

# NOTICE

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION

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National Policy

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**SUBJ:** OpSpec/MSpec A010, Aviation Weather Information

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**1. Purpose of This Notice.** This notice announces a revision to operations specification (OpSpec) and management specification (MSpec) A010, Aviation Weather Information, and provides guidance for Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) certificate-holding district offices (CHDO), including Flight Standards District Offices (FSDO) and certificate management offices (CMO), and principal operations inspectors (POI) assigned to certificate holders conducting airplane operations under Title 14 of the Code of Federal Regulations (14 CFR) parts 91 subpart K (part 91K), 121, 125, and 135. This notice also announces significant changes to guidance contained in FAA Order 8900.1, Flight Standards Information Management System (FSIMS), Volume 3, Chapter 25, Section 1, and Volume 3, Chapter 26, Sections 1 through 4.

**2. Audience.** The primary audience for this notice consists of FAA CHDOs and POIs assigned to certificate holders and program managers conducting parts 91K, 121, 125, and 135 operations. The secondary audience includes Flight Standards Service (AFS) divisions and branches in the regions and in headquarters (HQ).

**3. Where You Can Find This Notice.** You can find this notice on the MyFAA employee Web site at [https://employees.faa.gov/tools\\_resources/orders\\_notices](https://employees.faa.gov/tools_resources/orders_notices). Inspectors can access this notice through the FSIMS at <http://fsims.avs.faa.gov>. Operators can find this notice on the FAA Web site at <http://fsims.faa.gov>. This notice is available to the public at [http://www.faa.gov/regulations\\_policies/orders\\_notices](http://www.faa.gov/regulations_policies/orders_notices).

**4. Background.** The Air Transportation Division (AFS-200) conducted a comprehensive review of the currently issued OpSpec/MSpec A010, formerly titled "Aeronautical Weather Data." The review revealed a wide range of authorizations, some of which have been issued in a manner inconsistent with FAA policy and guidance. As a result of the FAA's review and research, several changes have been made to OpSpec/MSpec A010 and to the guidance contained in Order 8900.1, Volume 3, Chapter 26, Aviation Weather Regulatory Requirements. In addition, we have updated 8900.1 Volume 3, Chapter 25, Section 1 to remove references to weather information that would be in conflict with the new guidance. We also updated the entire section for accuracy. Below are some of the highlights of the changes to OpSpec/MSpec A010:

- The OpSpec/MSpec language has been modified to conform to the individual regulatory requirements of parts 91K, 121, 125, and 135 operations.
- The Qualified Internet Communication Provider (QICP) table has been removed due to lack of a regulatory requirement for such a provider.
- The Enhanced Weather Information Systems (EWINS) table has been removed from the part 125 OpSpec and letter of authorization (LOA).
- A table has been added to the part 121 OpSpec template for an approved adverse weather phenomena reporting and forecast system.

**Note:** A sample OpSpec A010 template for part 121 operations is attached to this notice. The templates for parts 91K, 125, and 135 operations can be viewed in the automated Operations Safety System (OPSS), also known as Web-based Operations Safety System (WebOPSS). Information on how to populate the text boxes and tables in A010 is available by clicking on the help icon ( ? ) in WebOPSS for each box and table. Any text entered into the optional/nonstandard text (Text 99) box of A010, requires prior approval from the Air Transportation Division (AFS-200). POIs should review the new A010 template as it applies to the type of operation conducted by the certificate holder or program manager for whom the POI has oversight responsibility.

**5. Guidance.** Order 8900.1, Volume 3, Chapter 18, Section 3, Part A Operations Specifications, contains guidance on how to issue OpSpec/MSpec A010. Order 8900.1, Volume 3, Chapter 26, Sections 1 through 4 contain detailed guidance on the regulatory requirements for aviation weather information. This guidance has been changed significantly to provide clarity.

## **6. Action.**

**a. Parts 91K, 121, and 135 Mandatory Change.** The revision to the A010 templates for parts 91K (Rev 010), 121 (Rev 030), and 135 (Rev 030) are mandatory changes.

