FEDERAL AVIATION AGENCY
FLIGHT STANDARDS SERVICE
Washington 25, D. C.

December 19, 1961

CIVIL AIR REGULATIONS DRAFT RELEASE NO. 61-27

SUBJECT: Termination of Special Civil Air Regulation No. SR-392B, Facilitation of Experiments With Exterior Lighting Systems

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The Flight Standards Service of the Federal Aviation Agency is considering whether the privileges granted by Special Civil Air Regulation No. SR-392B should be continued in effect beyond its February 25, 1962, termination date. Special regulation SR-392B permits experimentation, with exterior lighting systems which do not comply with the standards prescribed in the Civil Air Regulations, on aircraft with standard airworthiness certificates.

The reasons supporting the view that SR-392B need not be extended beyond February 25, 1962, are as follows:

(1) The widespread private experimentation permitted by SR-392B has necessarily introduced some degree of ambiguity and confusion in night operations, which was justified in the past on the basis that the experiments would contribute to the development of improved safety rules dealing with exterior lighting. Five years of experimentation under this special regulation, however, have failed to produce any substantial body of sound objective evidence that revision of the currently effective lighting rules is necessary. The "experiments" often involved no more than the solicitation of observer comment on a newly devised lighting system, but without the use of controls to insure some measure of validity to the observations.

(2) Federal Aviation Agency's Aviation Research and Development Service is prepared to undertake evaluation of any new exterior lighting system which might be presented, to determine its effectiveness relative to the system prescribed by the Civil Air Regulations. Evaluation by FAA (as opposed to evaluation by private experimenters) has the virtue of impartiality and the further advantage that modern test facilities, trained personnel, and advanced know-how can be applied to the task.

(3) Termination of SR-392B would not prevent private lighting experimentation since such experiments could still be performed under the terms of an experimental airworthiness certificate. This procedure is relatively burdensome, but no more so than similar procedures applicable to all other classes of aircraft experiments.

On the other hand, the contrary view has been expressed that SR-392B has given a needed stimulus to the development of new lighting systems which, it is claimed, outperform the standard prescribed system.

To assist in resolving this question, the Flight Standards Service desires that all persons affected by the forthcoming expiration of SR-392B have the opportunity to submit pertinent arguments and evidence bearing on the need for further exterior lighting experimentation on aircraft with standard airworthiness certificates.

In order to insure consideration, comments must be submitted in duplicate to the Docket Section of the Federal Aviation Agency, Room C-226, 1711 New York Avenue, N. W., Washington 25, D. C. on or before January 22, 1962.

George C. Price

Director
Flight Standards Service