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Australian Government
Civil Aviation Safety Authority

PROTOCOL

(OPS.13) Managing continuing airworthiness

May 2024

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Acknowledgement of Country

The Civil Aviation Safety Authority (CASA) respectfully acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the lands on which our offices are located and their continuing connection to land, water and community, and pays respect to Elders past, present and emerging.

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1. Purpose

This protocol is for the assessment of management of continuing airworthiness under Part 4, Part 4A and Part 4B of the *Civil Aviation Regulations 1988* (CAR). The protocol also covers the assessment of airworthiness management for cross hiring an aircraft, and the use of a foreign registered aircraft by an operator. The protocol will satisfy the assessment of continuing airworthiness for the following Parts of the *Civil Aviation Safety Regulations 1998* (CASR):

- Part 121 and Part 135 (non-scheduled air transport operations)
- Part 133 Air transport operations—rotorcraft
- Part 137 Aerial application operators—other than rotorcraft
- Part 138—Aerial work operations
- Part 141—Recreational, private and commercial flight training, other than certain integrated training courses in an aircraft
- Part 142—Integrated and multi-crew pilot flight training, contracted training and contracted checking activities in an aircraft.

Notes

- Part 121 and Part 135 Australian air transport operators who conduct scheduled air transport operations must manage their continuing airworthiness under Part 42.
- Part 133 air transport operators, Part 137 aerial application operators—other than rotorcraft and Part 138 aerial work operators may elect to manage their continuing airworthiness under Part 42.
- Protocol (OPS.13) is not applicable to aircraft subject to CASR Part 42 continuing airworthiness management.

2. Concept and philosophy

The holder of an air transport air operator's certificate (AOC) under Part 119 must have an arrangement in place to manage the continuing airworthiness of their aircraft. A Part 137 operator must ensure their aircraft are maintained. For an aerial work operation under Part 138, the operations manual must contain a description of the arrangements for managing the continuing airworthiness of the aircraft. Although the language is different, in essence, all operators must ensure an aircraft is airworthy prior to flight.

To manage the airworthiness of an aircraft, an operator must have documented systems, procedures and processes in place to ensure required maintenance is performed in accordance with the approved maintenance schedule. Other processes should also be included, such as ensuring unscheduled maintenance is actioned appropriately, selection of a maintenance organisation that can carry out the maintenance and how to apply for separate approvals.

The elements required to be assessed will depend on the size, nature and complexity of operations and involve verification of the applicant's claims through a range of activities, including:

- desktop assessments of the documentation provided
- site inspection of facilities
- assessment of the maintenance controller, head of aircraft maintenance control (HAMC) and, if required, the person responsible for continuing airworthiness
- aircraft inspection.

3. Process

All administration tasks should follow standard regulatory service administration procedures (as applicable), in addition to the following:

- a. For an initial issue or significant change to an air transport AOC, operators will submit the [Air Operator's Certificate / Associated Approvals form](#) (CASA-04-5515) to CASA for an approval.
- b. For an initial issue or significant change to an aerial work certificate (AWC), operators will submit the [Aerial Work Operations form](#) (CASA-04-5505) to CASA for an approval.
- c. For an initial issue or significant change to a flight training certificate, operators will submit the [Flight Training Operator Certificate application form](#) (CASA-04-5389) to CASA for an approval.
- d. For an initial issue or significant change to a single instructor flight training certificate, operators will submit the [Flight Training Operator Certificate - single instructor application form](#) (CASA-04-6388) to CASA for an approval.
- e. For an initial issue or variation to aerial application AOC, operators will submit the [Air Operator's Certificate \(Aerial Application Operations\) form](#) (CASA-04-5643) for approval.
- f. Regservices will create a case in EAP to be assigned to an airworthiness inspector.
- g. Regservices and the inspector should confirm that an EAP stop alert is not active.
- h. All associated CASA staff must be knowledgeable of, and competent with, Principle (OPS.13)—Managing continuing airworthiness.
- i. The relevant sections of the (OPS.13) Worksheet must be completed by the airworthiness inspector and saved as a PDF document in RMS, including:
 - i. the assessment summary
 - ii. the approval data sheet.
- j. The inspector must complete the relevant record of interview (OPS.13) if applicable.
- k. If the application is a significant change, the inspector must complete the relevant section on the approval data sheet and provide the revision details for the exposition/operations manual.
- l. The inspector must complete EAP in accordance with the EAP OAS Case Management - Regulatory Oversight Division (ROD) handbook (CASA-03-550).

