

Proposed Rules

Federal Register

Vol. 68, No. 47

Tuesday, March 11, 2003

This section of the FEDERAL REGISTER contains notices to the public of the proposed issuance of rules and regulations. The purpose of these notices is to give interested persons an opportunity to participate in the rule making prior to the adoption of the final rules.

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Parts 21, 43 and 145

Performing Work on Products and/or Parts That Have Left a Production Approval Holder's (PAH's) Quality System

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) DOT.

ACTION: Notice of policy statement; request for comments.

SUMMARY: The Production and Airworthiness Division (AIR-200) and the Aircraft Maintenance Division (AFS-300) propose to formally adopt policy regarding who is authorized to perform work on products and/or parts that have left a PAH's quality system

DATES: Comments must be received by May 12, 2003.

ADDRESSES: Send comments on this Notice of Policy Statement to the Aircraft Certification Service, Production and Airworthiness Division, Production Certification Branch, AIR-210, Room 815, 800 Independence Avenue SW., Washington, DC 20591.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Barbara A. Capron, Aircraft Certification Service, Production and Airworthiness Division, Production Certification Branch, AIR-210, Room 815, 800 Independence Avenue SW., Washington, DC 20591; telephone (202) 267-3343; fax (202) 267-5580; email: barbara.capron@faa.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Comments Invited

The FAA invites interested parties to comment on this notice of policy statement. Please submit comments to the above address. The FAA will consider all comments received by the closing date before issuing a final policy statement.

Background

Part 21 Applicability

Title 14, Code of Federal Regulations (14 CFR) part 21 Certification Producers for Products and parts (part 21) defines the regulations for the portion of the aviation industry that supports the design and manufacture of aviation products and parts. This includes the requirements for the issue of type certificates and changes to those certificates; the issue of production certificates (PCs); the issue of airworthiness certificates; the issue of export airworthiness approvals; the rules governing the holder of any of these certificates, and procedural requirements for the approval of certain materials, parts, processes, and appliances.

Part 43 Applicability

14 CFR part 43 Maintenance, Preventive Maintenance, Rebuilding and Alteration (part 43) defines regulations for the portion of the aviation industry that supports continued airworthiness standards, or more specifically those that maintain the airworthiness status of products and parts. It prescribes rules governing the maintenance, preventive maintenance, rebuilding and alteration of any aircraft having a U.S. airworthiness certificate; foreign-registered civil aircraft used in common carriage or carriage of mail under the provisions of 14 CFR part 121 or 135; and airframe, aircraft engines, propellers, appliances, and component parts of such aircraft. Part 43 does not apply to any aircraft for which an experimental airworthiness certificate has been issued, unless a different kind of airworthiness certificate had previously been issued for the aircraft.

For products and parts that have already met the applicability requirements of part 43, § 43.3(j) authorizes a manufacturer to *rebuild or alter* (emphasis added) any aircraft, aircraft engine, propeller, appliance, or part manufactured by him under a type or PC, Technical Standard Order (TSO) Authorization, an FAA Parts Manufacturer Approval (PMA), or Product and Process Specification. Any maintenance, preventive maintenance and alterations are not included in the authority of § 43.3(j).

Part 145 Applicability

Part 145, Subpart D, Limited Ratings for Manufacturers, permits certain manufacturers to obtain, without further showing, a repair station certificate with a limited rating under Part 145. The FAA considered that the standards met by a manufacturer to obtain a PC, approved production inspection system (APIS), or other approved quality control system, provided a level or safety equivalent to that achieved under the standards applicable to a certificated repair station with a limited rating. This has permitted the holder of a limited rating for manufacturers to maintain and approve for return to service any article for which it is rated, and perform preventive maintenance on that article if certificated mechanics and repairmen are employed directly in charge of the maintenance and preventive maintenance in accordance with current § 145.103.

Elimination of the Limited Rating for Manufacturers

As proposed in Notice No. 99-09 (66 FR 41117, August 6, 2001) the FAA is eliminating the limited rating for manufacturers because maintenance practices and aircraft technologies have evolved since the establishment of limited ratings for manufacturers, and the FAA has determined that all repair facilities' systems for inspection, recordkeeping, and quality control should be consistent. These regulatory changes should also ensure uniform FAA surveillance activities.

Part 145 Regulatory Change

Effective April 6, 2003, Manufacturer Maintenance Facilities will no longer be permitted. Under the revised 14 CFR part 145, existing MMFs will be required to have a limited repair station rating under § 145.61 if they choose to continue exercising similar privileges.

Need To Define Part 21 vs. Part 43 Activities

A production approval holder (PAH) is a person who holds a PC, APIS, a PMA, or a TSO authorization that controls the design and quality of a product or part thereof. For many years, products and/or parts have been shipped from suppliers to PAHs, between PAHs, and from PAHs to airlines, repair stations, distributors, etc. This notice is designed to clarify at what