



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS
2000 NAVY PENTAGON
WASHINGTON, DC 20350-2000

IN REPLY REFER TO
OPNAVINST 3120.28C
N86
07 NOV 2011

OPNAV INSTRUCTION 3120.28C

From: Chief of Naval Operations

Subj: CERTIFICATION OF THE AVIATION CAPABILITY OF SHIPS
OPERATING AIRCRAFT

Ref: (a) OPNAVINST 3120.35J

1. Purpose. To issue procedures and delineate responsibilities for the formal inspection and certification of shipboard aviation facilities and aircraft operating envelopes.

2. Cancellation. OPNAVINST 3120.28B.

3. Scope. This instruction applies to all ships whose mission includes the conduct of flight operations.

4. Background. Certification is a process established to verify:

a. Shipboard aviation facilities are installed, available, and operated according to approved plans and procedures; and

b. Safe operating envelopes for wind and ship motion are established. Both are essential to the proper, adequate, and safe conduct of flight operations.

5. Discussion. Many aspects of air and surface warfare have changed over the years, bringing about various naval ships and aircraft configured for different purposes. Differences in missions and capabilities dictate a wide variety of shipboard aviation facilities and operating envelopes. The type and number of ships capable of conducting flight operations have resulted in the need for formal, standard certification procedures to provide the maximum safe environment for both aircraft and ship's personnel.

a. The primary objective of the shipboard aviation facility certification process is to validate (by inspection) the

facilities, equipment, and their operating capabilities for proper, adequate, and safe conduct of flight operations. Therefore, all procedures, documentation, and technical guidelines shall reflect the level, class, and type requirements defined in reference (a) and follow the ship's aviation mission as established by the Chief of Naval Operations.

b. The primary objective of the aircraft operating envelope certification process is to establish and validate by flight test, analysis or simulation the complete wind and ship motion envelopes for safe aircraft operation.

c. All aviation capable ships shall have certified aviation facilities with certified aircraft operating envelopes. It shall be noted that the certification of a ship's aviation capability does not constitute authorization to conduct air operations. Authorization to conduct air operations is the responsibility of fleet commanders, Commander, Military Sealift Command (COMSC), or Chief of Naval Research (CNR), as applicable.

6. Action

a. Commander, Naval Air Systems Command (COMNAVAIRSYSCOM) or program executive officer (PEO) will:

(1) Establish responsibilities, procedures, and technical guidelines for mandatory facility and operating envelope certifications based on three distinct types of aviation capable ships:

(a) Aviation (aircraft carrier, nuclear (CVN));

(b) Amphibious aviation (amphibious assault ships, general purpose and multipurpose (LHA, LHD)); and

(c) Air capable (all other naval ships from which aircraft can takeoff, land, and routinely receive or transfer personnel and materials).

(2) Assign responsibilities to subordinate naval activities to achieve and support the objectives of certification.

(3) Provide technical guidelines, personnel, data, and funding for the support of formal inspection and flight test programs associated with aviation capability certifications.

(4) Coordinate funding to support dynamic interface testing for each aviation capable class of ship from which new or existing aircraft are planned to operate.

(5) Ensure that proposals for modification of the certification criteria are processed per the applicable reference document.

(6) Procure equipment to support the aviation systems required for certification. Provide installation guidelines to support shipboard aviation capabilities at or above certification standards.

(7) Approve all aviation facility design and modifications before installation to ensure that the objectives of existing and projected aviation facility certification standards will be achieved.

(8) Maintain direct liaison with fleet commanders, COMSC, and CNR on certification matters.

b. Commander, Naval Sea Systems Command (COMNAVSEASYS COM) or PEO will:

(1) Procure equipment to support the ship systems required for certification. Install, modify, and maintain all shipboard facilities and associated equipment to support shipboard aviation capabilities at or above certification standards.

(2) Provide personnel, data, and funding for support of formal inspections of COMNAVSEASYS COM cognizant equipment associated with aviation capability certifications.

(3) Budget Ship Construction, Navy funds to support dynamic interface testing for aviation capable lead ships of each class, and subsequent follow-on ships as appropriate, where baseline class changes have affected the ship's flight deck characteristics.

c. Fleet commanders, COMSC, and CNR will:

(1) Establish responsibilities and procedures necessary for mandatory certification of all ships with aviation facilities within the technical guidelines issued by the COMNAVAIRSYSCOM. Certification shall be subject to periodic review at intervals determined by COMNAVAIRSYSCOM.

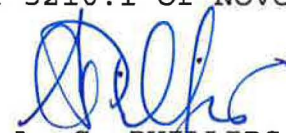
(2) Authorize aircraft operations aboard ship to meet established and special mission requirements.

(3) In cases where certification is not possible without inordinate operational disruption, authorize on a case-by-case basis operational waivers to aviation certification. Certification criteria waivers shall be granted for a specific period of time and shall not abrogate safety considerations. In any case, the waiver period shall not exceed 1 year from the date of waiver authorization. Follow-on waivers shall not be granted until an appropriate inspection of the aviation facilities has been accomplished and corrective measures initiated.

(a) For ships operating under waivers, corrective measures shall be included in the list of repairs and or alterations to be accomplished during the next major yard availability period. The priority for accomplishing these alterations will be established following the Fleet Modernization Program.

(b) Copies of all waivers issued shall be provided to COMNAVAIRSYSCOM and to COMNAVSEASYSYSCOM.

7. Records Management. Records created as a result of this instruction, regardless of media or format, shall be managed per the Secretary of the Navy Manual 5210.1 of November 2007.



A. C. PHILLIPS
Rear Admiral, U.S. Navy
Director, Surface Warfare

OPNAVINST 3120.28C
07 NOV 2011

Distribution:

Electronic only, via Department of the Navy Issuances Web site
<http://doni.daps.dla.mil/>