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Autoriteti i Aviacionit Civil i Kosovës
Autoritet Civilnog Vazduhoplovstva Kosova
Civil Aviation Authority of Kosovo

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Air Operator Certificate (AOC) First Certification

Guidance Material (GM)

Foreword

1. Purpose

This Guidance Material (GM) describes the process of applying for and obtaining an Air Operator Certificate (AOC) to conduct commercial air transport operations under EASA Operations Rules. The certification process may appear to be a complex undertaking, particularly to a “first-time” operator. This GM provides basic information applicable to the certification process.

This GM will assist the applicant in completing the “five phase certification process” with minimal delays and complications.

2. Background

The Civil Aviation Authority of the Republic of Kosovo (CAAK) recognises the responsibility of Commercial Air Transport Operators to provide air transportation with the highest possible degree of safety in the public interest. The certification process is designed to ensure that prospective AOC holders understand and are capable of fulfilling this duty. When satisfactorily completed, the certification process should ensure that the operator is able to comply with the Law on Civil Aviation of the Republic of Kosovo, CAAK regulations, EU Regulations and the international standards pertaining to the operation of aircraft as published in relevant Annexes to the Convention on International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO).

There are five phases in the air operator certification process. Each phase is described in sufficient details to provide a general understanding of the entire certification process. The five phases are:

- 1) **Pre-Application phase,**
- 2) **Formal Application phase,**
- 3) **Document Evaluation phase,**
- 4) **Demonstration and Inspection phase, and**
- 5) **Certification Phase.**

In some cases, the guidance and suggested sequence of events in this GM may not be entirely appropriate. In such situations, the CAAK and the operator should proceed in a manner that considers existing conditions and circumstances. The operator, however, should not expect to be certificated until the CAAK is assured that Law on Civil Aviation, it's Implementing Regulations and the applicable ECAA legislation will be complied with in an appropriate and continuing manner.

The five phases are to be seen as steps. In order to continue the certification process, the previous phase shall be completed. Therefore no continuation of the certification

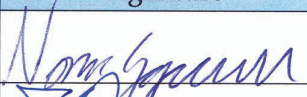
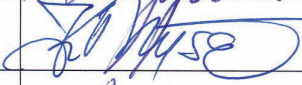
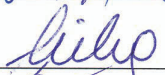
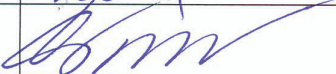
process will be undertaken if not all points, articles and individual tasks are completed in the previous certification phase.

CERTIFICATION PHASES				
PHASE 1	PHASE 2	PHASE 3	PHASE 4	PHASE 5
Pre Application	Formal Application	Document Evaluation	Demonstration and Inspection	Certification

List of Effective Pages (LEP)

Chapter	Pages	Revision No.	Effective Date
Foreword	2 of 16	Version 5	01.01.2016
	3 of 16	Version 5	01.01.2016
List of Effective Pages	4 of 16	Version 5	01.01.2016
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1. Pre-Application Phase	9 of 16	Version 5	01.01.2016
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3. Document Evaluation Phase	12 of 16	Version 5	01.01.2016
4. Demonstration and Inspection Phase	13 of 16	Version 5	01.01.2016
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5. Certification Phase	15 of 16	Version 5	01.01.2016
Cost and Time Schedule	16 of 16	Version 5	01.01.2016

Table of Approval

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5	January 2016	Naser Grajçevci	Dritan Gjonbalaj

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Abbreviations

Abbr.	Meaning
ACJ	Advisory Circulars Joint
AEA	Association of European Airlines
AMC	Acceptable Means of Compliance
AOC	Air Operator Certificate
ATA	Air Transport Association
CAAK	Civil Aviation Authority of the Republic of Kosovo
EASA	European Aviation Safety Agency
ECAA	European Common Aviation Area Agreement
ECAC	European Civil Aviation Conference
FAA	Federal Aviation Administration
FSF	Flight Safety Foundation
GM	Guidance Material
IATA	International Air Transport Association
ICAO	International Civil Aviation Organisation
IEM	Interpretative and Explanatory Material
JAA	Joint Aviation Authority
LeP	List of Effective Pages
MI	Ministry of Infrastructure
MIA	Ministry of Internal Affairs
RoA	Record of Amendments
NAT PCO	North Atlantic Programme Coordination Office
OD	Operational Directives
FP	Focal Point

1. Pre-Application Phase

This Guidance Material (GM) has been written to give an overview about the Air Operator Certificate (AOC) 5 phase certification process in general. The 5 phase certification process is a standard published by the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) and known by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA). Each phase must be completed before starting the next one.

An application for an AOC is a time consuming and expensive work. This work is very often underestimated. CAAK accepts an AOC application by EASA operations standards only. All application forms must be duly signed by the people requested in original, electronic signatures are not yet accepted.

The project may be delayed because of other applications already in progress or due to the quality of the submissions or missing parts. Even if one of the proposed post holders has missed the necessary score in the assessment, a project could get further delay until all management personnel has been accepted.

If an applicant has the need for further information, please write to the following address:

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Ahmet Krasniqi Street n.n. (Arbëria)

10 000 Prishtina

Republic of Kosovo

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The prospective operator is expected to inform CAAK of his intention to start the certification process in the form of Letter of Intent. Letter of Intent should describe in brief the intended type of operation, aircraft types intended for use, area of operation, plan of intended infrastructure, staff etc.

