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InFO

Information for Operators

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http://www.faa.gov/other_visit/aviation_industry/airline_operators/airline_safety/info

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.

Subject: Commercial Aviation Safety Team (CAST) Voluntary Safety Enhancements (SE) Data Collection

Purpose: This InFO explains how a new Part S category in the Web-based Operations Safety System (WebOPSS) will be used to gather SE implementation status information from air carriers operating under Title 14, Code of Federal Regulations (14 CFR) part 121.

Background: CAST is a voluntary organization made up of government agencies, air carriers, manufacturers and aviation labor organizations dedicated to reducing the commercial aviation accident rate and associated fatality risk. Based on past accident analysis, CAST has identified voluntary SE implementations which should reduce the risk of future accidents. Because implementation of these SEs is voluntary and may vary between different air carriers or manufacturers, CAST desires to collect information to evaluate SE implementation. This information will be valuable in measuring CAST's SE effectiveness.

Discussion: A new WebOPSS category, Part S, has been developed to collect selected CAST SE data. SE documents, which will be numbered in the S4XX series, have boilerplate language clearly stating that the document is *not* an Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) operations specifications (OpSpec), that completion is voluntary and that the FAA principal inspector (PI) digital signature only represents acceptance of the data and not an authorization or approval.

WebOPSS category Part S, S4XX documents are intended to gather critical information about the voluntary implementation of these SEs and will be issued to all part 121 certificate holders. Certificate holders will be encouraged to answer specific questions about operations and procedures to determine the implementation status of air carrier-related SEs.

Once issued, the certificate holder will enter data electronically into the S4XX documents. In cases where the exact SE has not been implemented by the responding certificate holder, but its objective has been met through alternative means, this information, along with the data, may be entered in the comment section. Also, if a given SE or question only applies partially to an air carrier, such as for only one type of aircraft, the comments section may be used to clarify the response. The PI will acknowledge this data input by signing the document. FAA digital signature by the air carrier's PI only represents acceptance of the data and does not signify an authorization or approval.

Either the PI or the air carrier can move an S4XX document to the “Workspace” in WebOPSS. If the air carrier chooses to provide SE implementation information, the air carrier enters information to answer the questions in the document. When signing the document, the air carrier must select the "Certificate Holder applies..." option for the Origin, signifying that the information is complete and accurate. The PI then signs the document. The PI's signature is required only for the purpose of submitting the data and the PI signature line for these documents states “The Operator submits the status of Safety Enhancements contained in this document.”

The information gathered here is intended only for use in evaluating industry-wide safety-related issues and is not intended to reflect regulatory compliance. PIs will not use the information contained in this OpSpec to make safety assessments. Air carrier provided information in the S4XX documents will be de-identified before analysis by CAST and will be protected from disclosure indefinitely under provisions of Title 49, United States Code (49 U.S.C.) 40123 and 14 CFR part 193.

Recommended Action: Although this information is being collected via WebOPSS, because it is not regulatory in nature, air carriers may find it more efficient not to assign the task of responding to these SE questions in the S400 to those individuals normally responsible for OpSpecs. During a beta test of this system, one air carrier found its safety department is the most appropriate for responding to WebOPSS S400 questions.

Contact: Questions or comments regarding this InFO should be directed to AFS-200, Air Transportation Division, at (202) 267-8166. More information on CAST is available at www.cast-safety.org.