

NOTICE

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION

N 8900.618

National Policy

Effective Date:
3/16/22

Cancellation Date:
3/16/23

SUBJ: OpSpec A010, Aviation Weather Information

1. Purpose of This Notice. This notice announces a nonmandatory revision to operations specification (OpSpec) A010, applicable to flag or supplemental operations under Title 14 of the Code of Federal Regulations (14 CFR) part 121 or 121/135.

2. Audience. The primary audience for this notice is the Flight Standards (FS) Safety Assurance offices' Principal Operations Inspectors (POI) responsible for approving an air carrier to conduct international air carrier operations in a foreign country. The secondary audience includes air carriers and operators, as well as the FS Safety Standards and Foundational Business 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, the Flight Standards Information Management System (FSIMS) at <https://fsims.avs.faa.gov>, and the Dynamic Regulatory System (DRS) at <https://drs.faa.gov>. Operators and the public can find this notice on the FAA's website at https://www.faa.gov/regulations_policies/orders_notices, FSIMS at <https://fsims.faa.gov>, and the DRS.

4. Background. Due to the unexpected impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, weather reporting in some European countries has been affected in that certain elements of the Aviation Routine Weather Report (METAR) may be missing. Some countries rely on certified weather observers to report ceiling, visibility, and present weather information in the official METAR. When any of these elements of the METAR are missing, affected countries have published a Notice to Air Missions (NOTAM) indicating certain mitigations required to continue operations. Additionally, International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) Annex 6, Operation of Aircraft, provides guidance for operations with missing weather information. FS has determined operators may conduct operations when these elements of the METAR are missing and remain authorized to use the weather reporting, as long as each operation is consistent with certain risk mitigation measures. These procedures are listed in the revised A010 template, which describes the FAA's authorization for using the weather reporting.

5. Discussion. The purpose of this revision is to add language to OpSpec A010 to allow certificate holders (CH) to continue flights to a destination airport at airports outside the United States and its territories or at U.S. military airports experiencing a temporary disruption to critical information in the METAR.

6. Guidance.

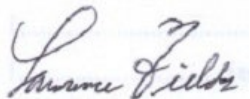
a. FAA Order 8900.1, Volume 3, Chapter 18, Section 3, Part A Operations Specifications—General, OpSpec/MSpec A010—Aviation Weather Information. We are adding subparagraph D4) for procedures for adding optional text to A010 for part 121 and/or 121/135 operators who encounter missing weather elements at certain foreign airports.

b. Sample OpSpec A010 Templates. This notice contains the following:

- The sample OpSpec A010 template in Appendix A applies to part 121.
- The sample OpSpec A010 template in Appendix B applies to part 121/135.

7. Action. Upon receipt of this notice, POIs should issue the revised OpSpec A010 at the request of CHs conducting operations to account for unexpected missing weather information in the METAR.

8. Disposition. We will incorporate the information in this notice into Order 8900.1, Volume 3, Chapter 18, Section 3 before this notice expires. Direct questions or comments concerning the information in this notice to the Air Transportation Division Operations Group (AFS-220) at 202-267-8166.



Lawrence M. Fields
Deputy Executive Director, Flight Standards Service

**Appendix A. Sample 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.

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 U.S. National Weather Service (NWS) or a source approved by the U.S. NWS in accordance with § 121.101(b)(1).

(2) Except as provided in subparagraph b(3) or d of this operations specification, 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):

- ☐ See Table 2.
- ☐ The NWS for those United States and its territories located outside of the 48 contiguous States.
- ☐ U.S. and North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) military observing and forecasting sources.
- ☐ Members of the World Meteorological Organization (WMO).
- ☐ Active meteorological offices operated by a foreign State that subscribe to the standards and practices of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) conventions.
- ☐ A meteorological station, or automated observation weather product, authorized by an ICAO Member State.
- ☐ For reports of adverse weather phenomena: Pilot Weather Reports (PIREP) provided by aircraft of the same or similar type and size.
- ☐ For reports of adverse weather phenomena: Aircraft Reports (AIREP) provided by aircraft of the same or similar type and size.

(3) The certificate holder is approved to use the adverse weather phenomena reporting and forecast system(s) referenced in Table 1 below. If the certificate holder is approved to use an Enhanced Weather Information System (EWINS) in Table 2 of this operations specification, select “See Table 2” in the first column of Table 1 below.

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 subparagraph b(1), b(2), or b(3) of this operations specification.

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 operations specification, the “Weather Bureau” is represented by the U.S. NWS.