4. List of supplements

Only the following supplements may be used in support of this protocol. The most recently approved versions will be found on the CASA intranet website. Approved forms are located on CASA's external website.

- [Principle \(OPS.13\) Managing continuing airworthiness](#)
- [Worksheet \(OPS.13\) Managing continuing airworthiness](#)
- [Record of interview \(OPS.13\) Maintenance controller](#)
- [Record of interview \(OPS.13\) Person responsible for managing continuing airworthiness](#)

5. Scope

This protocol is for the assessment of an initial issue AOC/AWC application under Part 119 (non-scheduled operations), Part 133, Part 137 and Part 138 of CASR. This protocol may also be used for certain significant change variations to an existing AOC/AWC, such as adding a new aircraft.

The protocol will be used to support the relevant operational worksheet for each CASR Part and approval of the maintenance control manual.

6. Competency requirements

To conduct the assessment, airworthiness inspectors must have successfully completed the foundation training and advanced regulatory assessment training programs. Airworthiness inspectors must also complete the following practical training:

- observe an interview for the person responsible for managing continuing airworthiness or HAMC
- conduct at least 1 management of airworthiness assessment, including an interview, under the observation of a qualified airworthiness inspector.

7. Associated legislation

Table 1. Legislation associated with this protocol

| Document | Title |
|-----------------------|--|
| Part 21 of CASR | Certification and airworthiness requirements for aircraft parts |
| Part 119 of CASR | Australian air transport operators—certification and management |
| Part 137 of CASR | Aerial application operations—other than rotorcraft |
| Part 138 of CASR | Aerial work operations |
| Part 141 of CASR | Recreational, private and commercial flight training, other than certain integrated training courses |
| Part 142 of CASR | Integrated and multi-crew pilot flight training, contracted training and contracted checking |
| Part 4 of CAR | Airworthiness requirements |
| Part 4A of CAR | Maintenance |
| Part 4B of CAR | Defect reporting |
| regulation 214 of CAR | Training of maintenance personnel |
| schedule 8 of CAR | Maintenance that may be carried out on a Class B aircraft |
| CAO 100.5 | General requirements in respect of maintenance of Australian aircraft |
| CASA EX82/21 | Part 119 of CASR – Supplementary Exemptions and Directions Instrument 2021 |

8. Guidance references

Table 2. Guidance material relevant to this protocol

| Document | Title |
|-----------------|--|
| Part 119 AMC/GM | Acceptable means of compliance and guidance material - Australian air transport operators—certification and management |
| Part 138 AMC/GM | Aerial work operations |

| Document | Title |
|--------------|---|
| AC 42-03 | Reliability programs |
| CAAP 30-4 | Certificate of approval maintenance organisations |
| CAAP 39-1 | Maintenance requirements for class A aircraft |
| CAAP 41-2 | Maintenance requirements class B aircraft |
| CAAP 42B-1 | CASA maintenance schedule |
| CAAP 42L-1 | Inspection of aircraft after abnormal flight loads, heavy landing or lightning strike |
| CAAP 42M-1 | Approved system of maintenance class A aircraft |
| CAAP 43-01 | Maintenance release |
| CAAP 50A/B-1 | Aircraft logbooks and alternate to aircraft logbooks |

9. ICAO references

Table 3. ICAO references applicable to this protocol

| Document | Title |
|------------------|---|
| Annex 6 Part I | Operation of aircraft - International commercial air transport operations |
| Annex 6 Part II | Operation of aircraft - International general aviation - aeroplanes |
| Annex 6 Part III | Operation of aircraft - International operations - helicopters |

10. Revision history

Amendments/revisions of this protocol are recorded below in order of most recent first.

Table 4. Revision history table

| Version No. | Date | Parts/Sections | Details |
|-------------|----------------|----------------|-----------------------------|
| 1.2 | May 2024 | All | Reformat to latest template |
| 1.1 | April 2023 | All | Post implementation review |
| 1.0 | September 2022 | All | First Issue |