

NOTICE

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION

N 8900.650

National Policy

Effective Date:
1/17/23

Cancellation Date:
1/17/24

SUBJ: Clarification on the Operational Evaluation Process

1. Purpose of This Notice. This notice provides information and guidance to the Aircraft Evaluation Division (AED) on the Flight Standardization Board (FSB) Operational Evaluation (OE) Policy Initiative, resulting from the Air Carrier Training Aviation Rulemaking Committee (ACT ARC) and the Flight Standardization Board Workgroup (FSB WG) recommendations on OE.

2. Audience. The primary audience for this notice is AED aviation safety inspectors (ASI) conducting FSB activities. 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 Federal Aviation Administration's (FAA) website at https://www.faa.gov/regulations_policies/orders_notices and DRS.

4. Background. The ACT ARC and FSB WG submitted recommendations to the FAA between 2020 and 2021. The ACT ARC Recommendation's (AAR) implementation strategy/schedule encompassed recommendations ranging from improvements to the FSB Report (FSBR) template to the inclusion of human factors in the FSB process. An implementation plan was divided into four tasks, ranging from Task 0 to 3. Task 1 will be completed upon the publication of this notice.

5. Definitions. As defined by and for the purposes of the Task 1 implementation plan, the following terms are defined in this notice.

a. Aircraft Evaluation Division (AED) Summary Report. A report for the applicant generated by AED in accordance with AVS-002-005, AVS Coordination Process – Aircraft Certification and Operational Evaluations, to document OEs conducted in accordance with the Type Inspection Authorization (TIA) or Letter of Authorization (LOA), and to provide a record of the aircraft configuration presented for the evaluation.

b. Evaluation Plan (EP). An EP is submitted by the applicant and accepted by AED to outline the FSB's operational activities, which includes crewmember training, checking, and

identifying any gaps that may occur in operational suitability as a result of simulator crewmember training (e.g., equipment differences, night conditions, instrument flight rules (IFR), etc.). The EP should also include an operator differences requirements (ODR) table, in accordance with Advisory Circular (AC) 120-53, Guidance for Conducting and Use of Flight Standardization Board Evaluations, if the applicant is seeking differences credit.

c. Letter of Authorization Report (LOAR). The LOAR provides a record of the flight tests, the OE flights, or both conducted as authorized by the LOA. It documents the configuration tested and any findings or discrepancies noted. If an LOA is issued, AED and project aircraft certification office (PACO) personnel must prepare a LOAR. The LOAR may also serve as the AED summary report. A copy of the LOAR must be submitted to the Project Manager (PM).

d. Operational Evaluation (OE). An OE is an AED process to determine pilot type rating, minimum crewmember training, checking and currency requirements, and the unique or special airman certification requirements (e.g., specific flight characteristics, no-flap landing). An OE is associated with all FSBs, but can also be completed as a standalone task.

e. Operational Suitability. The operational suitability is comprised of two parts: the evaluation and the results.

(1) Operational Suitability Evaluation (OSE). An OSE is an AED determination that an aircraft or system may be safely used in the National Airspace System (NAS) and meets the applicable FAA policies and regulatory requirements.

(2) Operational Acceptability or Unacceptability. The result of the OSE may be documented via a compliance checklist, the AED summary report, or the LOAR, at the discretion of the FSB chairperson.

f. Operational Suitability Letter (OSL). The AED may issue an OSL to a hardware manufacturer or Type B software developer. These letters do not grant operational authorization, but indicate some previous FAA evaluation of performance. OSLs are not published on the applicable Flight Standards (FS) repository because they are not complete OEs. Normally, these letters are distributed by the manufacturer, but can also be obtained directly from the AED.

g. Operational Suitability Report (OSR). An OSR mirrors an FSBR, and is published on the applicable FS repository, but is normally not generated during an FSB, unless additional systems are evaluated (e.g., Electronic Flight Bag (EFB)). OSRs can also be used to document OEs on type rated aircraft for which an FSBR does not exist (e.g., aircraft registered before AED's creation).

6. Task 1 Implementation. The implementation of this notice provides intermediate clarity for operational terminology, which will be further defined/revised during the development of FSB policy and procedures. OEs are currently conducted in accordance with FAA Order 8110.4, Type Certification; FAA Order 8430.21, Flight Standards Division, Aircraft Certification Division, and Aircraft Evaluation Group Responsibilities; FAA Order 8900.1, Flight Standards Information Management System; and AC 120-53.

7. Related Publications (current editions):

- FAA Order 8110.4, Type Certification.
- FAA Order 8110.52, Type Validation and Post-type Validation Procedures.
- FAA Order 8430.21, Flight Standards Division, Aircraft Certification Division and Aircraft Evaluation Group Responsibilities.
- FAA Order 8900.1, Flight Standards Information Management System.
- AC 120-53, Guidance for Conducting and Use of Flight Standardization Board Evaluations.
- AVS-002-005, AVS Coordination Process – Aircraft Certification and Operational Evaluations.

8. Coordination. Participants from the FSB WGs will be solicited from AED, the Air Transportation Division (AFS-200), the General Aviation and Commercial Division (AFS-800), and other FAA lines of business deemed necessary.

9. 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 9-AWA-AFS-AED-Policy@faa.gov.



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