



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION
National Policy

ORDER
8900.3

Effective Date:
9/21/09

SUBJ: Flight Standards Service Document Control Board

- 1. Purpose of This Order.** This order establishes the Flight Standards Service (AFS) Document Control Board (DCB).
- 2. Audience.** The primary audience for this order is AFS Headquarters policy and non-policy divisions, and regional AFS divisions. The secondary audience includes Flight Standards District Offices (FSDO), other AFS field offices, aviation safety inspectors (ASI), other Aviation Safety (AVS) offices, and Non-AFS organizations as appropriate.
- 3. Where You Can Find This Order.** This order is available through the Flight Standards Information Management System (FSIMS) at <http://fsims.avs.faa.gov>. Operators and the public can find this order at <http://fsims.faa.gov>.
- 4. Effective Date and Duration.** The DCB is effective upon signature of this order. It will remain in effect until canceled by the Director, Flight Standards Service.
- 5. Distribution.** This order is distributed to the director level in the office of the Director for the Flight Standards Service; AFS-50, AFS-100, AFS-200, AFS-300, AFS-400, AFS-500, AFS-600, AFS-700, AFS-800, AFS-900, and the regional Flight Standards offices.
- 6. Background.** The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) is committed to providing timely and efficient regulatory guidance and policy in support of current and NextGen initiatives as required by law. In keeping with current and new technologies becoming available, updating of regulatory guidance, policy, authorizations, and proposed regulations may be required. Given this commitment, there exists a need to quickly and efficiently create new guidance and policy, as well as update existing guidance and policy to satisfy requirements for performance of new technologies and applications, new aircraft type/capabilities, configurations, and current operations. These complex issues mandate a comprehensive review of existing regulatory criteria and guidance materials.
- 7. Objectives and Scope.** The DCB is created to informally coordinate the initial production of AFS policy guidance between the International Programs and Policy Division (AFS-50), Air Transportation Division (AFS-200), Aircraft Maintenance Division (AFS-300), Flight Technologies and Procedures Division (AFS-400), Flight Standards Training Division (AFS-500), Regulatory Support Division (AFS-600), Civil Aviation Registry (AFS-700), General Aviation and Commercial Division, (AFS-800), and the Flight Standards Certification and Surveillance Division (AFS-900) for the purpose of accelerating the process of creating and/or modifying new or existing policy documents. These documents include advisory circulars

(AC), notices, orders, authorizing documents (e.g., operations specifications (OpSpecs), management specifications (MSpecs), letter of authorization (LOA)), handbook guidance, job aids, and International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) documents. By utilizing a change management process, all policy divisions will meet on a weekly basis or as designated by the DCB Chair, to share their concerns and opinions about current and future policy issues and changes. Flight Standards has no expectation that all AFS documents will be handled by the DCB. The DCB will determine which policy and guidance documents will continue to be managed separately from the DCB. The DCB's primary function is to review and provide preliminary approval of documents that involve or impact more than one AFS division. The goal is to provide an informal coordination arena for joint AFS policy review at the beginning of the production process rather than at the end of the formal production review process. Each Headquarters policy division and each regional AFS division office will provide at least one DCB member. DCB representatives are to discuss their ideas and work together to address matters of concern in order to promote a quicker formal review of guidance, policies, authorizations, and proposed regulations. As noted in FAA Order 1320.1, by circulating an early draft for review by perspective users through an informal coordination process, an office of primary responsibility can gain support and input from the directive. This informal coordination process can reduce the amount of time divisions spend reviewing documents during formal coordination and the delays involved in resolving non-concur comments received during the formal document review process.

8. Procedures. The following procedures define the DCB processes:

a. Meetings. The DCB will meet for no more than two hours weekly, or as scheduled by the DCB Chair(s) or designee.

b. Required Attendance. Each of the following AFS Headquarters divisions will provide at least one representative member as well as any required subject matter expert(s) (SME): AFS-50, AFS-200, AFS-300, AFS-400, AFS-800, AFS-900, and each Flight Standards regional office. AFS non-policy divisions, and other AFS personnel will participate as required at the invitation of the DCB Chair(s).

c. Applicable Documents and Processes. Policy divisions proposing changes in current regulation/policy/procedure (ACs, handbook guidance, orders, OpSpecs, notices, job aids and ICAO harmonization) will submit their proposed change(s) to the DCB via their respective DCB representative along with a short statement of the change objective. Non-policy divisions will submit their proposed changes to the DCB Chair(s). Non-AFS organizations can submit their proposed change(s) to the DCB Chair(s) along with a short statement of the change objective.

(1) Draft documents will be available for review and comment via a Web site or similar mechanism accessible to all DCB participants.

(2) Documents will be briefed at DCB meetings along with a presentation of the proposed change(s).

