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Dated: June 29, 2015.

**Melike A. Yetken,**

*Designated Federal Official, U.S. Department of State.*

[FR Doc. 2015-16616 Filed 7-6-15; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 4710-08-P**

## DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

### Federal Aviation Administration

#### Emergency Locator Transmitters (ELTs)

**AGENCY:** Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), DOT.

**ACTION:** Final notice recommending voluntary change to securing existing ELTs as specified in Technical Standard Order (TSO)-C126b, 406MHz Emergency Locator Transmitter.

**SUMMARY:** This notice summarizes the inadequacies of hook and loop fasteners as a means for securing automatic fixed (AF) and automatic portable (AP) ELTs, and avoids placing an undue burden on aircraft owners while acknowledging the voluntary efforts of ELT manufacturers to improve designs.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Ms. Charisse R. Green, AIR-131, Federal Aviation Administration, 470 L'Enfant Plaza, Suite 4102, Washington, DC 20024. Telephone (202) 267-8551, fax (202) 267-8589, email to: [Charisse.Green@faa.gov](mailto:Charisse.Green@faa.gov).

#### SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

##### Background

On March 10, 2015, the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) published in the **Federal Register**, (80 FR 12697 (2015)), a Notice announcing the recommendation of voluntary change to a metal strap type restraint method for securing ELTs. The FAA recommends voluntary changes to existing ELTs installed with hook and loop fasteners because of their tendency to become dislodged from their mounting trays on impact. The separation of those ELTs from their mounting trays caused their antenna connection to sever, thus rendering the

ELTs to be ineffective and unable to perform their intended function. The FAA also evaluated the retention tests specified by TSO-C91a, TSO-C126, and TSO-C126a and determined these standards did not adequately address the use of hook and loop fasteners. Hook and loop fasteners were not an acceptable means of compliance to meet the mounting and retention requirements of the ELT TSOs. While the evaluation of installation approval using hook and loop fasteners may meet the TSO requirements for retention forces in laboratory conditions, accident investigations found these fasteners did not perform their intended function. Technical Standard Order TSO-C126b, 406 MHz Emergency Locator Transmitters, already excludes hook and loop fasteners as the primary method of ELT attachment.

##### FAA Concerns

The agency identified the following concerns after completing its evaluation of the use of hook and loop fasteners:

(1) Hook and loop fasteners fail to retain the ELT when insufficient tension is applied to close the fastener. There is no repeatable method for installation and no method to evaluate the tension of the hook and loop fastener. The allowance for pilots to secure ELTs to the aircraft when changing ELT batteries further increases the potential for inconsistent and unsatisfactory installations.

(2) Hook and loop fasteners closed with proper tension may stretch or loosen over time due to wear, fluids, vibration, and repeated use, leading to insufficient tension to retain the ELT.

(3) Hook and loop fasteners closed with proper tension do not provide stated retention capability due to debris which can contaminate the hooks and loops of the fastener.

(4) Hook and loop fasteners closed with proper tension degrade due to environmental factors such as repeated heating and cooling cycles, temperature extremes, and contamination resulting from location in equipment areas.

##### Comments

The FAA received one comment in response to the March 10, 2015, **Federal Register** Notice. The comment, by ELTA, stated that there is some potential confusion as to which ELTs were applicable under the FAA's proposed voluntary change from the use of hook and loop fasteners to metallic straps. Some customers could assume the **Federal Register** notice is applicable to all types of ELTs, including the survival type ELT.

The FAA acknowledges this comment. This final **Federal Register** notice clarifies the FAA recommends voluntary changes to the securing mechanisms for automatic fixed and automatic portable ELTs. Additionally, the requirements section of TSO-C126b specifies the use of hook and loop fasteners is not an acceptable means of attachment when showing compliance with the Crash Safety requirements of RTCA/DO-204A, section 2.2.5. Section 2.2.5 of this RTCA document applies only to AF and AP ELTs.

##### Conclusion

The FAA evaluated the mounting requirements and retention test and determined the standards do not adequately address the use of hook and loop fasteners. Upon completion of the evaluation, the FAA identified numerous concerns with the use of hook and loop fasteners and continues to recommend voluntary changes of securing mechanisms for existing ELTs which utilize hook and loop fasteners. The FAA also asks aircraft owners/operators with ELTs secured with hook and loop fasteners in their aircraft to voluntarily switch to a metal strap type restraint method.

Issued in Washington, DC, on June 30, 2015.

**Susan J.M. Cabler,**

*Acting Manager, Design, Manufacturing, & Airworthiness Division, Aircraft Certification Service.*

[FR Doc. 2015-16557 Filed 7-6-15; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 4910-13-P**

## DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

### Federal Aviation Administration

#### Alaska: Fixed Wing Aircraft External Loads as a Restricted Category Special Purpose Flight Operation

**AGENCY:** Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), DOT.

**ACTION:** Notice of availability and request for public comments.

**SUMMARY:** This notice announces the availability of and request comments on the proposed authorization of Alaska Fixed Wing External Loads (FWEL) as a new restricted category special purpose operation, pursuant to Title 14 of the Code of Federal Regulations (14 CFR) 21.25(b)(7), for operations within the State of Alaska.

**DATES:** Comments must be received on or before August 6, 2015.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Federal Aviation Administration, Design Manufacturing and

Airworthiness Division, Design Certification Section (AIR-111), 950 L'Enfant Plaza SW., Washington, DC 20024. ATTN: Mr. Graham Long. Telephone (202) 267-1624, fax 202-267-1813, email to: [graham.long@faa.gov](mailto:graham.long@faa.gov).

