

INFORMATION FOR PROSPECTIVE AOC APPLICANTS

A BACKGROUND

Annex 6 Part 1 to the Convention on International Civil Aviation requires member States to Issue an Air Operator Certificate (AOC) or equivalent document to commercial air transport operators which shall be dependent upon the operator demonstrating an adequate organization, method of control and supervision of flight operations, training program, and maintenance arrangements consistent with the nature and extent of the operation specified.

In order to carry out its responsibilities in accordance with Annex 6, the Maldives Civil Aviation Authority (MCAA) has developed a formal process for the certification of Air Operators. That process is described in the following paragraphs.

B THE CERTIFICATION PROCESS

The certification process which results in the initial issuance of an Air Operator's Certificate (AOC) is divided into the following steps:

- Pre-application
- Formal application
- Preliminary financial, economic, and legal assessment of the proposal
- Preliminary technical assessment of the application including document review
- Operational inspections
- Decision on application and award of AOC and Operation Specifications (with CAMO certificate and area of operation approval)

1. **Pre-Application.** This phase includes all of the preliminary contact between the prospective operator and the MCAA prior to the submission of a formal application. During this time and in response to the operator's initial queries, the MCAA will make the potential operator fully aware of the regulatory requirements which must be met in order to obtain an AOC and of the exact steps in the certification process which must be accomplished before the AOC may be issued. It is essential that the applicant has a clear understanding of the form, content, and documents required for the formal application.

2. **Preliminary Financial, Economic, and Legal Assessment of the Proposal.** After receipt of the proposal, it will be necessary for the Air Transport Section to make a preliminary investigation to determine that the applicant has:

- a. sufficient financial resources;
- b. a route structure for the proposed operation;
- c. an intended level of service that meets a need or demand and is in the public interest;

d. proposed a type and level of operation that is in accordance with bilateral or multilateral air transport agreements relating to traffic rights, frequencies, capacity, routes, etc., to which the Maldives is a party;

e. presented traffic studies or other data indicating that the proposed operation should be economically successful; and

f. management structure and suitable personnel, equipment, facilities, manuals, buildings, service agreements, etc., or will be able to obtain them.

The above process normally requires two to four weeks. If the CE is satisfied as to the viability and legality of the operation, the certification process may proceed to the next step with the issuance of the NOL.

3. Formal Application. If, after preliminary discussions with the MCAA, the operator intends to proceed with the certification process, he must submit a formal application to the Chief Executive (CE) of Maldives Civil Aviation Authority. This formal application may be in the form of a letter and shall include the MCAA AOC Application form (Form1801 - Application for Air Operator's Certificate and MCAR-M, Subpart G) with the following detailed information:

a. the name and address of the applicant and the main base of the proposed operations;

b. description of the applicant's business organization, corporate structure, and names and addresses of those entities and individuals having a major financial interest;

c. information on management organization and key staff members, including their title, name, background, qualifications and experience;

d. detailed information on flight operations under the following headings:

1. type of aircraft, communication and navigation equipment, instruments, equipment and flight documents to be used;

2. arrangements for maintenance and inspection of aircraft and associated equipment;

3. State of Registry of the aircraft if foreign registered a copy of the lease agreement should be provided;

4. data concerning each flight crew member including types of certificates or license number, ratings, medical certificate and evidence of currency in assigned aircraft;

5. arrangements for crew and ground personnel training and qualification;

6. installations and equipment available;

7. proposed routes, including geographical tracks, minimum flight altitudes, destination and alternate aerodromes to be used including data on instrument approach procedures, proposed aerodrome operating minima, navigation and communications facilities;

8. details of operational control and supervision methods to be used; and

9. nature of operations passenger/cargo/mail, day, night, VFR or IFR, etc.;

e. detailed description of how the applicant intends to show compliance with each provision of the applicable code of air navigation regulations;

f. specified financial data; and

g. desired date for operation to commence.

