

NOTICE

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION

N 8900.210

National Policy

Effective Date:
3/12/13

Cancellation Date:
3/12/14

SUBJ: OpSpec/MSpec A010, Aviation Weather Information

1. Purpose of This Notice. This notice replaces cancelled notice N 8900.199, announces an updated revision to operations specification (OpSpec) and management specification (MSpec) A010, Aviation Weather Information, and provides revised guidance for Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) certificate-holding district offices (CHDO), including Flight Standards District Offices (FSDO) and certificate management offices (CMO), and principal operations inspectors (POI) assigned to certificate holders conducting operations under Title 14 of the Code of Federal Regulations (14 CFR) parts 91 subpart K (part 91K), 121, 125, and 135. This notice also announces significant changes to guidance contained in FAA Order 8900.1, Flight Standards Information Management System (FSIMS), Volume 3, Chapter 25, Section 1, General Topics, and Volume 3, Chapter 26, Sections 1 through 4. These changes were initially announced in cancelled notice 8900.199. POIs should be aware that there are additional changes to 8900.1 Volume 3, Chapter 26, Sections 1 and 2, effective with the publication of this notice.

2. Audience. The primary audience for this notice is the CHDO (including the FSDOs and CMO), ASIs. The secondary audience includes Regional Flight Standards Divisions (RFSD) headquarters (HQ) policy divisions.

3. Where You Can Find This Notice. You can find this notice on the MyFAA employee Web site at https://employees.faa.gov/tools_resources/orders_notices. Inspectors can access this notice through the FSIMS at <http://fsims.avs.faa.gov>. Operators can find this notice on the FAA's Web site at <http://fsims.faa.gov>. This notice is available to the public at http://www.faa.gov/regulations_policies/orders_notices.

4. Background. The Air Transportation Division (AFS-200) conducted a comprehensive review of the currently issued OpSpec/MSpec A010, formerly titled "Aeronautical Weather Data." The review revealed a wide range of authorizations, some of which have been issued in a manner inconsistent with FAA policy and guidance. On October 11, 2012, we published N 8900.199, OpSpec/MSpec A010, Aviation Weather Information, which provided policy and instructions applicable to the revised A010 OpSpec/MSpec template which was renamed, Aviation Weather Information. Review of the new A010 templates issued thus far, to certificate holders conducting parts 121 and 135 operations, revealed multiple occurrences of A010 authorizations that continue to be issued in a manner inconsistent with FAA policy and guidance. As a result, AFS-200 has cancelled N 8900.199, revised the A010 templates for 91K, 121 and 135, and issued this notice as a replacement to N 8900.199.

5. Guidance.

a. Previously Introduced Guidance. Order 8900.1, Volume 3, Chapter 18, Section 3, Part A Operations Specifications—General, and Volume 3, Chapter 26, Sections 1 through 4, were significantly updated to provide clarity, and to accurately reflect the regulatory requirements for aviation weather information. Order 8900.1, Volume 3, Chapter 25, Section 1, was updated for accuracy and to remove references to weather information that would be in conflict with the guidance contained in Volume 3, Chapter 26, Sections 1 through 4.

b. New Guidance. We have issued another update to Order 8900.1, Volume 3, Chapter 18, Section 3, and Volume 3, Chapter 26, Section 2 to reflect the revised A010 OpSpec/MSpec template and the associated policy. Below are some of the highlights of the changes to OpSpec/MSpec A010:

- The OpSpec/MSpec language has been modified to conform to the individual regulatory requirements of parts 91K, 121, 125, and 135 operations.
- The ability to add free text into subparagraph b of the 91K, 121, and 135 templates has been replaced with the ability to select weather sources from a list provided within the A010 template.
- A table is available in the part 121 OpSpec template for an approved adverse weather phenomena reporting and forecast system.
- The Qualified Internet Communications Provider (QICP) table has been removed from all templates.
- The Enhanced Weather Information Systems (EWINS) table has been removed from the part 125 OpSpec and letter of authorization (LOA).
- A sample OpSpec A010 template for part 121 operations is attached to this notice. The templates for parts 91K, 125, and 135 operations can be viewed in the automated Operations Safety System (OPSS), also known as Web-based Operations Safety System (WebOPSS). Information on how to populate A010 is available by clicking on the help icon (?) in WebOPSS for each box and table. Any text entered into the optional/nonstandard text (Text 99) box of A010, requires prior approval from AFS-200. POIs should review the revised A010 template as it applies to the type of operation conducted by the certificate holder or program manager for whom the POI has oversight responsibility.

