

VOLUME 3 GENERAL TECHNICAL ADMINISTRATION**CHAPTER 38 Evaluate Part 135 (Nine Or Less) Approved Aircraft Inspection Program****3-3731 PROGRAM TRACKING AND REPORTING SUBSYSTEM (PTRS) ACTIVITY CODES.**

A. Maintenance: 3343/3344

B. Avionics: 5343/5344

3-3732 OBJECTIVE. This chapter describes how to evaluate and approve Title 14 of the Code of Federal Regulations (14 CFR) part 135 (nine or less) Operator's Approved Aircraft Inspection Program (AAIP).

3-3733 GENERAL. Whenever aircraft inspections required or allowed under part 91 of this chapter are not adequate for 14 CFR part 135 nine or less operations, or upon application by a certificate holder, the Administrator may amend the certificate holder's operations specifications under section (§) 119.51, to require or allow an AAIP for any make and model aircraft of which the certificate holder has the exclusive use of at least one aircraft (as defined in § 135.25).

NOTE:In order to require the use of an AAIP, the FAA must make a formal written finding of inadequacy of the inspection program that is being used.

A. Inspectors should become thoroughly familiar with the operator/applicant's operation. Special attention should be given to:

- Areas of operation
- Type of equipment (size and complexity)
- Operating history
- Maintenance/inspection organization, as applicable

B. The AAIP is used in lieu of the aircraft inspection requirements of 14 CFR § 91.409. However, it does not supersede other requirements of part 91, such as the altimeter system tests and equipment check. An AAIP can include additional maintenance requirements specified by 14 CFR § 135.421, repetitive Airworthiness Directives (AD) compliance, Airworthiness Limitation Items, and life-limited part retirement times, but the AAIP cannot override or alter Airworthiness Limitation Items, or AD or life-limited requirements.

C. An AAIP is authorized for use on operations specifications (OpSpecs).

D. The use of scheduling "windows" can be approved by principal inspectors with certain stipulations. The use of "windows" will not significantly affect the target inspection interval. The scheduling flexibility that is realized through the use of "windows" should all but eliminate any special requests for time escalation. "Windows" should not be considered a justification for accomplishing "piecemeal" inspections, nor should it become a de facto permanent time extension. Once an inspection segment is initiated (i.e., panels opened), it should

be completed before the aircraft is placed back in service. In addition, “windows” should not permit extensions of AD compliance times, Airworthiness Limitations, or life limited part retirement times.

3-3734 CHANGES TO AAIP and/or AAIP TIME INTERVALS. Whenever the Administrator finds that revisions to an approved aircraft inspection program are necessary for the continued adequacy of the program, the certificate holder shall, after notification by the Administrator, make any changes in the program found by the Administrator to be necessary. The certificate holder may petition the Administrator to reconsider the notice to make any changes in a program. The petition must be filed with the representatives of the Administrator assigned to it within 30 days after the certificate holder receives the notice. Except in the case of an emergency requiring immediate action in the interest of safety, the filing of the petition stays the notice pending a decision by the Administrator.

A. Operator-Initiated Changes.

1) The operator may ask to amend inspection or overhaul intervals.

a) The operator must justify the request using the following:

- Past operating experience
- Environmental conditions
- Inspection program provisions
- At least one overhaul tear-down report
- Any other data necessary to substantiate changes

b) Operator-initiated time changes require revisions to both the AAIP and

OpSpecs.

2) Amendments or extensions are not permitted for retirement times of life-limited parts, Airworthiness Limitation Items, and/or those intervals designated by ADs unless authorized in FAA-approved revisions of the controlling document.

B. Manufacturer Escalations.

1) If a manufacturer extends its recommended inspection or overhaul interval, the operator may request approval to use the extension by submitting a revision to the AAIP. The request must be accompanied by the manufacturer’s recommendation.

2) Inspectors should not automatically approve a time escalation recommended by the manufacturer. The individual operator’s aircraft use and experience must be considered. The inspectors should ensure that the escalation will not compromise safety.

3-3735 POLICIES AND PROCEDURES MANUAL. The AAIP must be included in the operator’s policies and procedures manual. The operator should request a manual revision (in accordance with manual revision procedures) at the same time the AAIP/revision is submitted

NOTE: The aircraft inspection program included in the certificate holder's manual must contain the following:

- 1) Instructions and procedures for the conduct of aircraft inspections (which must include necessary tests and checks), setting forth in detail the parts and areas of the airframe, engines, propellers, rotors, and appliances, including emergency equipment, that must be inspected.
- 2) A schedule for the performance of the aircraft inspections expressed in terms of the time in service, calendar time, number of system operations, or any combination of these.
- 3) Instructions and procedures for recording discrepancies found during inspections and correction or deferral of discrepancies including form and disposition of records.

3-3736 COORDINATION REQUIREMENTS. Coordination. This task is performed by both principal maintenance inspectors (PMI) and principal avionics inspectors (PAI). It may require coordination with principal operations inspectors (POI) and/or regional specialists.

3-3737 REFERENCES, FORMS, AND JOB AIDS.

A. References (current editions):

- 14 CFR parts 43, 91, and 135
- Title 49 of the Code of Federal Regulations (49 CFR) Part 180
- Advisory Circular (AC) 135-3, Air Taxi Operators and Commercial Operators
- AC 135-10, Approved Aircraft Inspection Program, current edition

B. Forms: None

C. Job Aids: Automated OpSpecs checklists and worksheets

3-3738 PROCEDURES.

