RWANDA
CIVIL AVIATION AUTHORITY

ADVISORY CIRCULAR
AC 12-004

GUIDANCE FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF AN INTEGRATED FLIGHT SAFETY DOCUMENTS SYSTEM

Purpose— This advisory circular provides guidance on the organization and development of an operator's flight safety documents system.

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- Advisory Circulars are intended to provide advice and guidance to illustrate a means, but not necessarily the only means, of complying with the Regulations, or to explain certain regulatory requirements by providing informative, interpretative and explanatory material.
- Where an AC is referred to in a 'Note' below the regulation, the AC remains as guidance material,
- ACs should always be read in conjunction with the referenced regulations.

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SECTION 1 POLICY & GENERAL INFORMATION

1.1 APPLICABILITY

This advisory circular is applicable to all AOC holders and applicants for AOC, with the exception of the single pilot air taxi operators.

1.2 STATUS OF THIS ADVISORY CIRCULAR

This is original issuance [1]2017 of this AC.

1.3 BACKGROUND

A. It is now an ICAO Standard that an AOC holder's manual system will conform to the concept of a flight safety documents systems.

B. This concept is defined as a set of inter-related documentation established by the operator, compiling and organizing information necessary for flight and ground operations, and comprising, as a minimum, the operations manual and the operator's maintenance control manual.

C. As an ICAO Contracting State, Rwanda is obligated to implement this Standard. It is important that, as a minimum, the operations manual and maintenance control manual conform to the guidance in this circular.

1.4 RELATED REGULATIONS

The following Rwanda civil aviation regulations are applicable to the Intergrated Flight Safety Documents requirements—

- RCAR Part 12, AOC Certification & Administration

SECTION 2 INTEGRATED SYSTEM

2.1 IMPORTANCE OF AN INTEGRATED SYSTEM

A. The guidelines in this advisory circular address the major aspects of an operator's flight safety documents system development process, with the aim of ensuring compliance with the elements of systems safety.

B. The guidelines are based not only upon scientific research, but also upon current best industry practices, with an emphasis on a high degree of operational relevance.

C. Development of a flight safety documents system is a complete process, and changes to each document comprising the system may affect the entire system.

2.2 DIFFICULTIES IN ACHIEVING AN INTEGRATED SYSTEM

A. Guidelines applicable to the development of operational documents have been produced by government and industry sources and are available to operators.

B. Because the availability of this guidance is disjointed across a number of publications, it is difficult to apply the best practices as a whole. Application also varys relative to the individual authors' perceptions of a good product.

As a result, documents within a company system tend to also tend to be disjointed with different authors applying different formats and standards.

C. Most organizations fail to apply guidelines rarely cover the entire process of operational documents development in the flight safety documents.

2.3 IMPORTANCE OF AN INTEGRATED SYSTEM

A. It is important for operational documents to be consistent with each other, and consistent with regulations, manufacturer requirements and human factors principles.

B. It is also necessary to ensure consistency across departments as well as consistency in application.

SECTION 3 ORGANIZATION

3.1 EASE OF ACCESSING INFORMATION

A flight safety documents system should be organized according to criteria which ensure easy access to information required for flight and ground operations contained in the various operational documents comprising the system and which facilitate management of the distribution and revision of operational documents.

3.2 GROUPING OF INFORMATION

Information contained in a flight safety documents system should be grouped according to the importance and use of the information, as follows—

1) Time critical information, e.g., information that can jeopardize the safety of the operation if not immediately available;

2) Time sensitive information, e.g., information that can affect the level of safety or delay the operation if not available in a short time period;

- Time critical information should be placed early and prominently in the flight safety documents system.
- Time critical information, time sensitive information, and frequently used information should be placed in cards and quick-reference guides.

3) Frequently used information;

4) Reference information, e.g., information that is required for the operation but does not fall under (2) or (3) above; and

5) Information that can be grouped based on the phase of operation in which it is used.

3.3 DESIGN

3.3.1 TERMINOLOGY & MEANING

A. A flight safety documents system should maintain consistency in terminology and in the use of standard terms for common items and actions.

B. Operational documents should include a glossary of terms, acronyms and their standard definition, updated on a regular basis to ensure access to the most recent terminology.

