



Federal Aviation Administration

MMEL Policy Letter 34, Revision 4

Date: August 15, 1997
To: All Region Flight Standards Division Managers
All Aircraft Evaluation Group Managers
From: Manager, Air Transportation Division, AFS-200
Reply to Attn of: Manager, Technical Programs Branch, AFS-260

SUBJECT: MMEL and MEL Preamble

MMEL CODE: 00 (General)

REFERENCE: PL-14, undated, signed by Daniel C. Beaudette.
PL-34, dated June 14, 1989, signed by David R. Harrington.

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this policy letter is to standardize the preamble so that all MMELs and MELs use the same preamble.

DISCUSSION:

Revision 4 reformats policy letter 34 with no change to policy. This policy letter combines original PL-14 and PL-34, Revision 3, in order to have only one policy letter addressing the MMEL and MEL Preamble. Policy Letter 14 will be has been archived.

Policy Letter 14 was issued as a result of an inquiry from Singapore Airlines in requesting to change the preamble to suit their needs. The FAA responded by saying:

"We appreciate the concerns of the management of Singapore Airlines in requesting that they be permitted to change the standard preamble to the MEL for clarification of responsibilities of its engineering personnel. However, we can not agree that the FAA preamble to the Minimum Equipment List may be changed by the air carriers. It is our position that the preamble expresses the MEL philosophy and establishes the conditions for the use of the MEL. The acceptance by an air carrier to use the MEL includes the preamble and responsibility to comply with the philosophy and conditions therein. Therefore, deviations from this standard should not be permitted.

In review of Singapore Airlines' proposal, it is our view that the airline management could resolve the problems they are experiencing by amplifying the instructions and procedures in its manual as appropriate, for the personnel concerned."

PL-34, Revision 3, was issued on June 14, 1989, in order to provide the AEGs with the revised standard preamble and definitions to be used in both airplanes and rotorcraft Master Minimum Equipment Lists (MMELs). The 1989 revision of the preamble is still the standard preamble and specifies its applicability, acknowledges the administrative use of the MMEL, and streamlines previous wording. The definitions policy is now contained in Policy Letter 25.

POLICY:

The attached preamble will be included in all MMELs and MELs.

Attachment

Preamble, Revision 2, 06/14/1989

FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION
MASTER MINIMUM EQUIPMENT LIST

Preamble
(Effective 6/14/89)

The following is applicable for authorized certificate holders operating under Title 14 Code of Federal Regulations (14 CFR) Parts 121, 125, 129, 135: 14 CFR require that all equipment installed on an aircraft in compliance with the Airworthiness Standards and the Operating Rules must be operative. However, the Rules also permit the publication of a Minimum Equipment List (MEL) where compliance with certain equipment requirements is not necessary in the interests of safety under all operating conditions. Experience has shown that with the various levels of redundancy designed into aircraft, operation of every system or installed component may not be necessary when the remaining operative equipment can provide an acceptable level of safety.

A Master Minimum Equipment List (MMEL) is developed by the FAA, with participation by the aviation industry, to improve aircraft utilization and thereby provide more convenient and economic air transportation for the public. The FAA approved MMEL includes those items of equipment related to airworthiness and operating regulations and other items of equipment which the Administrator finds may be inoperative and yet maintain an acceptable level of safety by appropriate conditions and limitations; it does not contain obviously required items such as wings, flaps, and rudders. The MMEL is the basis for development of individual operator MELs which take into consideration the operator's particular aircraft equipment configuration and operational conditions. Operator MELs, for administrative control, may include items not contained in the MMEL; however, relief for administrative control items must be approved by the Administrator. An operator's MEL may differ in format from the MMEL, but cannot be less restrictive than the MMEL. The individual operator's MEL, when approved and authorized, permits operation of the aircraft with inoperative equipment. Equipment not required by the operation being conducted and equipment in excess of 14 CFR requirements are included in the MEL with appropriate conditions and limitations. The MEL must not deviate from the Aircraft Flight Manual Limitations, Emergency Procedures or with Airworthiness Directives. It is important to remember that all equipment related to the airworthiness and the operating regulations of the aircraft not listed on the MMEL must be operative.

Suitable conditions and limitations in the form of placards, maintenance procedures, crew operating procedures and other restrictions as necessary are specified in the MEL to ensure that an acceptable level of safety is maintained.

The MEL is intended to permit operation with inoperative items of equipment for a period of time until repairs can be accomplished. It is important that repairs be accomplished at the earliest opportunity. In order to maintain an acceptable level of safety and reliability the MMEL establishes limitations on the duration of and conditions for operation with inoperative equipment.

The MEL provides for release of the aircraft for flight with inoperative equipment. When an item of equipment is discovered to be inoperative, it is reported by making an entry in the Aircraft Maintenance Record/Logbook as prescribed by 14 CFR. The item is then either repaired or may be deferred per the

MEL or other approved means acceptable to the Administrator prior to further operation. MEL conditions and limitations, do not relieve the operator from determining that the aircraft is in condition for safe operation with items of equipment inoperative. When these requirements are met, an Airworthiness Release, Aircraft Maintenance Record/Logbook entry, or other approved documentation is issued as prescribed by 14 CFR. Such documentation is required prior to operation with any item of equipment inoperative.

Operators are responsible for exercising the necessary operational control to ensure that an acceptable level of safety is maintained. When operating with multiple inoperative items, the interrelationships between those items and the effect on aircraft operation and crew workload will be considered. Operators are to establish a controlled and sound repair program including the parts, personnel, facilities, procedures and schedules to ensure timely repair.

WHEN USING THE MEL, COMPLIANCE WITH THE STATED INTENT OF THE PREAMBLE, DEFINITIONS, AND THE CONDITIONS AND LIMITATIONS SPECIFIED IN THE MEL IS REQUIRED.

Each Flight Operations Evaluation Board (FOEB) Chairman should apply this Policy to affected MMELs through the normal FOEB process.

Manager
Air Transportation Division AFS 200

PL-34 reformatted 02/04/2010 with no change to content