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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/all_infos

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. This is a guidance document. Its content is not legally binding in its own right and will not be relied upon by the Department as a separate basis for affirmative enforcement action or other administrative penalty. Conformity with the guidance document is voluntary only. Nonconformity will not affect rights and obligations under existing statutes and regulations.

Subject: Inspections per Title 14 of the Code of Federal Regulations (14 CFR) Part 43, § 43.3.

Purpose: This InFO addresses language in manufacturer's manuals that may be inconsistent with 14 CFR Part 43.

Background: The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) has identified manufacturer's manuals stating that pilots may perform certain inspections if trained and authorized by local authorities (or similar statements). This has resulted in pilots performing inspections on United States (U.S.) registered aircraft.

Discussion: Inspections, which constitute maintenance as defined in 14 CFR part 1, require approval or disapproval for return to service in accordance with § 43.11. Section 43.3 does not authorize pilots to perform inspections, nor does a pilot certificate authorize its holder to determine airworthiness or to approve for return to service an aircraft, airframe, aircraft engine, propeller, appliance, or component under § 43.11.

A pilot's authority under § 43.3 is strictly defined as follows:

- Preventive Maintenance: Authorized only under the conditions of § 43.3(g) and (h).
- Specific Tasks: Under § 43.3(i), pilots of part 135 aircraft (9 seats or fewer) may only perform the removal and reinstallation of approved aircraft cabin seats, approved cabin mounted stretchers, and when no tools are required, approved cabin-mounted medical oxygen bottles.
- Avionics Database Updates: Under § 43.3(k), pilots may update installed avionics databases from the flight deck without tools or unit disassembly; the regulation specifically states these updates are not considered maintenance.
- Preflight Checks: Routine pilot preflight checks are operational checks and do not constitute inspections under 14 CFR Part 43.

Manufacturer's manuals may suggest pilots have broader authority to perform inspections, but these statements do not supersede requirements under 14 CFR.

Recommended Action: Pilots must disregard manufacturer language that suggests pilots may perform inspections beyond the scope of Part 43. Pilots should contact their local Flight Standards District Office (FSDO) if they encounter conflicting guidance recommended in a manufacturer's manual.

Contact: Direct questions or comments regarding this InFO to the Aircraft Maintenance Division via telephone at (202) 267-1675 or via email at 9-AWA-AFS-300-Correspondence@faa.gov.