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InFO

Information for Operators

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http://www.faa.gov/other_visit/aviation_industry/airline_operators/airline_safety/info

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: Datalink Communications Recording Requirements -- Clarification

Purpose: To aid the implementation of the datalink recording requirements in Title 14 of the Code of Federal Regulations (14 CFR) part 91 § 91.609 which require compliance as of on April 6, 2012, and in 14 CFR part 121, § 121.359, part 125, § 125.227 and part 135, § 135.151 which require compliance as of December 6, 2010.

Background: The datalink recording regulations listed above require airplanes or rotorcraft "... that install datalink communication equipment on or after {the effective date of the rule}, must record all datalink messages..." We have received inquiries concerning what is included in the phrase "...install datalink communication equipment..." The following is intended to assist operators in determining when datalink recording is required.

A. Datalink Equipment: "Datalink equipment" refers to the approved message set (e.g., the Controller Pilot DataLink Communications [CPDLC] application) hosted in either the Flight Management Computer or Communications Management Unit (CMU), the datalink router (e.g., hosted in the CMU), any radios that are used by the approved message set (e.g., VHF, HF Datalink, Satcom), and associated antennas.

B. Datalink Installation Date: The datalink installation date is the date that an airplane or rotorcraft is returned to service after the datalink equipment has been installed. For newly manufactured airplanes or rotorcraft, it is the date of manufacture as determined by the airframe manufacturer.

C. Airplanes or Rotorcraft Manufactured on or After the Effective Date of the Rule. Each aircraft must have datalink recording capability if both of the following conditions are met:

- 1) The aircraft is required to have both a cockpit voice recorder and a flight data recorder; and
- 2) The aircraft has datalink equipment installed that uses an approved message set as defined in AC 20-160 (or the latest approved revision).

D. Airplanes or Rotorcraft Manufactured Before the Effective Date of the Rule. Each aircraft must have datalink recording capability installed if all if the following conditions are met:

- 1) The aircraft is required to have both a cockpit voice recorder and a flight data recorder.
- 2) The aircraft has datalink equipment that was installed after the effective date of the rule and that equipment uses an approved message set as defined in AC 20-160 (or the latest approved revision).
- 3) The installation of the datalink equipment requires a supplement type certificate (STC) or amended type certificate (ATC), and the date that the STC or ATC (applicable to that airplane or rotorcraft) was signed is after the effective date of the rule.

Contact: Questions or comments regarding this InFO should be directed to the Aircraft Maintenance Division, Avionics Branch AFS-360 at (202) 385-4292.