U.S. Department
of Transportation
Federal Aviation
Administration

Office of the Chief Counsel

800 Independence Ave., S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20591

AUG - 8 2014

Taras Hryniw
[redacted]

Dear Mr. Hryniw,

This is in response to your May 19, 2014 letter asking about the difference, under 14 C.F.R. part 117, between a reserve availability period (RAP) and a flight duty period (FDP).

Part 117 contains a set of flight, duty, and rest regulations that apply to all part 121 passenger operations and certain part 91 operations.[1] Those regulations govern, among other things, the RAP and an FDP that a flightcrew member can work.

A RAP occurs when a flightcrew member is placed on short-call reserve. Part 117 defines a reserve availability period as "a duty period during which a certificate holder requires a flightcrew member on short call reserve to be available to receive an assignment for a flight duty period."[2] The RAP ends when a flightcrew member is either released from the RAP by the certificate holder or assigned to an FDP. The length of the RAP is governed by the limits specified in § 117.21(c), and those limits are generally less stringent than the limits governing the length of an FDP.

In exchange for the less-stringent limits on the length of the RAP, a flightcrew member is more limited in the activities that he or she can engage in during the RAP. Specifically, a flightcrew member cannot be required to fly an aircraft during a RAP without transforming the RAP into an FDP. A flightcrew member on a RAP cannot even be asked to be located at an airport during the RAP, as this requirement would transform the flightcrew member's short-call reserve into airport/standby reserve.[3]

An FDP occurs "when a flightcrew member is required to report for duty with the intention of conducting a flight, a series of flights, or positioning or ferrying flights..."[4] In contrast to a RAP, a flightcrew member on an FDP can be assigned to any type of duty, including flying an aircraft, by the certificate holder. However, in exchange for this flexibility, the length of an FDP is subject to the more stringent daily and cumulative FDP limits of §§ 117.13, 117.17, and 117.23.

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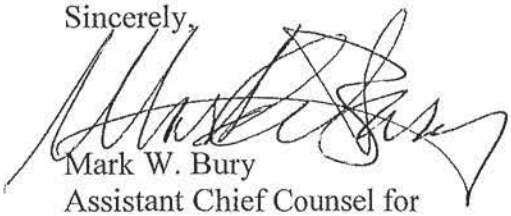
[1] 14 C.F.R. § 117.1.
[2] 14 C.F.R. § 117.3.
[3] *See id.* (definition of Airport/standby reserve).
[4] 14 C.F.R. § 117.3.

Thus, to sum up, the difference between a RAP and an FDP under part 117 is that an FDP provides more flexibility than a RAP, but the length of an FDP is more stringently limited than the length of a RAP.

We appreciate your patience and trust that the above responds to your concerns. If you need further assistance, please contact my staff at (202) 267-3073. This response was prepared by Alex Zektser, Attorney, International Law, Legislation, and Regulations Division of the Office of the Chief Counsel, and coordinated with the Air Transportation Division of Flight Standards Service.

Sincerely,



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