(1) POIs of part 91K program managers and part 121 certificate holders will have 120 days from the date of this notice to review the guidance contained in Order 8900.1, Volume 3 Chapter 26, Sections 1 through 4 and issue the new template in accordance with that guidance.

(2) POIs of certificate holders conducting part 135 operations will have 12 months from the date of this notice to issue the new template. POIs must review certificate holders' current A010 authorizations and compare them to the requirements contained in Order 8900.1, Volume 3, Chapter 26, Section 2, paragraphs 3-2073, 3-2074, and 3-2075 as soon as practicable. In accordance with the guidance:

(a) A certificate holder whose current A010 lists a commercial weather information provider (CWIP), and that provider is actually generating weather reports or forecasts, then either an EWINS or HQ approval will be required to continue using that CWIP. In this case, POIs will instruct the certificate holder that they have the following options:

- Develop an EWINS during the 12 months outlined in this paragraph;
- Prepare the necessary programs and information (see Appendix B of this notice and Order 8900.1, Volume 3, Chapter 26, Section 2, paragraph 3-2075) to submit to AFS-200 for approval to use a CWIP without an EWINS; or
- Use only weather information provided by the sources listed in 8900.1, Volume 3, Chapter 26, Section 2, subparagraphs 3-2073A and 3-2073C.

(b) If the certificate holder elects to seek AFS-200 approval to use a CWIP without an EWINS, POIs must follow the guidance in 8900.1, Volume 3, Chapter 26, Section 2, paragraph 3-2075 and request permission from AFS-200 to issue a nonstandard text authorization in OpSpec A010 to allow the certificate holder to use a CWIP. The request must be submitted by the CHDO manager, through the manager of the regional Flight Standards division (RFSO) to the manager of AFS-200. In accordance with this notice, all requests for nonstandard A010 authorizations must be submitted to the AFS-200 division mailbox at 9-AWA-AFS-200@faa.gov. All requests for nonstandard text authorizations must contain the following statement in the subject line: "OpSpec A010 Nonstandard Authorization Request". All requests must include the concurrence of the RFSO manager. To aid POIs in requesting AFS-200 approval for a nonstandard text authorization in A010, a checklist is included in Appendix B of this notice. POIs will complete the checklist and submit it along with their request to AFS-200.

**Note:** The checklist contained in Appendix B is also appropriate for use by POIs of part 91K program managers and certificate holders conducting part 121 operations.

**Note:** All POIs must review the Order 8900.1 guidance referenced in paragraph 5 and ensure that each certificate holder/program manager is able to comply with all of the requirements contained in that guidance prior to issuing the new OpSpec/MSpec A010 template.

**b. Providers Listed in the QICP Table of the Superseded A010 Template.** During the FAA's review of the currently issued OpSpec/MSpec A010, it was discovered that some certificate holders/program managers were authorized to use QICPs to access weather information, but were not authorized to use these weather providers accessed via the QICP, as an approved weather source. Since the QICP table is now removed from A010, POIs must ensure that each certificate holder who desires to continue using a QICP only uses that QICP for the purpose of accessing weather information (via the public Internet) that is provided by a weather source authorized by regulation or approved by the Administrator. POIs must follow the guidance contained in Order 8900.1, Volume 3, Chapter 26, Section 2, paragraphs 3-2073, 3-2074, and 3-2075 to make this determination. If a certificate holder/program manager is using a QICP that is also a CWIP, POIs must follow the guidance contained in Order 8900.1, Volume 3, Chapter 26, Section 2, paragraph 3-2076. This guidance provides details on the use of CWIPs. All approved weather sources must be listed in OpSpec/MSpec A010.

**c. Part 125 Nonmandatory Change.** The change to the A010 templates for part 125 is non-mandatory. POIs of these certificate holders are not required to issue the new template, which is Rev 01b of the OpSpec, and Rev 01a of the LOA for part 125 Letter of Deviation

Authority (LODA) holders. Entering information regarding sources of aviation weather information is now optional for all part 125 operations. This is because part 125 does not contain any requirements for specific sources of aviation weather information or weather reporting facilities. For this same reason, the QICP and EWINS tables have been removed from the part 125 OpSpec and LOA. If a certificate or LODA holder, or the POI wishes to exercise the option of listing sources of aviation weather information in OpSpec/LOA A010, the POI may list each weather source in the text box provided in the template. Otherwise, the POI may simply list "N/A" in the text box provided.