(2) Except as provided in subparagraph d of this operations specification, 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):

- ☐ See Table 2.
- ☐ The NWS for those United States and its territories located outside of the 48 contiguous States.
- ☐ U.S. and North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) military observing and forecasting sources.
- ☐ Members of the World Meteorological Organization (WMO).
- ☐ Active meteorological offices operated by a foreign State that subscribe to the standards and practices of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) conventions.
- ☐ A meteorological station, or automated observation weather product, authorized by an ICAO Member State.

- ☐ For reports of adverse weather phenomena: Pilot Weather Reports (PIREP) provided by aircraft of the same or similar type and size.
- ☐ For reports of adverse weather phenomena: Aircraft Reports (AIREP) provided by aircraft of the same or similar type and size.

(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 subparagraph c(1) or c(2) of this operations specification.

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, select “N/A” in the first column of Table 2 below.

Table 2 – EWINS

Name of Weather Source	Name of Manual Containing EWINS	Date of Initial Approval of EWINS	Date of Latest Revision of EWINS

e. At airports outside the United States and its territories or at U.S. military airports, the certificate holder is authorized to operate to or from an airport that is missing ceiling, visibility, or present weather information in the official Aviation Routine Weather Report (METAR) in accordance with the following conditions and limitations.

(1) The Terminal Aerodrome Forecast (TAF) indicates the weather conditions from 1 hour before to 1 hour after the estimated time of arrival (ETA) will be no less than a ceiling of 1,000 feet and visibility of 3 miles.

(2) The certificate holder plans two alternate airports that have available a complete METAR and TAF.

(3) Fuel will be provided for a diversion to the most distant alternate airport, based on nautical air miles, in accordance with the following:

- (a) Perform a missed approach at the destination airport.
- (b) Climb to the expected cruising altitude.
- (c) Fly the expected routing.

(d) Descend to the point at the most distant alternate, based on nautical air miles, where an approach will be initiated; then conduct an approach and landing.

(4) The Aircraft Dispatcher or person responsible to exercise operational control will brief the pilot in command (PIC) on the destination weather and the requirements of this subparagraph.

(5) Departure operations are not authorized if freezing precipitation is forecast and the weather elements are missing any ceiling, visibility, or present weather information.

(6) No circle-to-land operations may be conducted with missing ceiling and visibility.

(7) The minimum descent altitude (MDA) at the destination airport with missing ceiling, visibility, or present weather information will be limited to 1,000 feet above ground level (AGL).

**Appendix B. Sample OpSpec A010, Aviation Weather Information: 14 CFR
Part 121/135****SECTION I. Part 121 Aviation Weather Information**

a. The certificate holder conducting 14 CFR Part 121 operations shall use the sources of aviation weather information described in this operations specification.

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 U.S. National Weather Service (NWS) or a source approved by the U.S. NWS in accordance with § 121.101(b)(1).

(2) Except as provided in subparagraph b(3) or d of this operations specification, 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):

- ☐ See Table 2 (Section I).
- ☐ The NWS for those United States and its territories located outside of the 48 contiguous States.
- ☐ U.S. and North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) military observing and forecasting sources.
- ☐ Members of the World Meteorological Organization (WMO).
- ☐ Active meteorological offices operated by a foreign State that subscribe to the standards and practices of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) conventions.
- ☐ A meteorological station, or automated observation weather product, authorized by an ICAO Member State.
- ☐ For reports of adverse weather phenomena: Pilot Weather Reports (PIREP) provided by aircraft of the same or similar type and size.
- ☐ For reports of adverse weather phenomena: Aircraft Reports (AIREP) provided by aircraft of the same or similar type and size.

(3) The certificate holder is approved to use the adverse weather phenomena reporting and forecast system(s) referenced in Table 1 (Section I) below. If the certificate holder is approved to use an Enhanced Weather Information System (EWINS) in Table 2 (Section I) of this operations specification, select “See Table 2 (Section I)” in the first column of Table 1 (Section I) below.

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 subparagraph b(1), b(2), or b(3) of this operations specification.

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 operations specification, the “Weather Bureau” is represented by the U.S. NWS.

(2) Except as provided in subparagraph d of this operations specification, 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):

- ☐ See Table 2 (Section I).
- ☐ The NWS for those United States and its territories located outside of the 48 contiguous States.
- ☐ U.S. and North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) military observing and forecasting sources.
- ☐ Members of the World Meteorological Organization (WMO).
- ☐ Active meteorological offices operated by a foreign State that subscribe to the standards and practices of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) conventions.
- ☐ A meteorological station, or automated observation weather product, authorized by an ICAO Member State.

- ☐ For reports of adverse weather phenomena: Pilot Weather Reports (PIREP) provided by aircraft of the same or similar type and size.
- ☐ For reports of adverse weather phenomena: Aircraft Reports (AIREP) provided by aircraft of the same or similar type and size.

