§ 121.99 Communications facilities—domestic and flag operations.

(a) Each certificate holder conducting domestic or flag operations must show that a two-way communication system, or other means of communication approved by the FAA certificate holding district office, is available over the entire route. The communications may be direct links or via an approved communication link that will provide reliable and rapid communications under normal operating conditions between each airplane and the appropriate dispatch office, and between each airplane and the appropriate air traffic control unit.

(b) Except in an emergency, for all flag and domestic kinds of operations, the communications systems between each airplane and the dispatch office must be independent of any system operated by the United States.

(c) Each certificate holder conducting flag operations must provide voice communications for ETOPS where voice communication facilities are available. In determining whether facilities are available, the certificate holder must consider potential routes and altitudes needed for diversion to ETOPS Alternate Airports. Where facilities are not available or are of such poor quality that voice communication is not possible, another communication system must be substituted.

(d) Except as provided in paragraph (e) of this section, after February 15, 2008 for ETOPS beyond 180 minutes, each certificate holder conducting flag operations must have a second communication system in addition to that required by paragraph (c) of this section. That system must be able to provide immediate satellite-based voice communications of landline-telephone fidelity. The system must be able to communicate between the flight crew and air traffic services, and the flight crew and the certificate holder. In determining whether such communications are available, the certificate holder must consider potential routes and altitudes needed for diversion to ETOPS Alternate Airports. Where immediate, satellite-based voice communications are not available, or are of such poor quality that voice communication is not possible, another communication system must be substituted.

(e) Operators of two-engine turbine-powered airplanes with 207 minute ETOPS approval in the North Pacific Area of Operation must comply with the requirements of paragraph (d) of this section as of February 15, 2007.

§ 121.101 Weather reporting facilities.

(a) Each certificate holder conducting domestic or flag operations must show that enough weather reporting services are available along each route to ensure weather reports and forecasts necessary for the operation.

(b) Except as provided in paragraph (d) of this section, no certificate holder conducting domestic or flag operations may use any weather report to control flight unless—
§ 121.106 ETOPS Alternate Airport: Rescue and fire fighting service.

(a) Except as provided in paragraph (b) of this section, the following rescue and fire fighting service (RFFS) must be available at each airport listed as an ETOPS Alternate Airport in a dispatch or flight release.

(1) For ETOPS up to 180 minutes, each designated ETOPS Alternate Airport must have RFFS equivalent to that specified by ICAO as Category 4, or higher.

(2) For ETOPS beyond 180 minutes, each designated ETOPS Alternate Airport must have RFFS equivalent to that specified by ICAO Category 4, or higher. In addition, the aircraft must remain within the ETOPS authorized diversion time from an Adequate Airport that has RFFS equivalent to that specified by ICAO Category 7, or higher.

(b) If the equipment and personnel required in paragraph (a) of this section are not immediately available at an airport, the certificate holder may still list the airport on the dispatch or flight release if the airport’s RFFS can be augmented to meet the requirements of this section from local fire fighting assets. A 30-minute response time for augmentation is adequate if the local assets can be notified while the diverting airplane is en route. The augmenting equipment and personnel must be available on arrival of the diverting airplane.

§ 121.103 En route navigation facilities.

(a) Except as provided in paragraph (b) of this section, each certificate holder conducting domestic or flag operations must show, for each proposed route (including to any regular, provisional, refueling or alternate airports), that suitable navigation aids are available to navigate the airplane along the route within the degree of accuracy required for ATC. Navigation aids required for approval of routes outside of controlled airspace are listed in the certificate holder’s operations specifications except for those aids required for routes to alternate airports.

(b) Navigation aids are not required for any of the following operations—

(1) Day VFR operations that the certificate holder shows can be conducted safely by pilotage because of the characteristics of the terrain;

(2) Night VFR operations on routes that the certificate holder shows have reliably lighted landmarks adequate for safe operation; and

(3) Other operations approved by the certificate holding district office.