6. Action.

a. Parts 91K, 121, and 135 Mandatory Change. The revision to the A010 templates for parts 91K (Rev 020), 121 (Rev 040), and 135 (Rev 040) are mandatory changes.

(1) POIs of part 91K program managers and part 121 certificate holders will have 120 days from the date of this notice to review the guidance contained in Order 8900.1, Volume 3, Chapter 18, Section 3, OpSpec/MSpec A010, and Volume 3, Chapter 26, Sections 1 through 4, and issue the new template in accordance with that guidance.

(2) POIs of certificate holders conducting part 135 operations will have 12 months from the date of this notice to review the guidance described in subparagraph (1) above, and issue the

revised template in accordance with that guidance. POIs must review certificate holders' current A010 authorizations and compare them to the requirements contained in Order 8900.1, Volume 3, Chapter 26, Section 2, paragraphs 3-2073, 3-2074, 3-2075 and 3-2076 as soon as practicable. In accordance with the guidance: If the certificate holder's current A010 lists a commercial weather information provider (CWIP), and that provider is actually generating weather reports or forecasts, the certificate holder will require either an EWINS, or HQ approval to continue using that CWIP. In this case, POIs will instruct the certificate holder that they have the following options:

- Develop an EWINS during the 12 months outlined in this paragraph;
- Prepare the necessary programs and information (see Appendix B of this notice and Order 8900.1, Volume 3, Chapter 26, Section 2, paragraph 3-2075) to submit to AFS-200 for approval to use a CWIP without an EWINS; or
- Use only weather information provided by the National Weather Service (NWS), a source approved by NWS, or a source approved by the Administrator, and available for selection in OpSpec/Mspec A010.

Note: The NWS and its approved sources only provide weather information for the United States, its territories, adjacent waters, and ocean areas. (Refer to Order 8900.1, Volume 3, Chapter 26, Sections 1 and 2).

(3) If a certificate holder or program manager elects to seek AFS-200 approval to use a CWIP without an EWINS, POIs must follow the guidance in Order 8900.1, Volume 3, Chapter 26, Section 2, paragraph 3-2075 and request approval from AFS-200 to issue a nonstandard text authorization in OpSpec A010 to allow the certificate holder/program manager to use a CWIP. The request must be submitted by the CHDO manager, through the manager of the regional Flight Standards division (RFS) to the manager of AFS-200. In accordance with this notice, all requests for nonstandard A010 authorizations must be submitted to the AFS-200 division correspondence mailbox at 9-AWA-AFS-200@faa.gov. All requests for nonstandard text authorizations must contain the following statement in the subject line: "OpSpec A010 Nonstandard Authorization Request." All requests must include the concurrence of the RFS manager. To aid POIs in requesting AFS-200 approval for a nonstandard text authorization in A010, a checklist is included in Appendix B of this notice. POIs will complete the checklist and submit it along with their request to AFS-200.

(4) All POIs must review the Order 8900.1, guidance referenced in paragraph 5 and ensure that each certificate holder/program manager is able to comply with all of the requirements contained in that guidance prior to issuing the revised OpSpec/Mspec A010 template.

b. Previous A010 Template Revisions, 91K, 121 and 135. WebOPSS will only allow two versions of a particular OpSpec/Mspec template to be "available" for editing in the system. When a template is superseded, WebOPSS will reflect an expiration date for the superseded template. It should be noted that the expiration date for superseded A010 templates is based on the compliance period outlined in this notice. Once superseded, a template is considered to be pending "Archive" until it expires. When the template expires, it is archived in WebOPSS, and

is no longer visible as an “available” template. There is no expiration date tied to an archived template revision.

