

NOTICE

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION

N 8900.742

National Policy

Effective Date:
6/17/25

Cancellation Date:
6/17/26

SUBJ: CoW J551, Restricted Category Civil Aircraft Operating Limitations

1. Purpose of This Notice. This notice announces a mandatory revision to Certificate of Waiver (CoW) J551 for Title 14 of the Code of Federal Regulations (14 CFR) part 91 operators using restricted category civil aircraft. This notice also provides revised guidance to Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Order 8900.1, Flight Standards Information Management System, clarifying the authorization granted by CoW J551 and adding guidance on authorizing operations within the entire United States.

2. Audience. The primary audience for this notice is Flight Standards (FS) Safety Assurance offices' aviation safety inspectors (ASI) and principal inspectors (PI). The secondary audience includes the 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 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 and DRS.

4. Background.

a. History. In 2022, a revision to Order 8900.1, Volume 3, Chapter 3, Section 3 and the issuance of CoW J551 for restricted category aircraft by the FAA contained possibly confusing language, leading many restricted category operators and FAA personnel at FS offices to believe that CoW J551 could only be granted for time-sensitive and emergency operations. Subsequently, it was determined that the policy was not uniformly applied. Industry concerns and congressional inquiries triggered the General Aviation and Commercial Division's (AFS-800) Operations Group (AFS-830) to review the policy and requirements for issuing CoW J551 to 14 CFR part 91 operators utilizing restricted category civil aircraft. A determination was made that a revision was warranted to provide operational flexibility to both restricted category operators and FAA FS offices processing these waivers without compromising safety within the National Airspace System (NAS).

b. Applicable Regulation. Title 14 CFR § 91.313(e) states: "Except when operating in accordance with the terms and conditions of a certificate of waiver or special operating limitations issued by the Administrator, no person may operate a restricted category civil aircraft within the United States—

- (1) Over a densely populated area;
- (2) In a congested airway; or
- (3) Near a busy airport where passenger transport operations are conducted.”

c. Explanation of Key Changes and Clarifications. The following revisions and clarifications have been made to Order 8900.1, Volume 3, Chapter 3, Section 3:

(1) The FAA has eliminated the language and necessity that an operation requires an emergency or time-sensitive nexus for the issuance of a CoW J551.

(2) Areas of operation approved under CoW J551 include the entire United States, the District of Columbia, and all U.S. territories, to include Puerto Rico, Guam, American Samoa, the Northern Mariana Islands, and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

(3) CoW J551 authorizes a 14 CFR part 91 operator using a restricted category civil aircraft under 14 CFR § 91.313 to operate the aircraft over a densely populated area, in a congested airway, or near a busy airport where passenger transport operations are conducted only for the purpose of relocating the aircraft for delivery, repositioning, maintenance, and refueling.

(4) CoW J551 does not authorize the operator to conduct any special purpose operations over a densely populated area, in a congested airway, or near a busy airport where passenger transport operations are conducted.

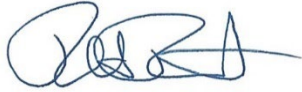
(5) CoW J551 does not authorize an operator to takeoff or land a restricted category civil aircraft in a densely populated area. Takeoffs and landing at airports listed in FAA Chart Supplements that are located within the boundaries of a densely populated area are permitted with the issuance of CoW J551 for the purpose of relocating the aircraft for delivery, repositioning, maintenance, and refueling.

5. Guidance. This notice contains the sample CoW J551 template in Appendix A, which applies to 14 CFR part 91.

6. Action. This is a mandatory revision to CoW J551. PIs with oversight responsibility for 14 CFR part 91 operators issued CoW J551 should review the updated guidance in Order 8900.1, Volume 3, Chapter 3, Section 3 and reissue CoW J551, if applicable, to all affected operators within 90 days of the effective date of publication of this notice and the updated Order 8900.1 policy.

7. Guidance Document. FAA employees and personnel are required to comply with this document. For non-FAA entities, this is a guidance document and conformity with the guidance document is voluntary only. Its content is not legally binding in its own right and will not be relied upon by the Department as a separate basis for affirmative enforcement action or other administrative penalty. Nonconformity will not affect rights and obligations under existing statutes and regulations.