A. Schedule and Conduct Preliminary Meeting, As Needed.

- 1) Advise applicant of regulatory requirements and policies.
- 2) Remind the operator that the AAIP/revision must be included in the policies and procedures manual.

B. Plan and Coordinate Task.

- 1) Determine whether the aircraft meets eligibility requirements.

2) Review operator file to identify any information concerning the AAIP/revision. Determine its effect on the operator's other programs or procedures.

3) If this task is performed as part of an original certification, review the Schedule of Events to ensure that the evaluation can be accomplished according to the schedule.

C. Evaluate the Proposed Program/Revision.

1) Evaluate instructions, procedures, and standards for conducting inspections.

a) The program must include:

- Airframe
- Aircraft engines
- Propellers
- Rotors
- Appliances
- Survival and emergency equipment

b) When establishing an AAIP, the program may include installed avionics and instrument systems. These systems are not always installed by the aircraft manufacturer and may not be included in their recommended inspection program.

c) Inspection methods, techniques, and standards, or other technical data may be included in the program by reference. Such references may be either the airframe manufacturer's or the appliance manufacturer's service data. However, when both the airframe manufacturer and the appliance manufacturer provide inspection data, the airframe manufacturer's data should be used.

d) The avionics and instrument systems inspections may be based on the manufacturer's recommendations, or Instructions for Continued Airworthiness.

e) All tests and checks recommended by the aircraft or equipment manufacturer should be addressed.

f) The instructions, procedures, and standards must be clear and easily understood. They must identify the scope of each task and provide a detailed outline of each step that must be accomplished to perform the inspection and ensure that established performance standards are met.

2) Evaluate the procedures for controlling life-limited parts retirement times. The program must contain provisions to ensure that records are current. Life limits must be expressed in one of the following measures:

- Length of time-in-service
- Number of cycles
- Number of landings

- Calendar time
- A combination of the above measures

3) Evaluate procedures for scheduling inspections.

a) The program must list inspection intervals for each inspection task and describe personnel responsibilities for scheduling and performing inspections.

b) Procedures must ensure that inspections are performed by properly certificated, qualified, trained, current, and authorized personnel. The program must identify, by title, the person responsible for ensuring that personnel accomplishing inspections under the AAIP meet regulatory requirements.

4) Ensure that engine overhaul periods correspond to the recommended overhaul intervals in the engine manufacturer's manuals and/or service bulletins.

5) Evaluate procedures for reporting and correcting mechanical irregularities. The program must include detailed instructions, procedures, and the necessary forms and documents for the recording and repair of mechanical irregularities. These instructions, procedures, and forms may appear elsewhere in the company manual, but their location must be referenced in the AAIP.

6) Ensure that the AAIP includes instructions on its use.

D. Analyze Findings. Determine if program changes are required. Before meeting with the operator/applicant, discuss initial findings with appropriate FAA personnel to determine the content of the briefing. Depending on the findings, it may be necessary to coordinate with the certification team, principal inspectors, regional specialists, or other FAA personnel.

E. Debrief Operator/Applicant. Discuss results of the evaluation, including any deficiencies noted during inspection.

3-3739 TASK OUTCOMES.

A. File PTRS Data Sheet.

B. Complete the Task. Completion of this task will result in one of the following:

1) If the AAIP/revision is not acceptable, advise the operator/applicant by letter that the program/revision is rejected. Give the reasons for the rejection. Return the program proposal and documentation to the operator/applicant.

a) If this review is performed as part of a certification, inform the applicant in the letter that the certificate will not be issued until the deficiencies are corrected. If necessary, advise the applicant to revise the Schedule of Events.

b) The letter must also accomplish the following:

- Confirm all agreements made during the debriefing
- Identify the date the AAIP/revision was submitted
- Show the revision number and date, as applicable
- Identify and describe all deficiencies by chapter, section, page, etc.
- Reference each deficiency to the appropriate regulation
- Request a revised Schedule of Events, if necessary
- If a revision, remind operator not to implement the revision

2) If the program or revision meets all regulatory requirements, accomplish the following:

a) Ensure that the AAIP or revision has been fully coordinated between maintenance and avionics.

b) For a new or totally revised program, indicate “Approved and authorized for use on operations specifications dated” on the first page identifying the program.

c) The approving PMI and PAI shall sign and date the document.

d) Send the operator a letter advising the AAIP is approved. The letter must accomplish the following:

- Confirm all information given during the debriefing
- Indicate the date that the AAIP/revision was submitted
- Show the revision number and date, if applicable
- If a revision, indicate the number of approved pages
- Advise the operator that the revision may be implemented
- If a manual revision was submitted and is acceptable, advise the operator of acceptance
- If a manual revision was not submitted, remind the operator to revise the manual to incorporate the program/revision. Advise the operator to submit the manual change for acceptance
- Enclose the stamped, dated, and initialed original AAIP
- Enclose the accepted manual revision, if appropriate

3-3740 FUTURE ACTIVITIES.

A. Schedule of Events. In the case of original certification, review the Schedule of Events to determine if a revised Schedule of Events is necessary.

B. Procedures and Policies Manual. Ensure that the Procedures and Policies Manual includes the AAIP/revision.

RESERVED. Paragraphs 3-3741. through 3-3755.