4. Preliminary Technical Assessment of the Application. Before this phase can commence, the applicant must submit to MCAA the following documents or their equivalents with compliance check lists for those manuals that require approval:

- An Aircraft Operating Manual (AOM) or Airplane Flight Manual (AFM), either developed specifically by the airline or adopted directly from the manufacturer, which contains information on aircraft systems, limitations, performance, and normal and abnormal operating procedures for the airplane.
- A Maintenance Manual which describes the maintenance organization and procedures which will be employed by the operator.
- A revised or updated Operations Manual (OM) which incorporates general information, guidance, and instructions pertaining to the aircraft type, and reflects the current operating environment of the airline.
- Aircraft Operating Matters Manual including all normal, abnormal, and emergency checklists, and abbreviated checklists for use in the cockpit.
- Passenger briefing cards in English and Dhivehi languages.
- A Route Manual containing takeoff, en-route, terminal, and approach charts and information for the routes and airports which the applicant intends to use.
- Airport Analysis charts or equivalent reference material for use by aircrew for determining maximum gross takeoff and landing weights for specific airports and runways; taking into account obstacle clearance, runway length and slope, aircraft configuration, and current meteorological conditions.
- A Training Manual containing detailed training programs for cockpit and cabin crewmembers and flight dispatchers/flight operations officers.
- A Weight and Balance Manual containing information and procedures on aircraft loading and weight distribution
- A Minimum Equipment List (MEL) which reflects the Master Minimum Equipment List approved by the state of manufacture, and is tailored to the specific airplane model and operating environment of the airline.
- A Configuration Deviation List or equivalent document which contains information regarding flight with missing aircraft components.
- A Safety Management System Manual.
- An Emergency Response Manual.
- A Security Manual.
- A Dangerous Goods Manual which contains information on the identification, packaging, and handling of hazardous materials.
- Quality (Compliance) Manual.
- A Flight Attendant Manual or other suitable reference for flight attendants concerning the configuration of the new aircraft type, location and operation of installed cabin equipment, and duties and responsibilities during normal and abnormal operations.
- Flight Operations Officer or Dispatcher Manual.

Detailed information on the structure and content of the above manuals or their equivalents may be obtained from MCAA.

MCAA will require approximately 90 days to evaluate the adequacy of the above documents and provide specific approval for training programmes, checklists, and minimum equipment lists etc.

5. Operational Inspections and Demonstrations. Prior to the commencement of this phase, all crew members, dispatchers (operations officers), and other appropriate ground support personnel must have completed their required training as outlined in the training programme which would have been submitted and approved in accordance with paragraph 4 above.

This phase will consist of the following demonstrations and inspections:

- Emergency evacuation and ditching drills will be conducted by the applicant in order to demonstrate the ability of the cabin crew to safely evacuate passengers and utilize aircraft emergency equipment.
- A least 10 hours of proving flights will be conducted by the applicant in order to demonstrate his ability to safely operate the airplane on a day to day basis. The airline will be required to submit a proving flight plan which contains the number of flights, dates, crew composition, and destinations.
- The MCAA will inspect each transit or line station to ensure that ground personnel are adequately trained to support the aircraft type and that support equipment and facilities are adequate for the operation. Transit stations may be inspected during proving flights or as separate events prior to the first revenue flight.
- The Dispatch/Operational Control center will be inspected to ensure adequacy of flight planning, briefing, dissemination of weather data and NOTAMS, and record-keeping.
- The applicant's Maintenance Organization will be inspected for adequacy of facilities, equipment, procedures, staffing, and training.
- The applicant's organization and procedures for keeping required records (crew flight and duty time, trip records, training and qualification, etc.) will be inspected to ensure its adequacy. An additional two to four weeks will be required to perform the above inspections.

6. Decision on application - Issuance of AOC and Operations Specifications. After all of the requirements of the above paragraphs are satisfactorily met, the CE will issue an Air Operator Certificate to the applicant. Additionally, Operations Specifications will be issued which contain specific operating authorizations and limitations such as approved aircraft and capacities, route and terminal authorizations, weather minimums, and other provisions unique to the operator. Thereafter, the operator will be required to adhere to all provisions of its AOC and Operations Specifications in addition to applicable MCAR and ICAO annexes.

After the AOC is granted, the operator will be subject to continuing inspection by the MCAA in order to ensure that he continues to operate to the same standards upon which the issuance of the AOC was based.

AOC FLOW CHART



