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InFO

Information for Operators

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An InFO contains valuable information for operators that should help them meet certain administrative, regulatory, or operational requirements, with relatively low urgency or impact on safety. The contents of this document do not have the force and effect of law and are not meant to bind the public in any way. This document is intended only to provide clarity to the public regarding existing requirements under the law or agency policies.

Subject: Crewmember Emergency Training.

Purpose: This InFO serves to provide clarity on the emergency drill requirements related to ditching, specifically how an air carrier complies with a ditching drill required by Title 14 of the Code of Federal Regulations (14 CFR) part 121 § 121.417.

Background: The Federal Aviation Administration's (FAA) Office of Safety Standards (FS) has received questions about how an operator meets the intent of § 121.417. These questions and feedback have revealed varying understandings of the phrase "if applicable, including but not limited to, as appropriate" written in § 121.417(c)(2)(i)(E).

Discussion: In order to clearly understand the phrase "if applicable, including but not limited to, as appropriate," the various elements of § 121.417 need to be discussed and clarified.

a. Definitions. The following provides clarification and references related to the terms utilized in this InFO.

- (1) Applicable: The FAA defines "applicable" as "Capable or suitable for being applied." For example, applicable to the installed equipment on the aircraft.
- (2) Appropriate: The defines "appropriate" as "especially suitable or compatible; fitting." For example, appropriate to each required crewmember and their duties and responsibilities.
- (3) Kind of Operation: 14 CFR Part 110 states "means one of the various operations a certificate holder is authorized to conduct, as specified in its operations specifications, i.e., domestic, flag, supplemental, commuter, or on-demand operations.
- (4) Crewmember: 14 CFR Part 1.1 states "means a person assigned to perform duty in an aircraft during flight time.

b. Emergency Training. Section 121.417 (c) States "Each crewmember must accomplish the following emergency training during the specified training periods, using those items of installed emergency equipment for each type of airplane in which he or she is to serve . . ." This statement indicates the mandatory requirement that crewmembers are trained in the use of all installed emergency equipment on the aircraft for the particular assignment of the crewmember.

Section 121.417 (c) (2) further requires additional emergency drill requirements to be accomplished during initial training and once each 24 calendar months during recurrent training. Each crewmember must, § 121.417 (c) (2)(i), “Perform the following emergency drills and operate the following equipment:”

The above statement denotes a mandatory requirement of training on installed emergency equipment. According to the definition in § 121.417(f)(7), “perform” means to satisfactorily accomplish a prescribed emergency drill using established procedures that stress the skill of the persons involved in the drill. Thus, training is required, and a drill is to be accomplished to demonstrate competency of each crewmember.

c. Ditching. Section 121.417 (c) (2) (i) (E) Ditching, states “if applicable, including but not limited to, as appropriate”:

(1) Cockpit preparation and procedures; (2) Crew coordination; (3) Passenger briefing and cabin preparation; (4) Donning and inflation of life preservers; (5) Use of life-lines; and (6) Boarding of passengers and crew into raft or a slide/raft pack.

Training is based on equipment that is installed on the aircraft. In reference to § 121.417 (a) each training program must provide the emergency training set forth in this section with respect to each airplane type, model, and configuration, each required crewmember, and each kind of operation conducted, insofar as appropriate for each crewmember and the certificate holder.

For example, if an air carrier has procedures for a water landing whether it is planned or unplanned, a ditching drill for the crewmembers would meet the intent of the rule with the equipment installed on the aircraft. In reference to § 121.417 (c) Each crewmember must accomplish the following emergency training . . . using those items of installed emergency equipment for each type of airplane in which he or she is to serve . . . By doing so would ensure the highest level of safety for the traveling public.

***Note:** An exception may apply if the air carrier trains under Advanced Qualification Program (AQP) and is issued a Variance that allows an alternate means of compliance to the requirement.*

Recommended Action: Directors of Operations for part 121 Air Carriers and part 135 Air Carriers approved to train under part 121 subparts N and O as well as subpart Y should review their approved training programs to ensure procedures for Emergency Drills and Ditching is adequately addressed.

Contact: Questions or comments regarding this InFO should be directed to the Air Transportation Division, at 9-AFS-200-Correspondence@faa.gov.