- All significant terms, acronyms and abbreviations included in the flight documents system should be defined.

3.3.2 FORMATING & STYLE

A flight safety documents system should ensure standardization across document types, including—

- Writing style, terminology,
- Use of graphics and symbols, and
- Formatting across documents.

This standardization includes a consistent location of specific types of information, consistent use of units of measurement and consistent use of codes.

3.3.3 FRONT END

A. Where possible and appropriate, each document should contain a consistent presentation in the front that includes a—

1) A record of revisions;
2) Listing of effective pages;
3) Table of contents, containing the titles of no more than 2 levels of headers
4) Index, of not more than 3 levels indexing, to the important words and phrases within the manual
5) An explanation of the manual purpose, construction, availability, revisions and distribution.

The table of contents and index shall have separate tables to enable the user to have immediate access to these portions of the document.

B. If a system of bulletins is the selected method of providing timely manual updates, the bulletins shall be inserted under a tab immediately following the list of effective pages.

3.3.4 MASTER INDEX

A. A flight safety documents system should include a master index to locate, in a timely manner, information included in more than one operational document.

B. The master index should be available as a attachment in the back of each primary user manual.and it should consist of no more than three levels of indexing.

Pages containing abnormal and emergency information must be tabbed for direct access.

3.3.5 CONFORMANCE WITH QUALITY SYSTEM

A flight safety documents system should comply with the requirements of the operator's SMS and associated quality system, if applicable.

SECTION 4 VALIDATION

A. The flight safety documents system should be validated before deployment, under realistic conditions.

B. Validation should involve the critical aspects of the information use, in order to verify its effectiveness. Interactions among all groups that can occur during operations should also be included in the validation process

SECTION 5 DEPLOYMENT

A. Operators should monitor deployment of the flight safety documents system, to ensure appropriate and realistic use of the documents, based on the characteristics of the

operational environment and in a way which is both operationally relevant and beneficial to operational personnel.

B. This monitoring should include a formal feedback system for obtaining input from operational personnel.

SECTION 6 AMENDMENT

6.1 EXTERNAL SOURCE REVISIONS

A. The operator's information gathering, review, distribution and revision control system should be adequate to process information and data obtained from all sources relevant to the type of operation conducted, including, but not limited to the—,

- State of the Operator
- State of Design
- State of Registry
- Manufacturers and equipment vendors.

B. Manufacturers provide information for the operation of specific aircraft that emphasizes the aircraft systems and procedures under conditions that may not fully match the requirements of operators.

The operator's system should be capable of responding to this information in a timely manner and in coordination with the RCAA.

6.2 INTERNAL CHANGES

The operator's information gathering, review, distribution and revision control system should be adequate to process information resulting from changes that originate within the operator, including—

1) Changes resulting from the installation of new equipment;
2) Changes in response to operating experience;
3) Changes in response to operating experience;
4) Changes in an operator's policies and procedures;
5) Changes in an operator certificate; and
6) Changes for purposes of maintaining cross fleet standardization.

Operators should ensure that crew coordination philosophy, policies and procedures are specific to their operation.

6.3 COMMUNICATING CHANGE INFORMATION

6.3.1 METHODS FOR COMMUNICATION

A. Operators should have standardized methods for communicating new information to their personnel.

- The specific methods should be responsive to the degree of communication urgency.

As frequent changes diminish the importance of new or modified procedures, it is desirable to minimize changes to the flight safety documents system.

B. New information should be reviewed and validated considering its effects on the entire flight safety documents system.

6.3.2 TRACKING OF DISTRIBUTION OF CHANGE INFORMATION

A. The method of communicating new information should be complemented by a tracking system to ensure currency by operational personnel.

B. The tracking system should include a procedure to verify that operational personnel have the most recent updates.

SECTION 7 SAFETY OVERSIGHT REVIEW

An operator's flight safety documents system will be reviewed by the RCAA-FSS—

1) On a regular basis (at least once a year);
2) After major events (mergers, acquisitions, rapid growth, downsizing, etc.);
3) After technology changes (introduction of new equipment); and
4) After changes in safety regulations.

End of Advisory Circular

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