

(d) A certificate holder may obtain an authorization to deviate from the requirements of paragraph (b) of this section, by an amendment to its operations specifications, if—

(1) It shows that due to circumstances beyond its control or to unreasonable economic burden it cannot comply for a specified period of time; and

(2) It has submitted a plan acceptable to the Administrator to effect compliance to the extent possible.

(e) A certificate holder need not comply with the requirements of paragraph (b) of this section for an aircraft—

(1) When the only persons carried are flight crewmembers and persons listed in § 121.583;

(2) If the aircraft is scheduled for retirement before January 1, 1985; or

(3) If the aircraft is scheduled for re-engining under the provisions of subpart E of part 91, until it is re-engined.

[Doc. No. 121-154, 45 FR 3883, Jan. 21, 1980. Redesignated by Amdt. 121-162, 45 FR 46739, July 10, 1980, and amended by Amdt. 121-181, 47 FR 58489, Dec. 30, 1982; Amdt. 121-251, 60 FR 65935, Dec. 20, 1995]

§ 121.579 Minimum altitudes for use of autopilot.

(a) *En route operations.* Except as provided in paragraphs (b), (c), and (d) of this section, no person may use an autopilot en route, including climb and descent, at an altitude above the terrain that is less than twice the maximum altitude loss specified in the Airplane Flight Manual for a malfunction of the autopilot under cruise conditions, or less than 500 feet, whichever is higher.

(b) *Approaches.* When using an instrument approach facility, no person may use an autopilot at an altitude above the terrain that is less than twice the maximum altitude loss specified in the Airplane Flight Manual for a malfunction of the autopilot under approach conditions, or less than 50 feet below the approved minimum descent altitude or DA/DH for the facility, whichever is higher, except—

(1) When reported weather conditions are less than the basic VFR weather conditions in §91.155 of this chapter, no person may use an autopilot with an approach coupler for ILS approaches at

an altitude above the terrain that is less than 50 feet higher than the maximum altitude loss specified in the Airplane Flight Manual for the malfunction of the autopilot with approach coupler under approach conditions; and

(2) When reported weather conditions are equal to or better than the basic VFR minimums in §91.155 of this chapter, no person may use an autopilot with an approach coupler for ILS approaches at an altitude above the terrain that is less than the maximum altitude loss specified in the Airplane Flight Manual for the malfunction of the autopilot with approach coupler under approach conditions, or 50 feet, whichever is higher.

(c) Notwithstanding paragraph (a) or (b) of this section, the Administrator issues operations specifications to allow the use, to touchdown, of an approved flight control guidance system with automatic capability, in any case in which—

(1) The system does not contain any altitude loss (above zero) specified in the Airplane Flight Manual for malfunction of the autopilot with approach coupler; and

(2) He finds that the use of the system to touchdown will not otherwise affect the safety standards required by this section.

(d) *Takeoffs.* Notwithstanding paragraph (a) of this section, the Administrator issues operations specifications to allow the use of an approved autopilot system with automatic capability below the altitude specified in paragraph (a) of this section during the takeoff and initial climb phase of flight provided:

(1) The Airplane Flight Manual specifies a minimum altitude engagement certification restriction;

(2) The system is not engaged prior to the minimum engagement certification restriction specified in the Airplane Flight Manual or an altitude specified by the Administrator, whichever is higher; and

(3) The Administrator finds that the use of the system will not otherwise affect the safety standards required by this section.

[Doc. No. 6258, 29 FR 19219, Dec. 31, 1964, as amended by Amdt. 121-13, 30 FR 14781, Nov. 30, 1965; Amdt. 121-33, 32 FR 13912, Oct. 6, 1967; Amdt. 121-130, 41 FR 47229, Oct. 28, 1976; Amdt. 121-206, 54 FR 34331, Aug. 18, 1989; Amdt. 121-265, 62 FR 27922, May 21, 1997; Amdt. 121-333, 72 FR 31682, June 7, 2007]

§ 121.580 Prohibition on interference with crewmembers.

No person may assault, threaten, intimidate, or interfere with a crewmember in the performance of the crewmember's duties aboard an aircraft being operated under this part.

[Doc. No. FAA-1998-4954, 64 FR 1080, Jan. 7, 1999]

§ 121.581 Observer's seat: En route inspections.

(a) Except as provided in paragraph (c) of this section, each certificate holder shall make available a seat on the flight deck of each airplane, used by it in air commerce, for occupancy by the Administrator while conducting en route inspections. The location and equipment of the seat, with respect to its suitability for use in conducting en route inspections, is determined by the Administrator.

(b) In each airplane that has more than one observer's seat, in addition to the seats required for the crew complement for which the airplane was certificated, the forward observer's seat or the observer's seat selected by the Administrator must be made available when complying with paragraph (a) of this section.

(c) For any airplane type certificated before December 20, 1995, for not more than 30 passengers that does not have an observer seat on the flightdeck, the certificate holder must provide a forward passenger seat with headset or speaker for occupancy by the Administrator while conducting en route inspections.

[Doc. No. 6258, 29 FR 19219, Dec. 31, 1964, as amended by Amdt. 121-144, 43 FR 22648, May 25, 1978; Amdt. 121-251, 60 FR 65935, Dec. 20, 1995; Amdt. 121-288, 67 FR 2128, Jan. 15, 2002]

§ 121.582 Means to discreetly notify a flightcrew.

Except for all-cargo operations as defined in § 119.3 of this chapter, after October 15, 2007, for all passenger-carrying airplanes that require a lockable flightdeck door in accordance with § 121.313(f), the certificate holder must have an approved means by which the cabin crew can discreetly notify the flightcrew in the event of suspicious activity or security breaches in the cabin.

[Amdt. 121-334, 72 FR 45635, Aug. 15, 2007]

§ 121.583 Carriage of persons without compliance with the passenger-carrying requirements of this part.

(a) When authorized by the certificate holder, the following persons, but no others, may be carried aboard an airplane without complying with the passenger-carrying airplane requirements in §§ 121.309(f), 121.310, 121.391, 121.571, and 121.587; the passenger-carrying operation requirements in §§ 121.157(c) and 121.291; and the requirements pertaining to passengers in §§ 121.285, 121.313(f), 121.317, 121.547, and 121.573:

- (1) A crewmember.
- (2) A company employee.
- (3) An FAA air carrier inspector, a DOD commercial air carrier evaluator, or an authorized representative of the National Transportation Safety Board, who is performing official duties.
- (4) A person necessary for—
 - (i) The safety of the flight;
 - (ii) The safe handling of animals;
 - (iii) The safe handling of hazardous materials whose carriage is governed by regulations in 49 CFR part 175;
 - (iv) The security of valuable or confidential cargo;
 - (v) The preservation of fragile or perishable cargo;
 - (vi) Experiments on, or testing of, cargo containers or cargo handling devices;
 - (vii) The operation of special equipment for loading or unloading cargo; and
 - (viii) The loading or unloading of oversize cargo.
- (5) A person described in paragraph (a)(4) of this section, when traveling to or from his assignment.