NOTICE

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION

N 8900.409

National Policy

Effective Date:
3/20/17

Cancellation Date:
3/20/18

SUBJ: Approval and Oversight of FAA-Approved Aircraft Dispatcher Certification Courses

1. Purpose of This Notice. This notice provides interim national policy and guidelines for aviation safety inspectors (ASI) who approve and have oversight responsibility of Aircraft Dispatcher Certification courses, approved by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) in accordance with Title 14 of the Code of Federal Regulations (14 CFR) part 65 subpart C. This interim policy is necessary until such time as the national policy is finalized and published in FAA Order 8900.1.

2. Audience. The primary audience for this notice is FAA Flight Standards (AFS) field offices (including Flight Standards District Offices (FSDO), and certificate management offices (CMO)) and ASIs responsible for the approval and oversight of FAA-approved Aircraft Dispatcher Certification courses. The secondary audience includes AFS divisions at headquarters (HQ), and regional AFS divisions and branches (including Regional Automated Modular Planning Software (RAMPS) coordinators).

3. Where You Can Find This Notice. You can find this notice on the MyFAA employee website at https://employees.faa.gov/tools_resources/orders_notices. Inspectors can access this notice through the Flight Standards Information Management System (FSIMS) at http://fsims.avs.faa.gov. Operators can find this notice on the FAA's website at http://fsims.faa.gov. This notice is available to the public at http://www.faa.gov/regulations_policies/orders_notices.

4. Cancellation. This notice cancels Notice N 8900.354, Surveillance of Part 65 Aircraft Dispatcher Certification Courses (PTRS 1667), dated March 21, 2016.

5. Background.

a. Establishment of National Work Program Guidelines (NPG). In 2014, the NPG established a Required Surveillance Work Activity (R-item) for ASIs with oversight responsibility of Aircraft Dispatcher Certification courses. Since that time, the NPG has required ASIs to use Program Tracking and Reporting Subsystem (PTRS) activity code 1667 (SURVL/AIRM/TRNG (61, 63, 65)) when conducting surveillance of an Aircraft Dispatcher Certification course operator as the operator is administering the course to students.

b. The Need to Establish Interim Policy. At the time the 2014 NPG requirement was established, AFS was in the process of developing policy related to the approval and oversight of Aircraft Dispatcher Certification courses. No such policy existed at the time, nor does it currently exist in an FAA order. With the understanding that any policy related to the approval and oversight of FAA-approved Aircraft Dispatcher Certification courses would be new, AFS determined it was in the public's interest to post a draft of the proposed policy in the Federal Register (FR) as a means to provide the public with an opportunity to provide their comments. The FAA published the draft policy in FR Docket Number FAA-2014-0820. The total comment period, including the extension, was 4 months (October 22, 2014–February 22, 2015).

c. Adjudication of Public Comments and Finalization of National Policy. As of the date of this publication, AFS is in the process of adjudicating public comments and drafting the final policy related to the approval and oversight of FAA-approved Aircraft Dispatcher Certification courses. Once finalized, the policy will be published in Order 8900.1 Volume 3, Chapter 63. There will also be an advisory circular (AC), whose number is yet to be determined but is referred to in the FR as "AC 65-DADE." The temporary name is based on the fact that the draft AC is part of a large suite of draft policy documents, which include policy related to Designated Aircraft Dispatcher Examiners (DADE). DADEs act on behalf of the Administrator by administering Aircraft Dispatcher practical tests to successful graduates of an Aircraft Dispatcher Certification course. AFS anticipates finalizing and publishing all policy related to aircraft dispatcher certification before this notice expires.

6. Appropriate Technical Resources for Approval and Oversight of an FAA-Approved Aircraft Dispatcher Certification Course. In the draft policy published in FR Docket Number FAA-2014-0820, AFS set forth ASI resource and qualification requirements for those ASIs who approve and have oversight responsibility of Aircraft Dispatcher Certification courses. As a means to assist field offices in determining the appropriate course of action where approval and oversight of an Aircraft Dispatcher Certification course is concerned, AFS is proceeding with the establishment of these requirements via this notice until such time as they are published in Order 8900.1 Volume 3, Chapter 63. In publishing these requirements, AFS has considered any internal and public comments we received during the comment period.

a. Approving Office and Dispatch Course Program Manager (DCPM).

