisions of:

(1) Section 21.183(a) or (b) for aircraft manufactured under production or type certificate only;

(2) Section 21.183(c) for “Import aircraft” type certificated in accordance with § 21.29, and if the country in which the aircraft was manufactured certifies, and the FAA finds, that the aircraft conforms to the type design and is in a condition for safe operation; or

(3) Section 21.183(d) for “Other aircraft,” which is generally applicable to used aircraft, aircraft built from spare or surplus parts, and U.S.-manufactured civil aircraft that were exported and later returned to the U.S. for FAA certification.

**b. Special airworthiness certificate.** An FAA Form 8130-7, Special Airworthiness Certificate, may be issued, for all non-standard aircraft, as classified under § 21.175(b). Applicants may request a special airworthiness certificate under the provisions of:

(1) Section 21.184 for primary aircraft;

(2) Section 21.185 for restricted aircraft;

(3) Section 21.189 for limited aircraft;

(4) Part 21, subpart C for aircraft in the category of provisional type certificates and part 21, subpart I for aircraft covered by the provisional airworthiness certificate requirements;

(5) Sections 21.191, 21.193, and 21.195 for any experimental aircraft, including amateur-built;  
or

(6) Sections 21.197 and 21.199 for an aircraft that does not currently meet the applicable airworthiness requirements, but is capable of safe flight, may receive a “special flight permit.”

**c. Special flight authorization.** An applicant may request a special flight authorization under the provisions of:

(1) Section 91.715 for a non-U.S. civil aircraft that does not have a current airworthiness certificate, or an equivalent to a U.S. standard airworthiness certificate, that indicates that the aircraft complies with a detailed and comprehensive airworthiness code as provided by Annex 8 to the Convention on International Civil Aviation. An SFA is required for an aircraft carrying an airworthiness certificate, flight permit, or similar document issued by the country of registry that is equivalent to a U.S. special airworthiness certificate.

(2) Part 375, Navigation of Foreign Civil Aircraft within the United States, for a non-U.S.-registered civil aircraft to navigate or operate within U.S. airspace. Additional authorization is required from the Department of Transportation, Office of Foreign International Aviation, under § 375.10 for certain foreign civil aircraft not registered with the International Civil Aviation Organization Member State, to operate a non-U.S. registered aircraft in the United States, or

(3) A “blanket” special flight authorization may be issued when an aircraft manufacturer’s operation will be conducted many times during a given period or for a number of aircraft engaged in the same operation. Refer to FAA Order 8130.2 for further information.

**NOTE: If the aircraft is of foreign military registry (non-civil), you should send the request to bring the aircraft into the United States to the United States Department of State. These aircraft may enter the United States only with a diplomatic clearance that would be issued solely on a government-to-government, non-commercial basis. Refer to Order 8130.2, Chapter 7 requirements.**

**6. DISCUSSION. As a production approval holder or individual owner what steps should I take to obtain a—**

**a. Standard airworthiness certificate?**

**(1) Step 1.** You must first register, identify, and mark your aircraft under part 47, Aircraft Registration, and part 45, Identification and Registration Marking. To help aid you in the aircraft identification and markings you may go to AC 45-2, Identification and Registration Marking.

**(2) Step 2.** File Form 8130-6, Application for Airworthiness Certificate, with your local FAA manufacturing inspection district office (MIDO), certificate management office (CMO), or FAA flight standards district office (FSDO). You can obtain this form from any of these offices. In general, the items on the form are self-explanatory; however, if you need help, refer to AC 21-12, Application for U.S. Airworthiness Certificate, FAA Form 8130-6, for additional guidance, or get assistance from the FAA office you will be working with.

**(3) Step 3.** Your local FAA office or their authorized designee will conduct a review of all the required documents (see Order 8130.2) and perform the necessary inspections to determine if your aircraft is eligible for a standard airworthiness certificate.

**(4) Step 4.** If the FAA determines your aircraft meets all the appropriate requirements under § 21.183, the FAA or the designee issues you a standard airworthiness certificate.

**b. Special airworthiness certificate?**

**(1) Step 1.** You may apply for a special airworthiness certificate in the same manner as described in steps 1 through 3 of paragraph 6a.

**(2) Step 2.** Once the FAA has determined your aircraft has met all the required regulations, applicable to the certificate requested, the FAA or the designee issues you a special airworthiness certificate. Title 14 CFR, part 91, General Operating and Flight Rules, prescribes operating limitations with the special airworthiness certificates; however, the FAA or designee issuing the special airworthiness certificate may prescribe additional limitations if necessary for safety.

**NOTE: The operating limitations become part of the airworthiness certificate.**

**c. Special flight authorization?**

**(1) Step 1.** Depending on the type of special flight authorization, whether individual or blanket SFA, you may send your application by letter, telegram, or fax to your FAA Flight Standards Division (AFS) Manager or AIR Directorate Manager of the FAA region in which you are located or to the region in which the United States point of entry is located. The following table (Table 1) shows what information is required in your application for either an individual or blanket SFA. The FAA office issuing the authorization may request additional information if necessary. You may go to the FAA website to contact your nearest AFS, international FAA office, or the supporting manufacturing inspection district office (for original certification). You may find all of the FAA offices in the FAA website:

Flight Standards Service: <http://www.faa.gov/avr/afs/fsdo/index.cfm>

Aircraft Certification Service: <http://www.faa.gov/certification/aircraft/map.htm#Top>