(1) For 91K, A010 template revisions 010 and 020 will be “available” for editing in WebOPSS. A010 Rev 020 is the active template, and Rev 010 is now pending archive. A010 Rev 000 is archived, and no longer available for editing. POIs who have issued A010 Rev 010 in conjunction with cancelled notice N 8900.199 have the same 120 days required by subparagraph 6.a(1) above, to issue A010 Rev 020. As of the date of this notice POIs must use the active MSpec A010 template Rev 020, to issue any revisions to program managers’ existing A010 authority. POIs must also use A010 Rev 020 to issue initial authority to a new program manager.

(2) For part 121, A010 template revisions 030 and 040 will be “available” for editing in WebOPSS. A010 Rev 040 is the active template, and Rev 030 is now pending archive. A010 Rev 02a is archived and no longer available for editing. POIs who have issued A010 Rev 030 in conjunction with cancelled notice N8900.199 have the same 120 days required by subparagraph 6.a(1) above, to issue A010 Rev 040. As of the date of this notice, POIs must use the active OpSpec A010 template Rev 040, to issue any revisions to certificate holders’ existing A010 authority. POIs must also use A010 Rev 040 to issue initial authority to a new certificate holder.

(3) For part 135, A010 template revisions 030 and 040 will be “available” for editing in WebOPSS. A010 Rev 040 is the active template and Rev 030 is now pending archive. A010 Rev 02a is archived and no longer available for editing. POIs who have issued A010 Rev 030 in conjunction with cancelled notice N8900.199 have the same 12 months required by subparagraph 6.a(2) above, to issue A010 Rev 040. As of the date of this notice, POIs will use the active OpSpec A010 template Rev 040, to issue any revisions to certificate holders’ existing A010 authority. POIs must also use A010 Rev 040 to issue initial authority to a new certificate holder.

c. Providers Listed in the QICP Table of the Superseded A010 Template Parts 91K, 121 and 135. A QICP provides a means to access weather information via the public internet. (Refer to the current edition of FAA Advisory Circular (AC) 00-62, Internet Communication of Aviation Weather and NOTAMS). The key point of a QICP is the access it provides to weather information, not the information itself. During the FAA’s review of the currently issued OpSpec/MSpec A010, it was discovered that some certificate holders/program managers’ A010 authorizations listed QICPs in lieu of approved weather sources. These certificate holders/program managers were approved to use QICPs to access weather information, but were not approved to use the weather sources that provided the information accessed via the QICP. It is not the FAA’s intent that QICPs be used in lieu of an approved source of aviation weather information.

(1) QICP table removed. There is no regulatory requirement to use a QICP. We have therefore removed the QICP table from A010. There is no longer a means to list a QICP in A010. The only text that can be entered into A010 is either applicable to a specific table (e.g., EWINS) or is Optional/Nonstandard Text (TEXT 99), which requires approval from AFS-200.

(2) QICPs only provide internet access. Certificate holders may continue to use a QICP, provided they only use it as a means to gain internet access to their approved sources of aviation weather information.

(3) QICPs that are also a CWIP. Some QICPs are also CWIPs. In this case all of the requirements for the use of a CWIP apply. Certificate holders/program managers may only use a CWIP that provides purely repackaged weather information provided by an approved source, unless the certificate holder/program manager has an EWINS, or prior approval from AFS-200 in lieu of an EWINS. POIs must review Order 8900.1, Volume 3, Chapter 26, Section 2, paragraph 3-2075 and 3-2076 to determine whether and EWINS or AFS-200 approval is required.

d. Part 125 Nonmandatory Change. The change to the A010 templates for part 125 is non-mandatory. POIs of these certificate holders are not required to issue the new template, which is Rev 01b of the OpSpec, and Rev 01a of the LOA for part 125 Letter of Deviation Authority (LODA) holders. Entering information regarding sources of aviation weather information is now optional for all part 125 operations. This is because part 125 does not contain any requirements for specific sources of aviation weather information or weather reporting facilities. For this same reason, the QICP and EWINS tables have been removed from the part 125 OpSpec and LOA. If a certificate or LODA holder, or the POI wishes to exercise the option of listing sources of aviation weather information in OpSpec/LOA A010, the POI may list each weather source in the text box provided in the template. Otherwise, the POI may simply list "N/A" in the text box provided.