(1) For the purposes of this notice, a field office with responsibility for approval and oversight of an Aircraft Dispatcher Certification course will be referred to as the approving office.

(2) The individual assigned the responsibilities of managing an Aircraft Dispatcher Certification course will be referred to as the DCPM. Course management includes approval (initial and/or continued) as well as ongoing oversight.

b. An ASI-Aircraft Dispatch (ASI-AD) is the Appropriate Technical Resource to Assign as the DCPM. It is AFS policy that the appropriate technical resource to be assigned as the DCPM of an Aircraft Dispatcher Certification course is an ASI-AD (commonly referred to as a dispatch inspector). An ASI-AD is not simply an ASI who holds an Aircraft Dispatcher Certificate. The title of "Aviation Safety Inspector-Aircraft Dispatch" is a specific U.S. Office of

Personnel Management (OPM) position description (PD). PDs are contained in the Human Resources Policy Manual (HRPM). The PD for an ASI-AD is contained in HRPM Supplement Volume 1, Employment, and is listed as "1825AD." An ASI is not considered to be an ASI-AD unless specifically designated as such in an official OPM PD. An ASI-AD becomes qualified to perform the duties of a DCPM upon completion of all FAA Initial Inspector Training (String Training) and the FAA Academy course, Aircraft Dispatcher Functions for ASIs. The successful completion of the Aircraft Dispatcher Functions for ASIs course provides the necessary training to specifically qualify an ASI-AD to perform these duties. The approving office manager will assign a qualified ASI-AD as the DCPM, provided the ASI's current assignments allow that individual to carry out these duties adequately and effectively. Prior to making this assignment, the office manager must consider the following factors to determine the ASI-AD's ability to maintain adequate and effective oversight:

- The number of Air Carrier Certificate holders the ASI-AD is currently assigned to conduct certificate management/oversight activities;
- Other Aircraft Dispatcher Certification courses for which the ASI-AD has approval oversight responsibility;
- The number of designees the ASI-AD is managing;
- The number of Aircraft Dispatcher practical tests the ASI-AD may have to administer; and
- The amount of travel involved for each of the ASI-AD's certificate management, designee management, course oversight, and testing responsibilities.

c. Temporarily Assign an ASI Who is an Air Carrier Operations Inspector (ASI-AC-OP). Under limited circumstances for an existing Aircraft Dispatcher Certification course, an approving office that does not have an ASI-AD who is available to manage the course may temporarily assign an appropriately qualified ASI-AC-OP to assume the duties of DCPM. This action is acceptable as an interim measure when the assignment of an ASI-AD to the approving office is eminent (through reassignment, new hiring, sharing of resources, etc.), for up to 24 calendar-months, which is the duration of a single approval cycle (refer to part 65, § 65.63(b)). Otherwise, the responsibility for continued approval and oversight should be transferred to another field office that does have an ASI-AD who is available to take over the course approval and the duties of DCPM. During any temporary assignment of an ASI-AC-OP, that individual must be available to conduct onsite surveillance of the course whenever necessary. For this temporary assignment, the appropriate qualifications of an ASI-AC-OP are as follows:

- The ASI-AC-OP has an Aircraft Dispatcher Certificate.
- The ASI-AC-OP has successfully completed the FAA Academy course, Aircraft Dispatcher Functions for ASIs.
- The ASI-AC-OP has at least 1 year of experience in certificate management/oversight responsibilities of a 14 CFR part 121 domestic and/or flag Air Carrier Certificate holder's dispatch center.

d. Transfer Approval of an Existing Course to Another Field Office. When an approving office does not have an available ASI-AD and temporary assignment of an

ASI-AC-OP is either not possible or is approaching 24 calendar-months, the office manager should transfer the course approval and all oversight responsibility for the course to another field office that has an ASI-AD who is able to take over the duties as DCPM. The office managers from the transferring office (the losing office) and the receiving office (gaining office) should work directly to coordinate and complete the transfer.

