



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

**ORDER**  
**8110.118**

Date:  
**09/20/12**

**SUBJ: Commercial Parts**

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**1. Purpose of this Order.** This order describes what aircraft certification office (ACO) personnel do to approve a commercial parts list (CPL), changes to a CPL, and commercial part replacement alternatives.

**2. Audience.** All Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) personnel responsible for evaluating applications for a type certificate (TC), amended type certificate (ATC), supplemental type certificate (STC), amended supplemental type certificate (ASTC), and parts manufacturer approval (PMA) involving commercial parts.

**Note:** Per Title 14, Code of Federal Regulations (14 CFR) 21.1(b)(4), a technical standard order authorization (TSOA) and a letter of design approval (LODA) are design approvals. However both the TSOA and LODA are issued based on a showing of compliance to a minimum performance standard, not the applicable airworthiness standards. Therefore TSOA and LODA holders are precluded from utilizing the privileges of 14 CFR 21.9(a)(4).

**3. Where to find this order.** You can find this order on [https://employees.faa.gov/tools\\_resources/orders\\_notices/](https://employees.faa.gov/tools_resources/orders_notices/) or public website [http://www.faa.gov/regulations\\_policies/orders\\_notices/](http://www.faa.gov/regulations_policies/orders_notices/) or the Regulatory and Guidance Library (RGL) website at <http://rgl.faa.gov>.

**4. Cancellation.** This order is effective September 20, 2012 and cancels Notice 8110.113, *Commercial Parts*, dated September 16, 2011.

**5. Background.**

**a.** The development of a commercial part classification began in the early 1990's after an investigation revealed spare articles were being produced without FAA production approvals (oftentimes by suppliers to the aircraft manufacturers). The solution for these companies was to obtain a PMA. However, many of these articles were not specifically designed or produced for sale for installation on type certificated products. These articles are often produced by major manufacturers (such as those producing consumer electronics) where aviation represents a very small share of their overall business. The regulations were silent on this issue, and as a result, many of these articles became suspected unapproved parts.

**b.** Commercial part is a designation the FAA has defined in 14 CFR 21.1(b)(3). FAA design approval holders (DAH) have the privilege of designating qualified articles as commercial

parts by including the CPL as part of their instructions for continued airworthiness (ICA). The manufacturer of an article on a CPL is not required to get an FAA production approval for that article.

c. Specifically, 14 CFR 21.9(a)(4), introduces commercial parts under replacement and modification articles. It explicitly deals with articles installed on aircraft that were not produced solely for aviation purposes. Advisory Circular (AC) 20-168, *Certification Guidance for Installation of Non-essential, Non-Required Aircraft Cabin Systems and Equipment* provides a means for approval of such articles; and identifies RTCA/DO-313 as a standardized and streamlined process for demonstrating compliance with applicable airworthiness requirements.

**6. Procedures.** As part of the TC, ATC, STC, ASTC, or PMA certification project, have the applicant identify whether or not they plan to develop a CPL as part of their ICA.

a. Inform applicants that they must submit data for each article on the proposed CPL. The data must substantiate the following in order for the article to be acceptable as a commercial part:

(1) The failure of the article leads to no degradation in the level of safety of the product (as defined in § 21.1(b)(5));

(2) The article is only manufactured under the manufacturer's specifications and marked with the manufacturer's markings. No additional design, quality, marking requirements, or production receiving inspection is required by the DAH.

**Note:** The term manufacturer, as used in this paragraph, refers to the article manufacturer that is exempt from obtaining a production approval (e.g., Sony, Krups, LG), and not the DAH.

b. Receive from the applicant a proposed CPL accompanied by the following supporting data as a minimum:

(1) Statement of the function of the article;

(2) System safety assessment;

(3) Drawing or sketch of where the article is used (if article uses electrical power or if deemed necessary by ACO on non-electrical article); and

(4) Dimensions, materials, and weight.

(5) Any other data necessary for the FAA to approve the CPL.

c. The ACO determines whether the applicant has established that each article on the proposed CPL meets the commercial part criteria. Discretionary function and engineering judgment should be used in determining the level and depth of FAA review in approving the CPL. Your office may allow the applicant to use means other than that specified in AC 21-45, *Commercial Parts*, without notifying

AIR-100. An applicant must provide a system safety assessment for possible failure modes and results to show those failures to be benign or contained so as to not degrade the level of safety of the product. Failure is not only defined as the article's intended function stopping, but also a failure must not create a hazardous situation. An example is an electrical short must not create a fire hazard. A letter must be sent to the applicant to inform them of CPL approval (refer to the CPL with date and revision number). An email or other written notification must be sent to an applicant to reject a CPL (with an explanation), or to identify that additional information is needed in the case of an incomplete package. Keep a copy of the approval letter and the approved CPL in the project folder.

## **7. Instructions for Continued Airworthiness (ICA).**

**a.** An applicant may notify the ACO of its intention to create a CPL in the project certification plan. The proposed CPL must be submitted as part of the ICA as provided for in 14 CFR 21.50(c). The FAA must approve the CPL if the applicant has met the criteria as established in this order. The CPL is considered an approved portion of the ICA. The ICA distribution requirements in 14 CFR 21.50 also apply to the CPL. For ease of distribution, the CPL may be a stand-alone document.

**b.** Once an article is listed on a CPL and approved by the FAA, the article must remain on the CPL, unless a safety issue exists that involves the article. The CPL establishes that the article may be procured from any available source and is acceptable for installation under part 43. The articles must be the exact same manufacturer and article number as listed in the CPL.

