



U.S. Department
of Transportation
Federal Aviation
Administration

InFO

Information for Operators

InFO 16004
DATE: 2/17/16

Flight Standards Service
Washington, DC

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: Datalink Communications (DLC) Recording Requirements -- Clarification

Purpose: This InFO serves to aid in the implementation of the DLC recording requirements of Title 14 of the Code of Federal Regulations (14 CFR) part 91, § 91.609 which required compliance by April 6, 2012, and part 121, § 121.359, part 125, § 125.227 and part 135, § 135.151 which required compliance by December 6, 2010.

Background: This InFO clarifies how the FAA defines the phrase “install datalink communication (DLC) equipment” for purposes of the DLC recording requirements. Clarification of this policy and Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) guidance material is intended to assist aircraft operators in determining when DLC recording is required. For complete background information on this issue, please see Docket No. FAA-2015-0289 at <https://www.federalregister.gov/articles/2015/03/02/2015-04158/policy-regarding-datalink-communications-recording-requirements>.

Discussion:

- A. **Definition of Datalink Communication (DLC) Equipment:** “Datalink communication (DLC) equipment” as used in these regulations, includes the components installed on the aircraft that are necessary to provide the DLC function. The DLC function uses an approved message set, as determined by Advisory Circular (AC) 20-160 as revised, (e.g., CPDLC application hosted in the Flight Management Computer), the datalink router (e.g., hosted in the Communications Management Unit), the radios (e.g., VHF, HF Datalink, Satcom), and related antennas. FANS 1/A and ATN B1 systems comprise DLC equipment. See AC 20-140 as revised for additional information.
- B. **Applicability:** In applying this regulation, aircraft are divided into two groups: those manufactured on or after the effective date of the rule, and those manufactured before that date.

Those airplanes or rotorcraft manufactured on or after the effective date must record messages that use the approved message set when both of the following conditions are met:

- 1) The aircraft is required to have both a cockpit voice recorder and a flight data recorder; and
- 2) The aircraft has DLC equipment installed.

Those airplanes or rotorcraft manufactured before the effective date of the rule must record messages that use the approved message set when both of the following conditions are met:

- 1) The aircraft is required to have both a cockpit voice recorder and a flight data recorder; and
- 2) No DLC equipment for the MAKE/MODEL/SERIES of the aircraft was approved before the effective date of the rule.

Recommended Action: Operators and avionics installers should use the information contained in this InFO to ensure compliance with applicable regulations when considering DLC modifications.

Contact: Questions or comments regarding this InFO should be directed to the Aircraft Maintenance Division, Avionics Branch AFS-360 at (202) 267-1675.