

§ 135.93 Autopilot: Minimum altitudes for use.

(a) Except as provided in paragraphs (b), (c), (d), and (e) of this section, no person may use an autopilot at an altitude above the terrain which is less than 500 feet or less than twice the maximum altitude loss specified in the approved Aircraft Flight Manual or equivalent for a malfunction of the autopilot, whichever is higher.

(b) When using an instrument approach facility other than ILS, no person may use an autopilot at an altitude above the terrain that is less than 50 feet below the approved minimum descent altitude for that procedure, or less than twice the maximum loss specified in the approved Airplane Flight Manual or equivalent for a malfunction of the autopilot under approach conditions, whichever is higher.

(c) For ILS approaches, when reported weather conditions are less than the basic weather conditions in §91.155 of this chapter, no person may use an autopilot with an approach coupler at an altitude above the terrain that is less than 50 feet above the terrain, or the maximum altitude loss specified in the approved Airplane Flight Manual or equivalent for the malfunction of the autopilot with approach coupler, whichever is higher.

(d) Without regard to paragraph (a), (b), or (c) of this section, the Administrator may issue operations specifications to allow the use, to touchdown, of an approved flight control guidance system with automatic capability, if—

(1) The system does not contain any altitude loss (above zero) specified in the approved Aircraft Flight Manual or equivalent for malfunction of the autopilot with approach coupler; and

(2) The Administrator finds that the use of the system to touchdown will not otherwise adversely affect the safety standards of this section.

(e) Notwithstanding paragraph (a) of this section, the Administrator issues operations specifications to allow the use of an approved autopilot system with automatic capability during the takeoff and initial climb phase of flight provided:

(1) The Airplane Flight Manual specifies a minimum altitude engagement certification restriction;

(2) The system is not engaged prior to the minimum engagement certification restriction specified in the Airplane Flight Manual, or an altitude specified by the Administrator, whichever is higher; and

(3) The Administrator finds that the use of the system will not otherwise affect the safety standards required by this section.

(f) This section does not apply to operations conducted in rotorcraft.

[Doc. No. 16097, 43 FR 46783, Oct. 10, 1978, as amended by Amdt. 135-32, 54 FR 34332, Aug. 18, 1989; Amdt. 135-68, 62 FR 27923, May 21, 1997]

§ 135.95 Airmen: Limitations on use of services.

No certificate holder may use the services of any person as an airman unless the person performing those services—

(a) Holds an appropriate and current airman certificate; and

(b) Is qualified, under this chapter, for the operation for which the person is to be used.

§ 135.97 Aircraft and facilities for recent flight experience.

Each certificate holder shall provide aircraft and facilities to enable each of its pilots to maintain and demonstrate the pilot's ability to conduct all operations for which the pilot is authorized.

§ 135.98 Operations in the North Polar Area.

After August 13, 2008, no certificate holder may operate an aircraft in the region north of 78° N latitude ("North Polar Area"), other than intrastate operations wholly within the state of Alaska, unless authorized by the FAA. The certificate holder's operation specifications must include the following:

(a) The designation of airports that may be used for en-route diversions and the requirements the airports must meet at the time of diversion.

(b) Except for all-cargo operations, a recovery plan for passengers at designated diversion airports.

(c) A fuel-freeze strategy and procedures for monitoring fuel freezing for operations in the North Polar Area.

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(d) A plan to ensure communication capability for operations in the North Polar Area.

(e) An MEL for operations in the North Polar Area.

(f) A training plan for operations in the North Polar Area.

(g) A plan for mitigating crew exposure to radiation during solar flare activity.

(h) A plan for providing at least two cold weather anti-exposure suits in the aircraft, to protect crewmembers during outside activity at a diversion airport with extreme climatic conditions. The FAA may relieve the certificate holder from this requirement if the season of the year makes the equipment unnecessary.

[Doc. No. FAA-2002-6717, 72 FR 1885, Jan. 16, 2007, as amended by Amdt. 135-112, 73 FR 8798, Feb. 15, 2008]

§ 135.99 Composition of flight crew.

(a) No certificate holder may operate an aircraft with less than the minimum flight crew specified in the aircraft operating limitations or the Aircraft Flight Manual for that aircraft and required by this part for the kind of operation being conducted.

(b) No certificate holder may operate an aircraft without a second in command if that aircraft has a passenger seating configuration, excluding any pilot seat, of ten seats or more.

§ 135.100 Flight crewmember duties.

(a) No certificate holder shall require, nor may any flight crewmember perform, any duties during a critical phase of flight except those duties required for the safe operation of the aircraft. Duties such as company required calls made for such nonsafety related purposes as ordering galley supplies and confirming passenger connections, announcements made to passengers promoting the air carrier or pointing out sights of interest, and filling out company payroll and related records are not required for the safe operation of the aircraft.

(b) No flight crewmember may engage in, nor may any pilot in command permit, any activity during a critical phase of flight which could distract any flight crewmember from the performance of his or her duties or which

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could interfere in any way with the proper conduct of those duties. Activities such as eating meals, engaging in nonessential conversations within the cockpit and nonessential communications between the cabin and cockpit crews, and reading publications not related to the proper conduct of the flight are not required for the safe operation of the aircraft.

(c) For the purposes of this section, critical phases of flight includes all ground operations involving taxi, take-off and landing, and all other flight operations conducted below 10,000 feet, except cruise flight.

NOTE: Taxi is defined as "movement of an airplane under its own power on the surface of an airport."

[Doc. No. 20661, 46 FR 5502, Jan. 19, 1981]

§ 135.101 Second in command required under IFR.

Except as provided in § 135.105, no person may operate an aircraft carrying passengers under IFR unless there is a second in command in the aircraft.

[Doc. No. 28743, 62 FR 42374, Aug. 6, 1997]

§ 135.103 [Reserved]

§ 135.105 Exception to second in command requirement: Approval for use of autopilot system.

(a) Except as provided in §§ 135.99 and 135.111, unless two pilots are required by this chapter for operations under VFR, a person may operate an aircraft without a second in command, if it is equipped with an operative approved autopilot system and the use of that system is authorized by appropriate operations specifications. No certificate holder may use any person, nor may any person serve, as a pilot in command under this section of an aircraft operated in a commuter operation, as defined in part 119 of this chapter unless that person has at least 100 hours pilot in command flight time in the make and model of aircraft to be flown and has met all other applicable requirements of this part.

(b) The certificate holder may apply for an amendment of its operations specifications to authorize the use of an autopilot system in place of a second in command.