

Federal Aviation Agency



AC NO: 20- 51

AIRCRAFT

EFFECTIVE :
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SUBJECT : PROCEDURES FOR OBTAINING FAA APPROVAL OF MAJOR ALTERATIONS TO TYPE CERTIFICATED PRODUCTS

1. **PURPOSE.** This advisory circular provides assistance to persons who desire to obtain FAA approval of major alterations to type certificated products.
2. **BACKGROUND.** Many persons desire to introduce changes to type certificated products. In most cases they use data which others have shown meet the FAA airworthiness requirements and no further approval of data is required. The FAA publishes a summary of these approvals which may be examined at a local FAA office. The summary lists the names and addresses of persons who have approvals so considerable time and expense may be saved by arranging with those persons to use their approved data. In cases where there is no previously approved data, FAA approval must be obtained.
3. **APPROVAL PROCEDURE.** In order to determine the proper procedure to follow in obtaining approval of a new major alteration, contact the local FAA district office, and an inspector will advise whether the approval can be made by the local inspector or whether it will require regional engineering evaluation.
4. **APPLICANT'S RESPONSIBILITY.** In obtaining approval for a major alteration, the applicant is responsible for showing compliance with the applicable airworthiness requirements. Normally, these are the rules with which the manufacturer originally showed compliance. To do this may require submittal of descriptive data, structural analyses, test reports and the conduct of structural, propulsion, systems and equipment, and flight tests, as appropriate. The extent of data required depends upon the nature of the alteration. The FAA requires only the data necessary to determine compliance. In cases where an applicant wishes to incorporate the alteration in numerous airplanes or make data available for use by others, the data should be adequate for duplication of the alteration on like products.

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5. SERVICE OF DESIGNATED ENGINEERING REPRESENTATIVES. It may be advantageous for an applicant to engage the services of a Designated Engineering Representative (DER) or a Designated Alteration Station (FAR 21, Subpart M) to assist in obtaining an FAA approval. By this means the applicant will not be dependent upon the limited number of FAA engineering personnel available for this type of work. Advisory Circular No. 183.29-1B (or subsequent revisions) lists persons who are authorized DERs and can provide certain FAA approvals. The circular may be examined in any FAA District Office.


Director
Flight Standards Service