e. New Course Applicant. When a new course applicant contacts an AFS field office with the intent to apply for initial FAA approval to operate an Aircraft Dispatcher Certification course, prior to accepting the application, the field office must have an ASI-AD available to review the application and ultimately be assigned the duties of DCPM. If a field office does not have an ASI-AD, it may not accept an application for initial approval. However, if the field office determines, or a potential course applicant can show, that a new course is meeting a public need for aircraft dispatcher certification, the field office will either assist the applicant in contacting another field office that has an ASI-AD, or direct the applicant to the appropriate FAA point of contact to which the application can be made. It is acceptable for an approving field office to be located outside the geographic area in which a potential new course is being established, particularly where public need is a factor. It is important to note that U.S.-certificated aircraft dispatchers are only required for part 121 domestic and flag operations, as described in part 121, §§ 121.107, 121.395, 121.533, 121.535, 121.593, 121.595, 121.599, 121.601, and 121.663. There is no other regulatory part or kind of operation that has this requirement. The privileges of a U.S. Aircraft Dispatcher Certificate are exercised when the aircraft dispatcher is fulfilling the requirements of these regulations. These are key factors to consider when determining whether there is a public need for a new Aircraft Dispatcher Certification course. Another factor to consider is whether other certificate holders, such as those conducting part 121 supplemental, part 125, or part 135 operations, desire to employ U.S.-certificated aircraft dispatchers as a method of operating to a higher level of safety than what is required by those regulatory parts.

7. PTRS Activity Codes Specific to Approval, Renewal, and Oversight of Aircraft Dispatcher Certification Courses.

a. Activity Code 1377. Use PTRS activity code 1377 (TECH/ADMN/EVAL TNG COURSE INIT (63, 65)) when conducting an initial evaluation of an Aircraft Dispatcher Certification course application. Enter the name of the proposed course operator in the “Non-Cert:” field in the “Transmittal” portion of the PTRS. ASIs should open the PTRS activity at the beginning of the evaluation, list appropriate information chronologically, and close the activity when the evaluation is complete. This should be the general rule, unless otherwise determined by the ASI’s supervisor or office manager.

b. Activity Code 1378. Use PTRS activity code 1378 (TECH/ADMN/EVAL TNG COURSE REVS (63, 65)) when conducting an evaluation of an Aircraft Dispatcher Certification course revision. Enter the name of the course operator in the “Non-Cert:” field in the “Transmittal” portion of the PTRS. ASIs should open the PTRS activity at the beginning of the evaluation, list appropriate information chronologically, and close the activity when the evaluation is complete. This should be the general rule, unless otherwise determined by the ASI’s supervisor or office manager.

c. Activity Code 1379. Use PTRS activity code 1379 (TECH/ADMIN/EVAL/TNG COURSE RENEWAL (65)) when renewing an Aircraft Dispatcher Certification course approval in accordance with § 65.63(c). Enter the name of the course operator in the "Non-Cert:" field in the "Transmittal" portion of the PTRS. ASIs should open the PTRS activity at the beginning of the evaluation, list appropriate information chronologically, and close the activity when the evaluation is complete. This should be the general rule, unless otherwise determined by the ASI's supervisor or office manager.

d. Activity Code 1667. Use PTRS activity code 1667 (SURVL/AIRM/TRNG (61, 63, 65)) when conducting onsite surveillance of an Aircraft Dispatcher Certification course operator actually conducting the course. In accordance with the NPG, beginning in fiscal year (FY) 2014, this PTRS activity is required at least once annually. Enter the name of the course operator in the "Non-Cert:" field in the "Transmittal" portion of the PTRS. ASIs should open and close the PTRS activity on the date the surveillance is conducted, unless conducting onsite surveillance over the course of 2 or more days. When an ASI has negative findings during surveillance, the ASI should close the initial PTRS activity and use a followup activity to record corrections made by the course operator.

e. Activity Code 1692. Use PTRS activity code 1692 (SURVL/MISC/APRVD TRNG COURSE (63, 65)) when performing any other surveillance/oversight activities, such as the ones listed below. Enter the name of the course operator in the "Non-Cert:" field in the "Transmittal" portion of the PTRS. ASIs should open and close these PTRS activities at their discretion, or as otherwise determined by their supervisor or office manager.