(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 subparagraph c(1) or c(2) of this operations specification.

d. The certificate holder is approved to use an EWINS to obtain and disseminate aviation weather information for the control of flight operations.

Table 2 – EWINS – Part 121

Name of Weather Source	Name of Manual Containing EWINS	Date of Initial Approval of EWINS	Date of Latest Revision of EWINS

e. At airports outside the United States and its territories or at U.S. military airports, the certificate holder conducting Part 121 flag or supplemental operations is authorized to operate to or from an airport that is missing ceiling, visibility, or present weather information in the official Aviation Routine Weather Report (METAR) in accordance with the following conditions and limitations.

(1) The Terminal Aerodrome Forecast (TAF) indicates the weather conditions from 1 hour before to 1 hour after the estimated time of arrival (ETA) will be no less than a ceiling of 1,000 feet and visibility of 3 miles.

(2) The certificate holder plans two alternate airports that have available a complete METAR and TAF.

(3) Fuel will be provided for a diversion to the most distant alternate airport, based on nautical air miles, in accordance with the following:

- (a) Perform a missed approach at the destination airport.
- (b) Climb to the expected cruising altitude.
- (c) Fly the expected routing.

(d) Descend to the point at the most distant alternate, based on nautical air miles, where an approach will be initiated; then conduct an approach and landing.

(4) The Aircraft Dispatcher or person responsible to exercise operational control will brief the pilot in command (PIC) on the destination weather and the requirements of this subparagraph.

(5) Departure operations are not authorized if freezing precipitation is forecast and the weather elements are missing any ceiling, visibility, or present weather information.

(6) No circle-to-land operations may be conducted with missing ceiling and visibility.

(7) The minimum descent altitude (MDA) at the destination airport with missing ceiling, visibility, or present weather information will be limited to 1,000 feet above ground level (AGL).

SECTION II. Part 135 Aviation Weather Information

a. The certificate holder conducting 14 CFR Part 135 operations is authorized to use weather reporting facilities operated by the National Weather Service (NWS), a source approved by the NWS, or a source approved by the Administrator.

b. The Administrator approves the certificate holder to use the following sources of aviation weather information:

- ☐ See Table 1 (Section II).
- ☐ The NWS or a source approved by the NWS (within the 48 contiguous United States and the District of Columbia).
- ☐ The NWS for those United States and its territories located outside of the 48 contiguous States.
- ☐ U.S. and North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) military observing and forecasting sources.
- ☐ Members of the World Meteorological Organization (WMO).
- ☐ Active meteorological offices operated by a foreign State that subscribe to the standards and practices of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) conventions.
- ☐ A meteorological station, or automated observation weather product, authorized by an ICAO Member State.
- ☐ For reports of adverse weather phenomena: Pilot Weather Reports (PIREP) provided by aircraft of the same or similar type and size.
- ☐ For reports of adverse weather phenomena: Aircraft Reports (AIREP) provided by aircraft of the same or similar type and size.
- ☐ For operations in a noncontiguous State under instrument flight rules (IFR) to conduct an instrument approach to a destination with a published approach without a destination Aviation Routine Weather Report (METAR), if a current Area Forecast (FA), supplemented

by noncertified local weather observations (such as weather cameras and human observations) is available, and an alternate airport that has a weather report is specified, in accordance with the limitations and procedures in subparagraph e of this operations specification.

- c. The certificate holder is approved to use an Enhanced Weather Information System (EWINS) to obtain and disseminate aviation weather information for the control of flight operations.

Table 1 – EWINS – Part 135

Name of Weather Source	Name of Manual Containing EWINS	Date of Initial Approval of EWINS	Date of Latest Revision of EWINS

- d. In accordance with Part 135, § 135.213(b), the certificate holder is authorized to deviate from § 135.213(a) in accordance with A005 of these operations specifications and Table 2 (Section II) of this operations specification.

Table 2 – Deviation in Accordance with § 135.213(b)

Location of Operation	Location of Weather Observation	Date of National Weather Service Concurrence	Conditions and Limitations	Revision Date of Conditions and Limitations

- e. If authorized in subparagraph b, the certificate holder may operate to destinations listed in Table 3 below with a published approach in a noncontiguous State under IFR and conduct an instrument approach without a destination METAR in accordance with the approved departure and en route weather evaluation procedures contained in the certificate holder's manual, reference: [Text Box (e.g., General Operations Manual (GOM), Section II)].

Table 3 – Airports Served by FAA-Approved Noncertified Supplemental Weather Information

Airport ID	FAA-Approved Weather Info Techniques	Certificate Holder's Manual Reference for Training/Evaluation Procedures	REV.