(3) The division representative that introduces a new document for DCB informal coordination will act as the DCB point of contact (POC) for that document. As such, the POC will oversee the document through informal coordination.

(4) When the DCB has finished its informal coordination process and approves the document for production, the POC will submit the document for formal coordination utilizing the appropriate AFS Quality Management System (QMS) process and monitor the formal coordination process to completion.

(5) The POC will contact and provide any follow-up to the Technical Information and Communications Programs Branch (AFS-140) as necessary.

(6) Documents will be processed as per appropriate FAA, AVS, and AFS directives.

d. Working Collaboratively. Participating members of each division or office will work collaboratively; providing advice and recommendations to expedite the informal coordination review and approval of the proposed policy guidance or change. There may be significant comments made concerning the proposed change. It is not intended that the weekly DCB meeting be the forum for resolving those changes. The sponsor should incorporate significant comments and suggestions and present the proposal again at a subsequent DCB meeting.

e. Document Endorsement. Once DCB members agree to a new policy or policy change, the document will be considered “DCB Endorsed/Informally Coordinated.”

f. Authorizing Document Templates. Any documents that include changes to authorizing document templates, e.g., OpSpecs, MSpecs, training specifications, LOAs, must also be coordinated directly with the Flight Standards Service’s Technical Programs Branch, AFS-260, for publication of the templates within the automated Operations Safety System (OPSS). It is incumbent upon the document POC to ensure compatibility with OPSS before sending the document to the DCB for final approval.

g. Production Process. Following approval by the DCB, the sponsoring division is responsible for adopting any agreed upon comments and suggestions, finalizing the draft document, and coordinating with AFS-140 for final formatting and editing. As a DCB informally coordinated document, the document will be placed on a “DCB-Approved” status with AFS-140.

h. Formal Coordination. After the proposed document is approved through consensus by each representative division, and only after it is accepted by the DCB Chair(s) or designee, the document is sent to AFS-140 for formal coordination by the submitting division via the appropriate AFS-100 production process. Once the formal coordination document reaches the divisions listed in the formal review process grid, the divisions are expected to expedite their review and signoff and return their comments to AFS-140 as soon as possible, but no later than the clearance date specified. This expedited review is possible because all policy issues must have been resolved before the document is released by the DCB for formal coordination. It is expected that there should be no non-concur comments from these AFS divisions during the formal coordination process because of the DCB’s document informal coordination review and

approval process. The goal of this order is to reduce the formal coordination review process timeline within Flight Standards while ensuring a better quality product.

9. Organization and Administration. The DCB will be administered by, and be comprised of at least one division representative and any necessary SMEs from AFS-50, AFS-200, AFS-300, AFS-400, AFS-800, AFS-900, and each Flight Standards regional office. Each represented division will have one vote regarding any issues brought before the DCB. A DCB Chair or Co-Chairs will coordinate the activities of the DCB. The DCB Chair(s) will resolve any issues that cannot be resolved by DCB consensus. The DCB Chair/s will be appointed and removed by the Director, Flight Standards Service. Non-policy divisions will participate at the invitation of the DCB Chair(s). SMEs will be provided by the divisions as required to support the work of the DCB.

Note: AFS-400 is responsible for establishing and scheduling locations of the meetings, establishing a telephone bridge or link for the convenience of participants, and sponsoring and maintaining the central document site.

10. Division Representative. Each of the AFS policy and regional AFS divisions will be responsible for appointing and ensuring the attendance of its representative member at each DCB meeting. Representatives may attend the meetings in person, by conference call, or other means as approved by the DCB Chair(s).

11. Administrative Support. The Flight Technologies and Procedures Division's Flight Operations Branch (AFS-410) is responsible for providing administrative support for the DCB. Direct proposed changes, comments or questions to: FAA Flight Technologies and Procedures Division, Flight Operations Branch, AFS-410, 470 L'Enfant Plaza SW, Ste. 4102, Washington, DC 20024, Attn: DCB Chair(s).

Note: A representative from AFS-140 is invited to participate as an observer.

12. Availability of Records. Records, reports, agendas, working papers, and other documents that are made available to or prepared for or by the DCB will be released under the Freedom of Information Act, Title 5 of the United States Code (5 U.S.C.) § 522 as appropriate. Releasable documents will be available for public inspection and copying at the FAA Flight Standards Headquarters: 800 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20591. Fees will be charged for information furnished to the public according to the fee schedule published in Title 49 of the Code of Federal Regulations (49 CFR) part 7.

13. Public Interest. Forming the DCB is determined to be in the public interest to fulfill the performance of duties imposed on FAA by law.

ORIGINAL SIGNED by

John M. Allen
Director, Flight Standards Service