

NOTICE

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION

N 8900.515

National Policy

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6/19/19

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6/19/20

SUBJ: Issuance of Blanket Special Flight Authorizations to Eligible 14 CFR Part 129 Foreign Air Carriers

1. Purpose of This Notice. This notice announces a Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) policy update regarding the issuance of blanket Special Flight Authorizations (SFA) to eligible Title 14 of the Code of Federal Regulations (14 CFR) part 129 foreign air carriers. This guidance has been removed from FAA Order 8900.1 Volume 4, Chapter 13, Section 1, Safety Assurance System: Evaluating a Part 119 Certificate Holder's and a Part 91K Program Manager/Operator's Special Flight Permit With Continuing Authorization to Conduct a Ferry Flight Program, paragraph 4-1333.

2. Audience. The primary audience for this notice is the Flight Standards Service (FS) International Field Offices (IFO), principal inspectors (PI), and aviation safety inspectors (ASI) with oversight responsibility for part 129 foreign air carriers. The secondary audience includes the Safety Standards and Safety Assurance offices.

3. Where You Can Find This Notice. You can find this notice on the MyFAA employee website at https://employees.faa.gov/tools_resources/orders_notices. Inspectors can access this notice through the Flight Standards Information Management System (FSIMS) at <http://fsims.avs.faa.gov>. Operators can find this notice on the FAA's website at <http://fsims.faa.gov>. This notice is available to the public at http://www.faa.gov/regulations_policies/orders_notices.

4. Background.

a. Early Policy. In 1996, the FAA introduced policy on SFAs specific to certain Canadian air carriers applying for "continuous SFAs" in the U.S. National Airspace System (NAS). Both the FAA Aircraft Certification Service (AIR) Production and Airworthiness Certification Division and the FS Aircraft Maintenance Division collaborated on the development of this policy. Subsequently, in 1997, the FAA issued Flight Standards Handbook Bulletin for Airworthiness (HBAW) 97-11, Procedures for the FAA to Permit Certain Canadian Air Carriers Continuous (Blanket) Special Flight Authorizations, outlining FAA policy regarding certain Canadian air carriers' eligibility for FAA continuous (blanket) SFAs.

b. Applicability. The FAA reviewed the continuous SFA policy early in 2018 and identified that the policy developed in 1996 was no longer appropriate as written. The review identified that the continuous SFA policy (now referred to as the “blanket SFA” policy) is applicable to all part 129 foreign air carriers in accordance with 14 CFR part 91, § 91.715.

c. Part 129 Foreign Air Carrier Blanket SFA Policy. Use the following policy guidance and information when a part 129 foreign air carrier submits an application for a blanket SFA for unairworthy aircraft capable of safe flight.

5. Responsibility. Airworthiness PIs are responsible for evaluating, accepting, and authorizing blanket SFAs. However, because of the operational aspects of air carrier ferry flights, PIs must closely coordinate the review and evaluation of the authorization with the Principal Operations Inspector (POI).

6. Standards and Eligibility.

a. International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) Airworthiness Standards. ICAO Annex 8, Airworthiness of Aircraft, Part II, details the airworthiness requirements for all contracting States. Part II specifies that all contracting States operating their aircraft over foreign (other contracting States) territory must be Airworthy. All aircraft operating under the provisions of ICAO must meet this requirement.

(1) When foreign civil aircraft cannot meet this condition (i.e., are unairworthy), the operator must have special permission from each foreign country it will overfly.

(2) The United States meets this ICAO obligation in accordance with § 91.715; FAA Order 8130.2, Airworthiness Certification of Aircraft; and this notice.

b. Eligibility. Foreign air carriers from International Aviation Safety Assessment (IASA) Category 1 countries and with valid special purpose flight permits or continuing authorization to conduct a ferry flight program (CAFP) and accompanying procedures are the only applicants eligible for FAA blanket SFAs under this guidance. These permits, issued by the responsible National Aviation Authority (NAA), allow foreign air carriers to issue special flight permits (SFP) for aircraft listed in their maintenance control manual that do not meet all airworthiness requirements, but are capable of safe operations.