**Table 1. Application Information Needed for a Special Flight Authorization**

INDIVIDUAL SPECIAL FLIGHT AUTHORIZATION	BLANKET SPECIAL FLIGHT AUTHORIZATION
1. Name and address of applicant, if different from registered owner. If the applicant is not the registered owner, a letter from the owner appointing the applicant as an agent also is submitted.	1. Name and address of the promotion sponsor or the name and address of the manufacturer, when the purpose is for export.
2. Name and address of registered owner of the aircraft.	2. The purpose(s) for which the blanket SFA is requested and the number of signed copies required to meet operating needs.
3. Operating purpose for which the SFA is requested.	3. Enough information to establish that the flights will not affect safety.
4. Type of airworthiness document, if any, issued for the aircraft by the country of registry.	4. For air shows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Name and address of the registered owner/operator or pilot if not the owner;</li> <li>• Make, model, serial number, registration number;</li> <li>• Type of airworthiness certificate carried;</li> <li>• Reason why the aircraft does not comply with standard airworthiness requirements; and</li> <li>• Aircraft maintenance provisions.</li> </ul>
5. Information of total aircraft time, maintenance status, date of last inspection, type of inspection, and inspector's name and title of the person performing the inspection.	5. Any other information deemed appropriate by the FAA.
6. Make, model, and serial number of aircraft.	
7. Assigned non-U.S. nationality and registration marks, a valid copy of registration document issued by the country of registry and translated in English.	
8. Base of operations for the proposed flight and the areas where the flight will be conducted.	
9. The proposed U.S. port of entry and itinerary while operating in the United States.	
10. The route to the U.S. border and to the ultimate destination.	
11. Whether the aircraft is to be modified by an FAA-approved Supplemental Type Certificate (STC) data, and will it require maintenance flight-testing in the United States.	
12. Whether the aircraft will be used as a test aircraft under a U.S. STC and will require flight-testing for the purpose of "showing compliance" with the regulations.	
13. If a damage aircraft is involved, the operating limitations (if any) assigned by the country of registry after its inspection.	
14. The duration for which the SFA is requested.	

**NOTE: A civil aircraft registered in a country that is a member of the International Civil Aviation Organization needs only a special flight authorization issued by the FAA. A civil aircraft registered in a country that is not a member of the International Civil Aviation Organization always requires an authorization from the United States Department of Transportation and a special flight authorization issued by the FAA to operate in the United States.**

(2) **Step 2.** Your FAA office issues your special flight authorization for foreign civil aircraft once it has received all documents and has determined you meet all requirements under § 91.715 and part 375.

## 7. FAA Publications.

### a. Are there any related documents I should look at?

(1) Title 14 CFR, parts 21, 45, 47, 91, and 375 sets forth the requirements for certification of products and parts; identification and marking of aircraft; aircraft registration; general flight and operating rules; and the navigation requirements of non-U.S. aircraft within the United States.

(2) Order 8130.2, Airworthiness Certification of Aircraft and Related Products, establishes procedures for accomplishing airworthiness certification of aircraft and related products. This order applies to FAA manufacturing aviation safety inspectors (ASIs), flight standards ASIs, designees, or organizational delegations authorized to issue airworthiness certificates and special flight authorizations.

(3) Advisory Circular 20-27, Certification and Operation of Amateur-Built Aircraft, offers guidance on the fabrication and assembly, airworthiness certification, and operation of amateur-built aircraft of all types.

(4) Advisory Circular 20-62, Eligibility, Quality, and Identification of Aeronautical Replacement Parts, provides guidance in determining the quality, eligibility, and traceability of parts and material that will be installed in U.S. type certificated aircraft.

(5) Advisory Circular, 21-4, Special Flight Permits for Operation of Overweight Aircraft, provides additional information and guidance with respect to special flight permits to operate an aircraft in excess of maximum take-off weight, etc.

(6) Advisory Circular 21-12, Application for U.S. Airworthiness Certificate, FAA Form 8130-6, explains how to prepare and submit the form to the FAA.

(7) Advisory Circular 21-23, Airworthiness Certification of Civil Aircraft, Engines, Propellers, and Related Products Imported to the United States, provides additional guidance on U.S. airworthiness certification or acceptance of civil aeronautical products imported into the United States.

(8) Advisory Circular 45-2, Identification and Registration Marking, further explains how to identify and mark your aircraft.

**b. How can I get this and other FAA publications?** You can get the publications for which there is a fee from the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402. You can view a list of all ACs at <http://www.faa.gov/regulations/index.cfm>. You can view the Code of Federal Regulations at: <http://www.access.gpo.gov/ecfr/>

### Written request for Advisory Circular Checklist to:

U.S. Department of Transportation  
M-30  
Washington, DC 20590

**To request free copies contact:**

U.S. Department of Transportation  
Subsequent Distribution Office, M-30  
Ardmore East Business Center  
3341 Q 75<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Landover, MD 20785

**To be placed on FAA's mailing list for free ACs contact either office, below:**

Federal Aviation Administration  
Planning and Financial Resources Management  
Division, AIR-530  
800 Independence Avenue, S.W., Room 819  
Washington, DC 20591

Federal Aviation Administration  
Standards and Information Division,  
APF-100  
800 Independence Avenue, S.W., Room 615  
Washington, DC 20591

We encourage you to use the FAA website at <http://www.faa.gov/certification/aircraft/> for additional information and guidance.

**8. Submit comments about this AC.** You may submit direct comments regarding this AC to the Production and Airworthiness Division, AIR-200, Independence Ave., S.W., Washington, DC 20591.

/S/

Frank P. Paskiewicz  
Manager, Production and Airworthiness  
Division, AIR-200