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**Federal Aviation  
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# InFO

Information for Operators

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*An InFO contains valuable information for operators that should help them meet certain administrative, regulatory, or operational requirements with relatively low urgency or impact on safety.*

**SUBJECT:** Compliance with Flight Dispatch Communications for Flag Air Carriers, 14 CFR section 121.99; OpSpec A008

**Purpose:** This InFO contains directions about dispatch communications requirements outside of the United States (U.S.) for air carriers certificated in accordance with 14 CFR part 119, and authorized under section 119.21(a)(2) to conduct flag operations under 14 CFR part 121. It supersedes Flight Standards Information Bulletin for Air Transportation (FSAT) 00-14.

**Background:** An audit by the Office of Inspector General (IG) expressed concern about those air carriers that were using the air traffic control (ATC) system of a foreign government to provide their dispatch communication links. This link, in some countries, results in gaps of communications of 4 to 13 minutes. The Federal Aviation Administration's (FAA) safety assessment concludes that gaps of 4 or more minutes are too much of a delay under normal operating conditions. For more background information on 14 CFR section 121.99, see the OpSpec JobAid associated with operations specification (OpSpec) A008 in the operations specification subsystem (OPSS).

**Discussion:** An air carrier may arrange to use the foreign ATC communication system(s) for its dispatch communications for operations outside the U.S. In such cases, the carrier must show that it has a Memorandum of Agreement with the applicable ATC facilities containing a provision that, as part of the routine communication services provided, the ATC facility will have the capability and will establish communications with the carrier's dispatch office, whenever requested, within a period of time less than 4 minutes (under normal operating conditions) beginning with the completion of the carrier's request and confirmation response.

**Recommended action:** Directors of safety and directors of operations, training managers and pilots for certificate holders that conduct flag operations need to review their air carrier's communications with dispatch outside the U.S. and their "Operational Control" authorization in OpSpecs paragraph A008. If the rapid communications performance requirement of section 121.99 is not being met, affected carriers must take immediate steps to arrange for the use of alternative dispatch communications capability, other than the foreign ATC system, for operations outside the contiguous U.S.