**8. Changes to CPL.** Only the DAH may propose changes to the CPL. The DAH must provide these changes according to a plan that was accepted by both the ACO and the Aircraft Evaluation Group (AEG) for changes to the ICA. The changes must be formatted to directly supplement the original ICA and clearly state what is being changed. The DAH must control changes to the CPL by date, revision number, and a revision history (see AC 21-45 appendix A for an example). In accordance with 14 CFR 21.50(b), these changes must be made available to any person who must comply with them.

**9. Replacement Alternative.** Commercial part "replacement alternative" is an alteration to the product. A replacement alternative may be determined to be acceptable as part of a minor alteration, unless the article involves electrical power. Articles involving electrical power follow a major alteration process and must meet the requirements of AC 20-168 or its equivalent. If approved data is necessary, the data supporting a replacement alternative may be approved by the FAA, an appropriately authorized designated engineering representative (DER), or an Organization Designation Authorization (ODA) unit member. Approval of a replacement alternative article through the alteration process does not change the CPL. Only the DAH may change the CPL. An installation of a replacement alternative article will require a record in accordance with 14 CFR 43.9.

**10. Technical Requirements for an STC.** An STC holder has the same privileges and responsibilities as a TC holder in regards to creating a CPL.

**11. PMA.** PMA holders who obtained PMA through evidence of a license agreement are excluded from utilizing the privileges of 14 CFR 21.9(a)(4), unless prior written approval is obtained from the licensor.

**12. ODA.** The ODA may not approve a CPL.

**13. Definitions.**

**a. Article.** An article (from 14 CFR 21.1) is defined as a material, part, component, process, or appliance.

**b. Commercial Part.** Commercial part is defined in 14 CFR 21.1(b)(3). Commercial part is an article (part, component or possibly an appliance depending on the appliance, but not a material or process) that was originally approved through an FAA design approval and is listed on an FAA-approved commercial parts list included in the DAH's ICA.

**c. Approved, Unapproved, Acceptable Article.** Articles are classified as approved, unapproved, or acceptable:

(1) An *Approved* article has an approved design under 14 CFR 21.8, is produced under an FAA-approved production system (for example, production certificate or PMA), conforms to FAA-approved data, and is in a condition for safe operation.

(2) An *Unapproved* article is an article not meeting the requirements of an approved or acceptable article.

(3) An *Acceptable* article has an approved design under 14 CFR 21.8, but is not required to be produced under an FAA-approved 14 CFR part 21 production system. An acceptable article can be a standard part; an owner/operator produced article for the purposes of maintaining their own product; or a commercial part. These articles are *acceptable* for installation on product under 14 CFR part 43.

**14. Related Publications.**

**a.** AC 21-45, *Commercial Parts*.

**b.** AC 20-168, *Certification Guidance for Installation of Non-Essential, Non-Required Aircraft Cabin Systems and Equipment*.

**15. Distribution.** Distribute this order to the following: the Washington headquarters branch levels of the Aircraft Certification Service, Flight Standards Service, the Regulatory Support Division in Oklahoma City, and the Aviation System Standards Office; the branch level in the Aircraft Certification Service directorates and regional Flight Standards Service divisions; all aircraft certification offices, manufacturing inspection district and satellite offices, and all flight standards district offices; the Aircraft Certification Branch and Flight Standards Branch at the FAA Academy; the International Policy Branch in Brussels, Belgium (AIR-BRU); and finally, applicable representatives of the Administrator and all international field offices.

**16. Deviations.** Adherence to procedures in this order is necessary for uniform administration of this directive material. Any deviations from this guidance material must be coordinated and approved by AIR-100. If a deviation becomes necessary, the FAA employee involved should ensure the deviation is substantiated, documented, and concurred with by the appropriate supervisor. A copy of the deviation must be submitted to AIR-100 for review and concurrence.

**17. Suggestions for Improvement.** If you find deficiencies, need clarification or want to suggest improvements to this order, send FAA Form 1320-19, Directive Feedback Information, (written or electronically) to the Aircraft Certification Service, Administrative Services Branch, AIR-510, Attention: Directives Management Officer. You can also send a copy to the Aircraft Engineering Division, AIR-100, Attention: Comments to Order 8110.118. If you urgently need an interpretation, contact AIR-110 at 202-385-6312. Always use Form 1320-19, in appendix A, to follow up each verbal conversation.

**18. Records Management.** Refer to Orders 0000.1, FAA Standard Subject Classification System; 1350.14, Records Management; and 1350.15, Records, Organization, Transfer, and Destruction Standards; or your office Records Management Officer or Directives Management Officer for guidance regarding retention or disposition of records.



**Susan J. M. Cabler**

Assistant Manager, Aircraft Engineering Division  
Aircraft Certification Service

**Appendix A. FAA Form 1320-19, Directive Feedback Information**

U.S. Department  
of Transportation  
**Federal Aviation  
Administration**

**Directive Feedback Information**

Please submit any written comments or recommendations for improving this directive, or suggest new items or subjects to be added to it. Also, if you find an error, please tell us about it.

Subject: FAA Order 8100.8D, Designee Management Handbook

To: Directives Management Officer at 9-AWA-AVS-AIR-DMO@faa.gov

*(Please check all appropriate line items)*

☐ An error (procedural or typographical) has been noted in paragraph \_\_\_\_\_ on page \_\_\_\_\_.

☐ Recommend paragraph \_\_\_\_\_ on page \_\_\_\_\_ be changed as follows:  
*(attach separate sheet if necessary)*

☐ In a future change to this directive, please include coverage on the following subject  
*(briefly describe what you want added):*

☐ Other comments:

☐ I would like to discuss the above. Please contact me.

Submitted by: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

FTS Telephone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Routing Symbol: \_\_\_\_\_

FAA Form 1320-19 (10-98)