- Training facility inspections.
- General courseware/content/curriculum review.
- Review of student records and reports required by § 65.70.
- The withdrawal or cancellation of approval of a course.

f. General Activity Codes Associated with Aircraft Dispatcher Certification.

- Activity Code 1513, CERT/AIRM/ATP LTR COMPETENCY (65).
- Activity Code 1524, CERT/AIRM/DISPATCHER (65).

8. Action—Conducting Onsite Surveillance Action (1667). ASIs conducting onsite surveillance of a course in progress will accomplish the following:

a. Preparation. Prior to conducting an inspection of an Aircraft Dispatcher Certification course, review the FAA-approved training course outline (TCO) to determine if it meets the requirements of part 65 subpart C and part 65 appendix A.

b. Onsite Activity. When observing an Aircraft Dispatcher Certification course in progress, ASIs should not participate in the course activities and should hold off making comments until the end of the class or during a break. ASI activities should not disrupt or negatively impact the students' environment.

c. Courseware Inspection. Evaluate the overall quality of the courseware, such as presentations, handouts, etc. Focus on the following:

- The courseware is consistent with the FAA-approved TCO and the course operator's courseware manual; and
- The courseware has sufficient detail to ensure students comprehend the subject areas.

d. Training Facilities. Part 65 requires training facilities and instructional environments to meet certain requirements. When conducting surveillance of an Aircraft Dispatcher Certification course in progress, ASIs should also evaluate the training facility to determine if it provides students with adequate workspace, equipment, and materials to complete intricate calculations related to aircraft performance and flight planning. ASIs should be able to determine that the workspace provides each student with enough room to properly use all necessary aeronautical charts and reference materials. An Aircraft Dispatcher Certification course training facility must be available for inspection by the Administrator at any time. In accordance with § 65.65, each training facility room or training space must be:

- Temperature controlled,
- Lighted,
- Ventilated,
- Free from distraction, and
- Conform to all local building, sanitation, and health codes.

e. Adequate Personnel. In accordance with § 65.67, Aircraft Dispatcher Certification course operators must have adequate instructional personnel. At least one instructor must hold an Aircraft Dispatcher Certificate and must be available to coordinate all training course instruction. In addition, ASIs will determine if the course operator complies with the following:

(1) Instructor-to-student ratio. In accordance with the requirements of § 65.67(a)(2), the ratio of students for each instructor may not exceed 25 students per instructor. ASIs must ensure that the course operator does not exceed this ratio.

(2) Section 65.67(b) requires that the instructor who teaches the Practical Dispatch Applications area of part 65 appendix A must hold an Aircraft Dispatcher Certificate.

f. Instructional Methods. ASIs should ensure instructors are conducting effective instruction. The following guidelines help determine if instruction methods are effective:

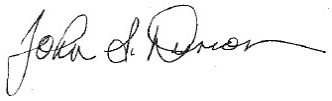
- The instructor is familiar with the course operator's policies and procedures and knows how to complete training forms;
- The instructor is knowledgeable in the specific area of instruction and is able to present the material in a factual, clear, logical, and organized manner;
- The instructor follows the applicable lesson plans, guides, and other training aids; and
- The students in the class appear engaged and able to comprehend the lesson(s).

g. Records. ASIs should review student records for compliance with § 65.70. In particular, ASIs should determine that the course operator complies with the requirement for 80 percent of its students to pass the Aircraft Dispatcher practical test on their first attempt (§ 65.63(c)(1)).

h. Additional PTRS Activities. ASIs may conduct separate Planned Surveillance Work Activities (P-item) of the following, at any time, using PTRS activity code 1692 (SURVL/MISC/APRVD TRNG COURSE (63, 65)):

- Training facility inspections;
- General courseware/content/curriculum review;
- Review of student records and reports; and
- The withdrawal or cancellation of approval of a course.

9. Disposition. We will incorporate the information in this notice into Order 8900.1 before this notice expires. Direct questions or comments concerning this notice to the Air Transportation Division (AFS-200) at 202-267-8166.



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