Once the Letter of Intent is received, CAAK will organise pre-application meeting. The purpose of the pre-application meeting is to provide critical certification information to the applicant. It is imperative that the operator's Accountable Manager and nominated persons attend the pre-application meeting and be prepared to discuss in general terms the plans and specific aspects of the proposed operation. Many problems can be avoided by discussing all aspects of the proposed operation and the specific requirements, which must be met to be certificated as an air operator.

It is important to establish good working relationships and clear understandings between the CAAK and the operator's representatives. The CAAK recognises that a wide range of capabilities and expertise exists among operators. This background

experience will be considered by the CAAK and adjusted to during these initial meetings.

Subsequent to the pre-application meeting the certification team will evaluate the results of the meeting. Should the certification team consider that the applicant is not ready to make a formal application, advice should be given on further preparation and another pre-application meeting scheduled or, alternatively, the applicant may be advised to withdraw the intent to apply for certification.

Should the certification team establish that the information provided in the letter of intent is satisfactory, and that the applicant has a clear understanding of the certification process, then the applicant should be invited to prepare and proceed with a formal application phase.

2. Formal Application Phase

The formal application shall be submitted to CAAK as early as possible.

The CAAK will review the application to determine that it contains the required information, documents and attachments. If there are omissions or errors, the formal application and all attachments will be returned with a letter outlining the reasons for its return. If the operator has a good understanding of the requirements, the formal application should be of sufficient quality to allow any omission, deficiency, or open question to be resolved during the formal application meeting.

The Operator's Accountable Manager, Compliance Monitoring Manager, Safety Manager and Nominated persons shall attend the formal application meeting. The purpose of the meeting is to present the project manager, delegated inspectors, experts and specialists and to discuss the formal application and resolve omissions, deficiencies, or answer questions from either party. For example, this meeting may be used to resolve questions concerning the applicant's package or scheduling date conflicts, or to ensure the applicant understands the certification process. This meeting should also be used to reinforce open communication and working relationships.

3. Document Evaluation Phase

After the formal application has been accepted, CAAK inspectors will begin a detailed evaluation of all submitted manuals, forms and documents. Inspection of the Operations Manual System may, depending on the size of operation, be done on the whole manual or on different parts at different times with different experts. The CAAK will endeavour to complete these evaluations in accordance with the agreed schedule of events. If a manual or document is incomplete or deficient, or if non-compliance with the regulations or safe operating practices is detected, the manual or document will be returned for corrective action. Once the manuals and documents are positively evaluated, certification process may continue with the Demonstration and Inspection phase.

4. Demonstration and Inspection Phase

Prior conducting the Inspection and Demonstration Phase, it is expected, that the applicant for an AOC has implemented all the procedures and operating practices as described in the Operations Manual System and that the Compliance Monitoring System has successfully reviewed all different fields of operation by the means of audits and inspections. ICAO & EU regulations require an operator to demonstrate its ability to comply with regulations and safe operating practices before beginning actual revenue operations. These demonstrations include actual performance of activities and/or operations while being observed by CAAK inspectors. This includes on-site evaluations of aircraft maintenance equipment and support facilities. During these demonstrations and inspections, the CAAK evaluates the effectiveness of the policies, methods, procedures, and instructions as described in the operator's manuals and other documents. Emphasis is placed on the operator's management effectiveness during this phase. Deficiencies will be brought to the attention of the operator and corrective action must be taken before entering the certification phase.

Although the document evaluation and the demonstration and inspection phases have been discussed separately in this Guidance Material, these phases may overlap in the training aspect, or may be accomplished simultaneously in actual practice. The following list provides examples of the type of items which are evaluated during the inspection and demonstration phase.

Compliance Monitoring System

Facilities and Infrastructure

Training and checking (classroom, simulators, aircraft, flight and ground personnel training).

Operational control and supervision

Flight Dispatch

Company communications procedures

Station facilities (equipment, procedures, personnel, fuelling/defueling, de-icing, technical data).

Document control (control, analysis and storage of records, flight documents, additional information and data).

Maintenance Program / Maintenance Contract

CAME – Continuing Airworthiness Maintenance Exposition

The effectiveness of Emergency Response

Complete Demonstration Flights. Includes full-scale simulation of revenue operations to demonstrate the ability to operate independently, safely, and in compliance with all applicable EASA Operations Rules, including diversions and/or landing on route for abnormal and emergency situations.

Note: An applicant for an air operator certificate (AOC) may concurrently seek CAAK approval of its maintenance arrangements. The applicant needs to coordinate the progress of both certification projects. Both certification projects must be in the Inspection and Demonstration Phase at the same time. This is because the Demonstration Flights require the applicant to demonstrate to the CAAK all proposed flight and ground operations.

5. Certification Phase

When corrective actions out of findings given by the demonstration and inspection phase are completed and closed, the CAAK will issue the Air Operator Certificate (AOC). The operations are then specified, listed and approved within the operations specification document (OPS SPECS). The Director General of CAAK signs the AOC for the applicant.

The certificate holder is responsible for continued compliance with regulations according his authorisations, limitations, and specifications. The process for changes, variations or amending of specifications is similar to the certification process. The CAAK is responsible for conducting periodic inspections and audits of the certificate holder's operation to ensure continued compliance with the regulations, safe operating practices and airworthy aeroplanes. Nevertheless the compliance with all laws and regulation remains at all times with the operator.

Costs and Time Schedule

A complete certification process is time consuming for the applicant and the authority. The costs and the time schedule vary very much on the quality of the submitted manuals and the resource available with the CAAK. From the experience in the industry the work for a first certification of the operational part the amount of 600 working hours must be calculated.

A first estimate for the time schedule might be possible after the cursory review at the beginning of the Formal Application Phase. At this point a first estimate about the time schedule and costs might be possible.