8. Disposition. We will incorporate the information in this notice into Order 8900.1 before this notice expires. Direct questions or comments concerning the information in this notice to AFS-830 at 202-267-1100.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'R. Reckert', with a stylized flourish extending to the right.

Robert Reckert for
Lawrence Fields
Executive Director, Flight Standards Service

Appendix A. Sample Certificate of Waiver J551, Restricted Category Civil Aircraft Operating Limitations: 14 CFR Part 91

1. The operator, [Operator Name], is granted a Certificate of Waiver (CoW) from the provisions of 14 CFR Part 91, § 91.313(e), Restricted Category Civil Aircraft: Operating Limitations. This document constitutes the same authority and is issued in lieu of FAA Form 7711-1, Certificate of Waiver or Authorization, for restricted category civil aircraft operations.

a. This CoW does not waive any state law or local ordinance. Should the proposed operations conflict with any state law or local ordinance or require permission of local authorities or property owners, it is the operator's responsibility to resolve the matter.

b. No person will conduct any operation pursuant to the authority of this certificate except in accordance with the standard provisions contained in this certificate, and such other requirements of 14 CFR not specifically waived by this CoW.

2. Aircraft. The operator is authorized to use the following aircraft.

Table 1 – Restricted Category Civil Aircraft Authorized

Registration Number	Serial Number	Aircraft Make/Model/Series

3. Operating Limitations.

a. The operator is authorized to operate the restricted category civil aircraft listed in Table 1 over a densely populated area, in a congested airway, or near a busy airport where passenger transport operations are conducted only for the purpose of relocating the aircraft for delivery, repositioning, maintenance, and refueling. The operator is not authorized to conduct any special purpose operations within these areas.

b. The operator may not takeoff or land a restricted category civil aircraft in a densely populated area. Takeoffs and landings at airports listed in the FAA Chart Supplements that are located within the boundaries of a densely populated area are permitted.

c. All aircraft type certificated in the restricted category must be operated in compliance with the limitations prescribed in § 91.313, the operating limitations listed on FAA Form 8130-7, Special Airworthiness Certificate, and any other additional operating limitations issued by the FAA for the special purpose(s) involved.

4. Geographic Area of Operations. This CoW is authorized for use in the following geographic area(s):

[ENTER the geographic area over which aircraft will operate (e.g., a city, town, district, or state).]

5. Standard Provisions. The operator is responsible for compliance with the following provisions:

- a. A copy of the application (FAA Form 7711-2) made for this CoW must be attached to, carried with, and become a part hereof.
 - b. The Special Airworthiness Certificate operating limitations must be complied with and become a part hereof.
 - c. A copy or facsimile of this CoW must be carried on board each authorized aircraft or readily accessible near the pilot's operating station when operating under the provisions of this CoW.
 - d. The aircraft listed in Table 1 must be maintained in accordance with all applicable sections of the regulations and the operating limitations referenced in subparagraph 3 above.
 - e. This CoW must be presented for inspection upon request of any authorized representative of the FAA, or any state or municipal official charged with the duty of enforcing local laws or regulations.
 - f. The holder of this CoW is responsible for the strict observance of the terms and provisions contained herein.
 - g. This CoW is not transferable.
 - h. Failure to comply with this CoW and the standard provisions may constitute justification for cancellation of the CoW.
 - i. The operator is responsible for ensuring that all pilots are knowledgeable in restricted category operations and the provisions of this CoW.
6. Responsible Person. The Responsible Person for this Letter of Authorization (LOA) is listed in Table 1 of LOA A001 (revision 02c or later).
7. Effective Date and Expiration. This CoW will expire 24 calendar months from the effective date and is subject to cancellation at any time upon notice by the Administrator or his or her authorized representative. The operator may request renewal of this CoW by submitting a new application at least 45 calendar days prior to the expiration date to the responsible Flight Standards office having jurisdiction over the area where the applicant's principal base of operations is located.