Evaluation and Approval of Minimum Equipment Lists

1.0 PURPOSE

This Order is issued to provide standard guidance to Airworthiness Inspectors to use when evaluating and approving operators Minimum Equipment Lists (MEL).

2.0 REFERENCE

Regulation 38 of the Civil Aviation (Air Operator Certification and Administration) Regulations

3.0 GUIDANCE AND PROCEDURE

3.1 General Information

3.1.1 An operator is required to produce his own MEL to be approved by the Authority for incorporation in their manuals for the use and guidance of flight and ground operations personnel. The MEL will be tailored to the individual operator's routes and procedures within the constraints imposed by the MMEL. The current MMEL for a given aircraft may normally be obtained from the manufacturer of the aircraft or the Civil Aviation Organization of the certificating State.

3.1.2 The MMEL does not include obviously required items such as wings, empennage, flaps, powerplants, etc. Nor does the list include items which do not affect the airworthiness of the aircraft such as galley equipment, entertainment systems, etc. It must be stressed and understood by all persons developing and using the MMEL that all items that are related to the airworthiness of the aircraft and are not included on the list are automatically required to be operative.

3.1.3 It is the owner/operators responsibility to keep his approved MEL current. He must arrange to receive all changes to the manufacturers Master MEL and Dispatch Deviation Guide. He must then revise and submit revisions to the approved MEL in a timely manner.

3.1.4 The tailored MEL should be in the same format as the Master,

a) Keeping the same numbering system;
b) Where an item is not applicable marking that item N/A;
c) Show date and revision number of the MMEL being followed;
d) Use the MMEL Preamble and Definitions;
e) Give specific reference to regulatory requirement;
f) Give specific reference to incorporated Service Bulletins;
g) Show actual number of installed equipment;
h) Include procedures to meet repair intervals and/or obtain a time extension;
i) Whenever there is an (O) or (M) in the Master, have the proper operations or maintenance procedure included;
j) Attach copy of Configuration Deviation List (CDL) from the Aircraft’s Approved Flight Manual to the back of the MEL.

3.1.5 The owner or operator can make minor changes from the Master as long as the changes make the item more restrictive. At no time must a change make an item less restrictive. To preclude problems the MMEL and Dispatch Deviation Guide should be followed at all times.

3.1.6 The approval of the MEL is an Operations function involving the Flight Operations inspectors and Airworthiness inspector. The Operations Specification authorization is signed and issued by the Operations Inspector. An operators MEL should not be issued unless both Operations and Airworthiness inspectors have reviewed and accepted the MEL.

3.1.7 The operator is responsible for exercising the necessary operational control to ensure that his aircraft are not dispatched with multiple MEL items inoperative without first determining that any interface or inter-relationship between the inoperative systems or components will not result in degradation in the level of safety and/or an undue increase in crew workload.

3.1.8 The MEL is not intended to provide for continued operation of the aircraft for extended periods with MEL items unserviceable. In the case of unserviceable MEL items the operator should generally make repairs at the first station where repairs or replacement may be made, but in any case repair should be accomplished at the flight termination station, since additional unserviceability may require the aircraft to be removed from service.

3.2 Procedures

3.3 The owner/operator of an aircraft should present the following documents when asking for approval of an original or revised MEL:

3.3.1 A printed copy of the operators MEL;

3.3.2 An electronic copy of the operators MEL;

3.3.3 A copy of the MMEL used to prepare the tailored MEL;

3.3.4 A copy of the Dispatch Deviation Guide used to develop the operations and maintenance procedures contained in the tailored MEL.

3.4 The Inspectorate should not accept an original MEL or revision to a MEL until all the above documents are received. Once all the required documents are received they should be logged in and assigned to an operations and maintenance inspector for review.

3.5 The maintenance inspector should review the MEL or revision and ensure the following:

3.5.1 It is in the same format as the Master;

3.5.2 Has the same numbering system as the master;
3.5.3 Where an item is not applicable that item is marked N/A;

3.5.4 Shows the date and revision number of MMEL being followed;

3.5.5 Uses the Preamble and Definitions of the MMEL;

3.5.6 Gives specific reference to regulatory requirement;

3.5.7 Gives specific reference to incorporated Service Bulletins;

3.5.8 Show actual number of installed equipment;

3.5.9 Includes procedures to meet repair intervals and/or to obtain a time extension;

3.5.10 Whenever there is a (O) or (M) in the Master, it has the proper operations or maintenance procedure included.

3.5.11 Verify that a copy of the Configuration Deviation List (CDL) from the Aircraft’s Approved Flight Manual is attached to the back of the MEL.

3.6 Results

3.6.1 When the airworthiness inspector completes his review:

a) If problems are found, the assigned operations inspector will be notified in writing that the review is complete but that problems were found. The activity report comments sheet should list the specific problems with enough detail so proper corrections can be made.

b) The owner/operator should be given a copy of both operations and maintenance discrepancies in writing under one cover letter. The operator should make the needed corrections to both areas before re-submitting the MEL.

3.6.2 If everything is in accordance with the requirements the AWI notifies the operations inspector in writing that the airworthiness review is complete and acceptable.

3.6.3 When both FOI and AWI are satisfied with the proposed MEL it shall be recommended for approval by the Authority.

3.6.4 One copy of the approved MEL is retained by the Authority and the other is returned to the operator with an approval note issued by the Authority.

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Civil Aviation Authority