This is information only. Recommendations aren't mandatory.

Introduction

This Special Airworthiness Information Bulletin (SAIB) identifies new and revised guidance for industry related to Airworthiness Directive (AD) development and implementation processes. This SAIB provides recommendations for design approval holders (DAH) and owners/operators of **transport category airplanes certificated under 14 CFR part 25**. Implementation of the recommendations in this SAIB will improve the AD development and implementation processes which support continued operational safety of the existing airplane fleet.

Background

Based on widespread flight cancellations in March and April 2008, the United States Department of Transportation tasked an Independent Review Team (IRT) to examine the FAA's safety culture and its implementation of safety management. The IRT issued its report documenting 13 recommendations, two of which focused on the FAA's management of ADs. The FAA also formed an AD Compliance Review Team (AD CRT) to review the circumstances surrounding compliance issues with a specific AD, and the AD process in general. The AD CRT issued two reports outlining a total of 16 recommendations.   The IRT and AD CRT reports can be obtained at: http://www.faa.gov/aircraft/air_cert/continued_operation/ad/ad_arc/.

In August 2009, the FAA chartered the AD Implementation Aviation Rulemaking Committee (AD ARC) to evaluate and address the IRT and AD CRT recommendations relating to ADs.   The AD ARC issued its final report on August 19, 2011. In its report the AD ARC outlined its tasking, deliverables and implementation actions for each recommendation, and a proposal for future activities. More information on the AD ARC and the AD ARC report can be obtained at: http://www.faa.gov/aircraft/air_cert/continued_operation/ad/ad_arc/.

The AD ARC's deliverables and implemention actions include new or revised FAA and industry guidance and training. The deliverables and implementation actions are intended to improve the manufacturer (or DAH) development of service instructions, FAA AD development and oversight activities, and operator planning, accomplishment, and maintenance of service instructions incorporated by reference in ADs. Of the AD ARC deliverables and implementation actions, the following documents were developed or revised to provide guidance to industry:

- **AC 20-XXX, Design Approval Holder Best Practices with Regards to Airworthiness Directives** (Posted for public comment on 6/13/11; to be issued in late 2011)
    - Guidance for drafting service information that will be incorporated by reference into an AD;
    - Recommended processes for DAHs to check for overlapping/conflicting service information and ADs; recommended practices for maintaining airworthiness;
    - Information on ex parte communications; and,
    - Recommendations related to global Alternative Methods of Compliance.

- **FAA Advisory Circular (AC) 39-9, Airworthiness Directives Management Process** (Issued in June 2011)
    - Recommended procedures for operators to develop an AD Management Process including best practices for operator AD compliance planning; and,
    - Recommendations for involvement of Aviation Safety Inspectors in the operators' processes and AD prototyping.

- **Air Transportation Association (ATA) iSpec 2200, Information Standards for Aviation Maintenance** (Released July 2011)
    - Revised guidance for drafting service information.

- **Specification 1000D (S1000D), International Specification for Technical Publications (jointly developed by ATA, Aerospace and Defence Industries Association of Europe, and Aerospace Industries Association)** (To be released in 2012)
    - Revised guidance for drafting service information.

- **ATA Specification 111 (Spec111), Airworthiness Concern Coordination Process (also known as the Lead Airline Process)** (To be released in late 2011)
    - Revised process to better reflect current industry practices and to include metrics to determine effectiveness of the process and support future process improvement as necessary.

Information on obtaining the documents listed above may be found at:
http://www.faa.gov/aircraft/air_cert/continued_operation/ad/ad_arc/.

Recommendations

This SAIB recommends that DAHs and owners/operators of transport category airplanes certificated under 14 CFR part 25 implement the process improvements outlined in the above documents to enhance their respective AD development and implementation processes. Implementation of these improvements will facilitate effective AD implementation and continued compliance, minimize the need for AMOCs and reduce the potential for fleet-wide AD compliance issues that could disrupt air transportation.

For Further Information Contact

Dionne Palermo, Transport Airplane Directorate Flight Standards Liaison Program Manager, Transport Standards Staff, 1601 Lind Avenue SW., Renton, WA 98057-3356; telephone: (425) 227-2250; fax: (425) 227-1100; e-mail: dionne.palermo@faa.gov.