

Clarifying Training and Certification Check Requirements for Initial and Upgrading Training for SIC's Upgrading to PIC

The FAA is also proposing to revise paragraph 2 of the section entitled "Level C, Training and Checking Permitted," to clearly distinguish between the prerequisites for initial versus upgrade training and checking. To do this, paragraph 2(a) would be redesignated as paragraph 2 and paragraph 2(b) as paragraph 3. New paragraph 3 would be stated so as to eliminate the need for the flush paragraph currently at the end of the section.

Current paragraph 2(a) sets forth the prerequisites for training and checking in a Level C simulator for SIC's upgrading to PIC in the same equipment. For example, a pilot serving as SIC in a Boeing 727 upgrading to PIC in the same airplane would have to meet the requirements of this paragraph. Under new paragraph 2, these requirements would not change. The pilot would still have to have previously qualified as SIC in the equipment, have at least 500 hours of actual flight time as SIC in an airplane in the same group, and be currently serving as SIC in an airplane in the same group. These requirements are consistent with the definition of upgrade training under Subpart N—Training program. Section 121.400(c)(3) defines "Upgrade training" as the training required for crewmembers who have qualified and served as SIC or flight engineer on a particular airplane type, before they serve as PIC or SIC, respectively, on that airplane.

The requirements of current paragraph 2(b) must be read in conjunction with the final paragraph in the section to determine that it applies to initial training and checking for SIC's upgrading to PIC in an airplane type in which the pilot has never served as SIC. This SIC has experience in the same group of airplanes, but not in the same airplane to which the pilot wants to upgrade. For example, a pilot serving as an SIC in a Boeing 737 initially upgrading to PIC in a Boeing 727 must meet the requirements of this paragraph.

New paragraph 3 would not change this requirement, but would make it easier for the reader to see that it applies to initial training and checking. The pilot would still have to be employed by an operator, be currently serving as SIC in an airplane in the same group, have a minimum of 2500 flight hours as SIC in airplanes in the same group, and have served as SIC on at least two airplanes of the same group. Because proposed

new paragraph 3 would refer to "initial" training, the language in the current last paragraph is no longer needed to explain that pilots meeting these requirements may upgrade to another airplane in that group in which that pilot has not previously qualified. The requirements in new paragraph 3 continue to be consistent with § 121.400(c)(1), which defines "initial training" as the training required for crewmembers and dispatchers who have not qualified and served in the same capacity on another airplane of the same group.

Modifying Minimum Flight Hour Requirements

The FAA also is considering whether to propose revising certain flight hour experience requirements for initial and upgrade training and checking in a Level C simulator. Currently, pilots upgrading from SIC to PIC in equipment in which they have previously qualified as SIC are required to have at least 500 hours of actual flight time while serving as SIC in an airplane in the same group. Similarly, pilots who are initially upgrading from SIC to PIC in other equipment in which the pilot has not been previously qualified, must have a minimum of 2500 hours as SIC in airplanes of the same group as the equipment to which they are upgrading.

The flight hour experience requirements ensure that a pilot has adequate experience in order to upgrade to PIC. These values were established, based on the collective opinions of the FAA and industry members, when Appendix H was originally adopted. Since then, industry members have argued that the required hours are excessive. Based on the success of some industry members who have operated under exemptions that provided certain relief of these flight-hour requirements and other specific requirements for upgrade training under Subpart N, the FAA may propose, for example, to eliminate the 500 flight-hour requirement and reduce from 2500 to 500 the number of flight hours required for initial upgrade training and checking.

The FAA seeks comments and additional information that may justify proposing to modify these current flight hour requirements in a future notice of proposed rulemaking.

Standardizing Language and Eliminating Obsolete References

As discussed above, the term "phase" is no longer used to describe the various simulators referred to in Appendix H. Accordingly, it is proposed to replace "phase" with "level" wherever it

appears and to use the current alphabetical designations for the various levels.

In addition, it is proposed to remove the section entitled "Phase IIA Interim Simulator Upgrade Plan for Part 121 Operators" as obsolete. For the same reason, it is proposed to remove paragraph 7 of the section entitled "Advanced Simulation Training Program" which references Phase IIA. Under Phase IIA, any part 121 operator could conduct Phase II training for 3 and ½ years from the date it was approved for Phase I in a simulator approved for the landing maneuver under Phase I. The carrier's upgrade plan had to be submitted to the FAA before July 30, 1981. Thus, these provisions are no longer effective.

Regulatory Analysis

Executive Order 12866 established the requirement that, within the extent permitted by law, a Federal regulatory action may be undertaken only if the potential benefits to society for the regulation outweigh the potential costs to society. In response to this requirement, and in accordance with Department of Transportation policies and procedures, the FAA has estimated the anticipated benefits and costs of this rulemaking action. The FAA has determined that this proposed rule is not a "significant rulemaking action", as defined by Executive Order 12866 (Regulatory Planning and Review). The anticipated costs and benefits associated with this proposed rule are summarized below. (A more detailed discussion of costs and benefits is contained in the full regulatory evaluation placed in the docket for this proposed rule).

Costs

The proposed rule would not improve any additional costs on either part 121 air carrier operators or the flying public. The proposed rule would allow certain training practices that the FAA has determined to be safe and efficient methods for training pilots, and it would clarify other portions of Appendix H. Thus, the proposal would not impose any additional costs because it would permit operators to use the least costly methods of training while maintaining an equivalent level of safety for the flying public. Since current training practices would be maintained to current standards under the proposed rule, there would be no reduction in aviation safety imposed on the flying public.

Potential Cost-Relief Benefits

The proposed rule would generate potential cost savings benefits estimated