**7. Disposition.** We will incorporate the information in this notice into FAA Order 8900.1 before this notice expires. Direct questions or comments concerning this notice to AFS-260 at 202-267-8166.

for 

John Allen  
Director, Flight Standards Service

**Appendix A. OpSpec A010, Aviation Weather Information: 14 CFR Part 121**

- a. The certificate holder conducting 14 CFR part 121 operations shall use the sources of aviation weather information described in this operations specification (OpSpec).
- 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 National Weather Service (NWS) or a source approved by the NWS, in accordance with § 121.101(b)(1).

(2) Except as provided in subparagraph b(3) or d of this OpSpec, 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).

Text Box

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

**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 subparagraphs b(1), b(2), or b(3) of this OpSpec.

- 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 OpSpec, the “Weather Bureau” is represented by the NWS.

(2) Except as provided in paragraph d of this OpSpec, 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). List the name of each approved weather source in the text box provided.

Text Box

(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 subparagraphs c(1) or c(2) of this OpSpec.

d. The certificate holder is approved to use an EWINS to obtain and disseminate aviation weather information for the control of flight operations. If EWINS is not authorized; enter "N/A" in all four columns of Table 2.

**Table 2. EWINS**

<b>Name of Weather Source</b>	<b>Name of Manual Containing EWINS</b>	<b>Date of Initial Approval of EWINS</b>	<b>Date of Latest Revision of EWINS</b>

## **Appendix B. Checklist for Obtaining Approval from AFS-200 to Add a Weather Source to OpSpec/Mspec A010**

Principal operations inspectors (POI) of certificate holders or program managers who do not have an Enhanced Weather Information System (EWINS) must obtain approval from the Air Transportation Division (AFS-200) to allow a certificate holder/program manager to use an aviation weather report or forecast prepared by a source other than the ones listed below:

- The National Weather Service (NWS) or a source approved by the NWS (within the 48 contiguous United States and the District of Columbia),
- U.S. and North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) military observing sources,
- Meteorological offices operated by International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) member states,
- ICAO member state, authorized meteorological station, or automated observation,
- Members of the World Meteorological Organization (WMO),
- For reports of adverse weather phenomena: Pilot Weather Reports (PIREP) provided by aircraft of the same, or similar, type and size, and
- For reports of adverse weather phenomena: Aircraft Reports (AIREP) provided by aircraft of the same or similar type and size.

In order to obtain approval from AFS-200, POIs must follow the guidance in 8900.1, Volume 3, Chapter 26, Section 2, paragraph 3-2075, and submit the following information to AFS-200:

- A. The name of the weather source.
- B. The reason for the need to use the weather source.
- C. The method the certificate holder or program manager proposes to use to obtain and disseminate the weather report or forecast (for example, through their dispatch or flight following system, via the Internet, or by voice.)
- D. A copy of the portion of the certificate holder's/program manager's training program for flight crewmembers, dispatchers, or persons authorized to exercise operational control that contains instruction on the use of the weather report or forecast prepared by the weather source.
- E. A copy of the Weather Provider's Training Program. Provide a copy of the training program for weather provider personnel that will be involved in generating weather reports or forecasts for the certificate holder.
- F. For weather reports. In addition to the requirements of paragraphs A through E above:
  - 1) The location(s) at which the certificate holder/program manager intends to use the weather report.
  - 2) The elements that will be reported (for example, temperature, visibility, wind direction, and wind speed. Refer to FAA Order 8900.1, Volume 3, Chapter 26, Section 2, Required Elements of a Surface Weather Report/Observation, subparagraph 3-2072D for a full list of required elements contained in a weather report.

3) The method the certificate holder or program manager proposes for maintaining, or ensuring the maintenance (to certificated standards) of, the weather sensing equipment used in generating the weather report.

**Note:** POIs should be prepared to submit additional information to AFS-200 upon request, such as the qualifications of individuals providing weather reports or forecasts for the certificate holder or program manager.