7. Disposition. We will incorporate the information in this notice into FAA Order 8900.1, before this notice expires. Direct questions or comments concerning this notice to AFS-240 at 202-267-8166.

for



John M. Allen
Director, Flight Standards Service

Appendix A. OpSpec A010, Aviation Weather Information: 14 CFR Part 121Template Status=**Draft**Authorized=**Required**U.S. Department
of Transportation
Federal Aviation
Administration

Operations Specifications

A010 Aviation Weather Information**HQ Control: 12/10/2012****HQ Revision: 000**

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 § 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 or a source approved by the U.S. National Weather Service, 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 National Weather Service for those United States and U.S. 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.



Either a meteorological station, or automated observation weather product, authorized by an ICAO member State.

(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. National Weather Service 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. National Weather Service.

(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. National Weather Service 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 U.S. 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.
- Either a meteorological station, or automated observation weather product, authorized by an ICAO member State.

(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 subparagraphs 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

Appendix B. Checklist for Obtaining Approval from AFS-200 to Add a Weather Source to OpSpec/Mspec A010

Principal operations inspectors (POI) of certificate holders or program managers who do not have an Enhanced Weather Information System (EWINS) must obtain approval from the Air Transportation Division (AFS-200) to allow a certificate holder/program manager to use an aviation weather report or forecast prepared by a source other than the ones listed below:

- The National Weather Service (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 U.S. territories located outside of the 48 contiguous States,
- U.S. and North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) military observing and forecasting sources,
- Meteorological offices operated by International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) member states,
- ICAO member state, authorized meteorological station, or automated observation,
- Members of the World Meteorological Organization (WMO),
- For reports of adverse weather phenomena: Pilot Weather Reports (PIREP) provided by aircraft of the same, or similar, type and size, and
- For reports of adverse weather phenomena: Aircraft Reports (AIREP) provided by aircraft of the same or similar type and size.

In order to obtain approval from AFS-200, POIs must follow the guidance in FAA Order 8900.1, Flight Standards Information Management System (FSIMS), Volume 3, Chapter 26, Section 2, Regulatory Sources of Aviation Weather Information and Aviation Weather Information Systems—Parts 91K, 121, and 135, paragraph 3-2075, and submit the following information to AFS-200:

- a. The name of the weather source.
- b. The reason for the need to use the weather source.
- c. The method the certificate holder or program manager proposes to use to obtain and disseminate the weather report or forecast (for example, through their dispatch or flight following system, via the Internet, or by voice.)
- d. A copy of the portion of the certificate holder's/program manager's training program for flight crewmembers, dispatchers, or persons authorized to exercise operational control that contains instruction on the use of the weather report or forecast prepared by the weather source.
- e. A copy of the Weather Provider's Training Program. Provide a copy of the training program for weather provider personnel that will be involved in generating weather reports or forecasts for the certificate holder.
- f. For weather reports. In addition to the requirements of paragraphs a. through e. above:
 - (1) The location(s) at which the certificate holder/program manager intends to use the weather report.
 - (2) The elements that will be reported (for example, temperature, visibility, wind direction, and wind speed. Refer to Order 8900.1, Flight Standards Information Management System (FSIMS), Volume 3,

Chapter 26, Section 2, subparagraph 3-2072D, Required Elements of a Surface Weather Report/Observation, for a full list of required elements contained in a weather report.

(3) The method the certificate holder or program manager proposes for maintaining, or ensuring the maintenance (to certificated standards) of, the weather sensing equipment used in generating the weather report.

Note: POIs should be prepared to submit additional information to AFS-200 upon request, such as the qualifications of individuals providing weather reports or forecasts for the certificate holder or program manager.