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** Pursuant to the Reauthorization Act of 1966 (110 Stat. 3213) SEC. 1205., *Regulations Affecting Intrastate Aviation in Alaska*, modifying regulations contained in Title 14 of the Code of Federal Regulations, in a manner affecting intrastate aviation in Alaska became law. The Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration considered the extent to which Alaska is not served by transportation modes other than aviation, established such regulatory distinctions as deemed appropriate.

The Design, Manufacturing and Airworthiness Division (AIR-100) proposes Alaskan Fixed Wing External Loads (FWEL) as a recognized special purpose operation in the restricted category, under Title 14 of the Code of Federal Regulations (14 CFR) § 21.25(b)(7). Alaskan FWEL is the carriage of external loads temporarily attached to small, fixed-wing aircraft operating within the state of Alaska. This approval is issued with the following requirements:

1. Alaskan FWEL must be performed in conjunction with the procedures contained in FAA Notice N8900.272 (or its successor policy).

2. An airplane eligible for the carriage of external loads must:

a. Be a small propeller-driven airplane type-certificated in accordance with 14 CFR part 23 (or its predecessor regulations) in the normal, utility, or acrobatic category, and have a valid airworthiness certificate in that category.

b. Have a maximum certificated takeoff weight of 12,500 pounds or less.

3. The airworthiness limitations issued with the airworthiness certificate must include a requirement for training in the carriage of FWEL. The pilot must have sufficient knowledge of (1) external load attaching methods; (2) the airplane operating limitations issued for the external load operation; and (3) how the external load may affect the flight characteristics of the airplane.

**Note:** *Airplane Handling and Flight Characteristics:* When carrying external loads, aerodynamic forces and the weight of an external load change an airplane's handling and flight characteristics. These forces can negatively affect airplane performance (takeoff, climb, cruise, and landing), airplane stability, flight control effectiveness, vibration, fuel consumption, and engine cooling, among other

characteristics. The operator must take care when selecting and mounting an external load and also exercise prudence to avoid operation outside the airplane's approved weight & balance envelope, and to avoid aerodynamic effects that make operations unsafe.

4. The aircraft must be operated in accordance with the gross weight and flight envelope limitations when in the restricted category.

5. No passengers are permitted on board when in restricted category. All persons onboard must be flight crew members, flight crew member trainees, persons who perform an essential function in connection with the special purpose operation, or persons necessary to accomplish the work activity directly associated with the special purpose operation.

Issued in Washington, DC, on June 30, 2015.

**Susan J.M. Cabler,**

*Acting Manager, Design, Manufacturing and Airworthiness Division, Aircraft Certification Service.*

[FR Doc. 2015-16558 Filed 7-6-15; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 4910-13-P**

## DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

### Federal Aviation Administration

#### **Advisory Circular (AC) 20-159, Obtaining Design and Production Approval of Airport Moving Map Display Applications Intended for Electronic Flight Bag Systems**

**AGENCY:** Federal Aviation Administration (DOT).

**ACTION:** Notice of intent to cancel AC 20-159, Obtaining Design and Production Approval of Airport Moving Map Display Applications Intended for Electronic Flight Bag Systems.

**SUMMARY:** This notice announces the Federal Aviation Administration's (FAA) intent to cancel AC 20-159. This cancellation will result in no new approval of technical standard order authorizations (TSOA) for an "incomplete system" issued for Technical Standard Order (TSO) C-165, Electronic Map Display Equipment for Graphical Depiction of Aircraft Position. Therefore, the guidance contained in AC 20-159 allowing applicants to obtain a design and production approval using the software and database for an airport moving map display (AMMD) intended for use on a Class 2 electronic flight bag (EFB) for ground operations, will no longer be available. FAA AC 120-76C, Guidelines for the Certification, Airworthiness, and Operational Use of Electronic Flight Bags, dated May 9,

2014, replaces AC 20-159 and provides guidance for applicants seeking authorization to display an own-ship symbol limited to the airport surface as a Type B application for use on any EFB.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** To obtain additional details, please contact: Mr. Brad Miller, AIR-130, Federal Aviation Administration, Aircraft Certification Service, Systems and Equipment Standards Branch, 470 L'Enfant Plaza Suite 4102, Washington, DC 20024, Telephone (202) 267-8533, FAX: (202) 267-267-8589, Email: [brad.miller@faa.gov](mailto:brad.miller@faa.gov).

#### **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**

##### **Background**

In mid-March 2007, the FAA Administrator directed FAA to publish guidance by the end of April 2007 to facilitate the use of an AMMD application on EFBs and to streamline the certification means to deploy this safety enhancement to address airport runway incursions. AC 20-159 provided EFB AMMD applicant guidance to obtain TSO-C165 software-only TSO authorization requiring the need to obtain a design or production approval. However, AC 120-76C later introduced guidance to necessitate only an operator-based evaluation submitted to an FAA inspector for EFB hardware and software application authorization. The FAA envisions all new authorizations for use of AMMD functionality on EFBs be obtained under AC 120-76C as a Type B application.

Issued in Washington, DC, on June 30, 2015.

**Susan J.M. Cabler,**

*Acting Manager, Design, Manufacturing, & Airworthiness Division, Aircraft Certification Service.*

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## DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

### Federal Railroad Administration

[Docket No. FRA-2015-0007-N-18]

#### **Agency Request for Emergency Processing of Collection of Information by the Office of Management and Budget**

**AGENCY:** Federal Railroad Administration (FRA), United States Department of Transportation (USDOT).

**ACTION:** Notice.

**SUMMARY:** FRA hereby gives notice that it is submitting the following Information Collection request (ICR) to