

HQ-440

FEDERAL AVIATION AGENCY
FLIGHT STANDARDS SERVICE

[14 CFR Parts 40, 41, 42]

[Notice No. 63-32; Docket No. 1893]

NOTICE OF PROPOSED RULE MAKING

Means of Electric Illumination for Life Preservers and Liferrafts

The Federal Aviation Agency has under consideration a proposal to amend Parts 40, 41, and 42 of the Civil Air Regulations to require that each life preserver and liferaft, when carried in accordance with these regulations, be equipped with a means of illumination for the purpose of facilitating the location of persons who have survived a water landing in an air carrier aircraft.

Interested persons are invited to participate in the making of the proposed rule by submitting such written data, views, or arguments as they may desire. Communications should identify the notice or docket number and be submitted in duplicate to the Federal Aviation Agency, Office of the General Counsel: Attention Rules Docket, Room A-103, 1711 New York Avenue, N.W., Washington 25, D.C. All communications received on or before October 9, 1963, will be considered by the Administrator before taking action upon the proposed rule. The proposals contained in this notice may be changed in the light of comments received. All comments submitted will be available, both before and after the closing date for comments, in the Rules Docket for examination by interested persons.

The Federal Aviation Agency and the Civil Aeronautics Board have long been concerned by the lack of any requirement prescribing that life preservers and liferafts be equipped with a means of illumination. Such a requirement, we believe, would materially assist in the rescue of persons from the water at night. Since such a light had not been developed to a level of reliability sufficient to justify such a mandatory civil requirement, the United States filed and has maintained a difference to a similar ICAO requirement since November 1, 1954.

To our knowledge until recently there had been little or no advancement in the development of survival lights since 1954, when the United States filed its difference with ICAO. Ditchings in 1962 prompted this Agency to reevaluate our requirements in this regard and ascertain if our 1954 position was in fact acceptable at this time. In the course of our study, we have found that lights have now been developed which are acceptable.

In order for a light to be effective for this purpose it must be attached to the life preserver or mounted on the liferaft in such a manner as to provide maximum visibility in a horizontal and vertical plane. The light should be waterproof and provide a minimum source of effective intensity of 3 candles for a period of 8 hours.

Concurrent with this notice the Agency is issuing a proposed revision of TSO-C13c, Life Preservers, (circulated as Notice 63-31) which will prescribe minimum standards which will be acceptable. That part of the TSO dealing with the general light characteristics herein described will relate to the acceptability of lights which may be attached to presently approved life preservers.

The Agency is preparing a similar amendment to the TSO for liferafts to reflect a similar requirement.

Flotation is the primary and most important requirement for survival after escaping from an aircraft landing in water. The probability of survival is greatly increased if the passenger can then expeditiously board one of the airplane's liferafts or a rescue vessel. To insure and facilitate the locations of all passengers or liferafts at night, a means of illumination on the life preservers and rafts must be provided. A review of aircraft water landings confirms that where lights on life preservers were provided, persons in the water were sighted by persons in the liferafts or rescue vessels, who in turn were able to maneuver the raft or vessel and pick up persons who might not otherwise have been sighted.

This proposal is subject to the FAA Recodification Program announced in Draft Release 61-25 (26 F.R. 10698). The final rule, if adopted, may be in a recodified form; however, the recodification itself will not alter the substantive contents proposed herein.

These amendments are proposed under the authority of sections 313(a), 601, and 604 of the Federal Aviation Act of 1958 (49 U.S.C. 1354, 1421, 1424).

In consideration of the foregoing, it is proposed to amend Parts 40, 41, and 42 of the Civil Air Regulations as follows:

1. By amending section 40.206(a) of Part 40 by adding a new subparagraph (5) to read as follows:

40.206 *Equipment for overwater operations.*

(a) * * * *

(5) Each life preserver and liferaft required under subparagraphs (1) and (2) of this paragraph shall be equipped with a means of illumination approved for use on life preservers and liferafts, for the purpose of facilitating the location of persons.

2. By making similar amendments to that proposed in item 1 in Parts 41 and 42.



*Acting Director
Flight Standards Service*

Issued in Washington, D.C., on August 5, 1963.