7. Application and Associated Parameters.

a. Application to the FAA. A foreign air carrier applying to the FAA for a blanket SFA must submit, in writing, the information required by Order 8130.2, Chapter 22, Special Flight Authorizations for Foreign Civil Aircraft (§ 91.715), and any other information deemed necessary by the FAA. This application package will be submitted to the responsible FAA IFO. Typically, this would be accomplished via the assigned Airworthiness PI or appropriate office management. PIs must evaluate the complete application and air carrier history to assess any safety concerns and assess whether a blanket SFA should be issued.

b. NAA CAFPP Elements. The inspector should verify that the CAFPP contains requirements for displaying the SFP in the aircraft. The CAFPP should include requirements for carrying responsible NAA operations specifications (OpSpecs), management specifications (MSpecs), or portions of the foreign air carrier's manual containing those conditions, unless the SFP used by the operator lists those conditions and limitations. FAA inspectors do not approve or accept the foreign carrier's CAFPP or equivalent program; however, the FAA inspector must review this document to ensure it addresses elements such as crew training, operational limitations, flight equipment limitations, limitation to essential crew, nonrevenue operations, and aircraft inspection procedures.

c. Operating Limitations. The blanket SFA may include additional conditions and limitations unique to the foreign air carrier or NAA, or due to the proposed operating environment.

d. SFA Documentation. Foreign air carriers issued FAA blanket SFAs may issue SFAs in the United States. Foreign civil aircraft must carry the following documents aboard when operating with an SFA in the United States:

- A copy of the FAA blanket SFA; and
- A copy of the foreign air carrier's special purpose flight permit or CAFPP, issued by the responsible NAA, and the appropriate section of its maintenance control manual.

e. Aircraft Inspection. The foreign air carrier will have the aircraft inspected or evaluated prior to each flight (under this blanket SFA) according to procedures in its CAFPP and have an appropriately rated mechanic or maintenance provider certify in the aircraft record that the aircraft is in a safe condition for the flight as specified in the operator's manual.

f. Duration and Renewal. A blanket SFA may be issued for any duration up to a maximum of 1 year. Renewal of issued authorizations will follow the application procedure identified in this guidance. The FAA may cancel or rescind a blanket SFA at any time.

g. FAA PI Notification. The foreign air carrier must inform its FAA Principal Maintenance Inspector (PMI) or Principal Avionics Inspector (PAI) within 72 hours of operating an aircraft under an FAA blanket SFA of the reason (including aircraft malfunction), date, registration, flight route, and preparatory maintenance actions accomplished. PIs must ensure the air carrier is not misusing or exploiting the blanket SFA provision.

8. Records.

a. Blanket SFA Format. Refer to Order 8130.2 for the form and content of a blanket SFA.

b. Office Record. The responsible IFO must track issued blanket SFAs in accordance with office procedures. A copy of the blanket SFA must be kept in the operator file in accordance with office procedures.

c. Program Tracking and Reporting Subsystem (PTRS) Record.

(1) Initial and Renewal. PIs must enter a PTRS record upon initial issuance and at renewal of a blanket SFA. The record must include the part 129 designator and the comments must include the duration of the blanket SFA. Use “BLKT” (without quotation marks) in the “National Use” field.

(2) PI Notification. In addition, PIs must enter a PTRS record when notified by the air carrier of an operation under a blanket SFA. The appropriate PTRS fields and comment field must include the information identified above in subparagraph 7g. Use “BLKT” (without quotation marks) in the “National Use” field.

9. Action. Assigned PIs and ASIs are responsible for issuing blanket SFAs to eligible part 129 foreign air carriers in accordance with information contained in this notice.

10. Disposition. We will incorporate the information in this notice into FAA Order 8900.1 Volume 12, Chapter 4 before this notice expires. Direct questions concerning the information in this notice to the FS International Program Division at 202-267-0962.



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