

Done in Washington, DC, this 4th day of September 1996.

Terry L. Medley,

Administrator, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service.

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 21

Replacement and Modification Parts: "Standard" Parts

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), DOT.

ACTION: Request for comments.

SUMMARY: The FAA has traditionally interpreted the term "standard parts," as used in regulations concerning the production of replacement and modification parts for sale for installation of type certificated (TC) products, to include a basic structural or mechanical part the specification for which has been published by a standard setting organization or by the U.S. government. This document solicits public comment on including other kinds of parts, for example discrete electrical or electronic component parts.

DATES: Comments must be received on or before November 12, 1996.

ADDRESSES: Comments must be mailed or delivered in duplicate to: Federal Aviation Administration, Aircraft Engineering Division, AIR-100 Rm. 815, 800 Independence Avenue, SW., Washington, DC 20591. Comments must be marked Docket No. AIR-100-9601. Comments may be inspected on weekdays except Federal holidays, between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m. in room 815.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Bruce Kaplan, Aerospace Engineer, Aircraft Engineering Division, AIR-100, FAA, 800 Independence Avenue, SW., Washington, DC 20591, (202) 267-9588.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Section 21.303(a) of Title 14 of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) (§ 21.303(a)), Replacement and Modification Parts, prohibits a person from producing a part for sale for installation on a type certificated product unless that person produces the part pursuant to an FAA Parts Manufacturer Approval (PMA). Section 21.303(b) provides four exceptions to the requirement in § 21.303(a). One of these exceptions is for "Standard parts (such as bolts and nuts) conforming to established industry

or U.S. specifications." (14 CFR § 21.303(b)(4).)

"Standard part" is not otherwise defined in Title 14. Section 21.303(b)(4) has come to be understood by the aviation and manufacturing public as meaning a part, the specification for which has been published by a standard setting organization or by the U.S. government, and the FAA has traditionally regulated parts production with that understanding. Examples of such "traditional" standard part specifications include National Aerospace Standards (NAS), Air Force-Navy Aeronautical Standard (AN), Society of Automotive Engineers (SAE), SAE Aerospace Standard (AS), and Military Standard (MS). The FAA will continue to consider parts conforming to these specifications as standard parts.

Traditionally, for any specification to be acceptable it must include information on the design, materials, manufacture, and uniform identification requirements. The specification must include all the information necessary to produce the part and ensure its conformity to the specification. Furthermore, the specification must be publicly available, so that any party is capable of manufacturing the part. The above examples of accepted specifications fulfill those criteria.

In the past the FAA has applied § 21.303(b)(4) to parts that have specifications where a determination of physical conformity to a design could be made. This application largely excluded classes of parts where the parts are conformed not on the basis of their physical configuration but by meeting the specified performance criteria. These types of parts are best exemplified by discrete electrical and electronic parts.

Much of the componentry used in electronic devices are manufactured under standard industry practices, often to published specifications developed by standards organizations such as the Society of Automotive Engineers (SAE), the American Electronics Association, Semitec, Joint Electron Device Engineering Council, Joint Electron Tube Engineering Council, and the American National Standards Institute (ANSI). Such standards development by these bodies is overseen by the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE), the IEEE Standards Committee, as well as the electrical and electronics industry, at large, who depends upon characteristic design standards for consistency in operation and performance.

The FAA is aware of certain kinds of parts that may fit within the limits of

the § 21.303(b)(4) exception; these might include resistors, capacitors, diodes, transistors, and non-programmable integrated circuits (e.g. amplifiers, bridges, switches, gates, etc.). Conversely, large scale, application-specific, or programmable integrated circuits, hybrids, gate arrays, memories, CPU's, or other programmable logic devices would not be considered standard parts. Such components are not "discretes" since they require programming that controls their timing, functionality, performance, and overall operating parameters.

It is important to remember that 14 CFR Part 21 § 21.303 deals with the production of parts for sale for installation on type certificated products. The installation of an owner- or operator-produced, technical standard order, and standard parts must be shown to comply with part 43 of Title 14 of the CFR (Part 43). Installation eligibility for a PMA or a type or production certificated (PC) part is established at the time of issuing the production approval, nevertheless, a person may install a PMA, TC, or PC part on another TC product if that installation is shown to comply with Part 43. Generally, a standard part may be replaced with an identical standard part without a further demonstration of compliance with the airworthiness regulations. Substitution of a standard part with another would require a demonstration of acceptability in accordance with Part 43.

The FAA invites comments on the ability of producers to conform discrete electrical and electronic parts, and other kinds of parts, to specified performance criteria. It also invites comments on the ability of producers to distinctly identify such parts.

After comments are reviewed, the FAA anticipates taking the following actions:

(1) Compile a list of standard setting bodies and U.S. government entities that establish specifications for standard parts, and

(2) Publish these listings in an Advisory Circular which will be available on the Aircraft Certification Home Page on the World Wide Web.

Issued in Washington, DC, of August 29, 1996.

Elizabeth Yoest,

Deputy Director, Aircraft Certification Service, AIR-2.

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