

VOLUME 12 INTERNATIONAL AVIATION

CHAPTER 4 PART 129 OPERATIONS

Section 6 Part 129 Part H Operations Specifications—Rotorcraft Terminal Instrument Procedures, Airport Authorizations and Limitations

Source Basis:

- **Section 129.5, Operations Specifications.**
- **Section 129.7, Application, Issuance, or Denial of Operations Specifications.**
- **Section 129.9, Contents of Operations Specifications.**
- **Section 129.11, Amendment, Suspension and Termination of Operations Specifications.**
- **Section 129.17, Aircraft Communication and Navigation Equipment for Operations Under IFR or Over the Top.**
- **Section 129.22, Communication and Navigation Equipment for Rotorcraft Operations Under VFR Over Routes Navigated by Pilotage.**
- **Administrative.**

6.1 GENERAL.

6.1.1 Purpose. This section provides the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) policy requirements and aviation safety inspector (ASI) guidance associated with standard Part H operations specifications (OpSpec) paragraphs and their templates available for issuance to foreign air carriers and foreign persons operating under Title 14 of the Code of Federal Regulations (14 CFR) part 129.

6.1.2 Scope. This section is applicable to all FAA Flight Standards Service (FS) personnel and International Field Offices (IFO) having responsibilities associated with part 129 foreign air carrier and foreign person rotorcraft activities and international aviation operations.

Note: Advisory circulars (AC) referenced throughout this section provide guidance for compliance with specific regulations. They define acceptable means, but not the only means, of accomplishing or showing compliance with regulations.

6.1.3 Safety Assurance System (SAS) Activity Recording (AR) Codes.

- a) Operations: 1326 and 1327.
- b) Maintenance: 3315 and 3316.
- c) Avionics: 5315 and 5316.

6.1.4 Regulatory References. All regulatory references in this section are found in 14 CFR unless otherwise indicated.

6.2 DEFINITIONS. See Volume 12, Chapter 1, Section 1, Definitions, Abbreviations, and Acronyms, for information associated with this section.

6.3 PART H OPSPECS. The FAA issues Part H OpSpecs to each foreign air carrier who conducts part 129 instrument flight rules (IFR) operations with rotorcraft.

a) Part H OpSpecs are not issued to part 129 foreign air carriers who conduct only fixed-wing airplane operations.

b) Part H OpSpecs are not usually issued to foreign air carriers conducting on-demand rotorcraft operations who are restricted to visual flight rules (VFR)-only operations.

Note: FAA policy associated with part 129 Part H OpSpecs may be immediately accessed by clicking on the appropriate following paragraph number: [H101](#), [H102](#), [H103](#), [H105](#), [H106](#), [H113](#), [H116](#), [H117](#), [H118](#).

OPSPEC H101—TERMINAL INSTRUMENT PROCEDURES—ROTORCRAFT OPERATIONS (REQUIRED FOR ALL FOREIGN AIR CARRIERS CONDUCTING ROTORCRAFT IFR OPERATIONS).

a) General. OpSpec H101 is issued to all foreign air carriers who conduct rotorcraft IFR operations within the United States, authorizing the foreign air carrier to conduct terminal instrument operations. Additionally, H101 contains conversion tables that the foreign air carrier must use to convert any takeoff and landing minimum expressed in the metric linear measurement system to the U.S. standard linear measurement system.

b) No ASI Input Required. There is no ASI input or information needed to complete H101. See Volume 4, Chapter 2 for additional information concerning Terminal Instrument Procedures (TERPS).

OPSPEC H102—BASIC INSTRUMENT APPROACH PROCEDURE AUTHORIZATIONS—ROTORCRAFT OPERATIONS (REQUIRED FOR ALL FOREIGN AIR CARRIERS CONDUCTING ROTORCRAFT IFR OPERATIONS).

a) General. OpSpec H102 is required for all foreign air carriers conducting rotorcraft IFR operations within the United States. It specifies the types of instrument approaches the foreign air carrier performing rotorcraft operations is authorized to conduct and prohibits the use of other types of instrument approaches that are not listed.

1) The Principal Operations Inspector (POI) must ensure the foreign air carrier has established the following before authorizing a type of instrument approach procedure (IAP):

- a. Aircraft system eligibility, and
- b. A State of the Operator-approved/accepted manual, which includes both flightcrew training and procedures, as applicable, for the types of approaches to be authorized.

2) All the approaches authorized by H102 must be published in accordance with part 97.

b) Types of IAPs. Three types of IAPs may be authorized in H102:

1) Nonprecision Approach (NPA) Procedures – Without Vertical Guidance. Column 1 in the OpSpec’s table provides for the authorization of nonprecision IAPs without vertical guidance. An NPA without vertical guidance must be conducted in accordance with approved procedures that assure descent will not go below minimum descent altitude (MDA) unless the required visual references for continuing the approach are present (refer to part 91, § 91.175). To authorize an NPA without vertical guidance, click on the dropdown list in column 1 of the table and select the approach(es) for insertion into column 1.

2) Precision-Like (Nonprecision) Approach Procedures – With Vertical Guidance (APV). Column 2 in the OpSpec’s table provides for the authorization of precision-like APVs. These precision-like approaches provide vertical guidance but are not as accurate as true precision approaches. These APVs must be conducted using approved equipment, methods, and procedures that allow descent to a published decision altitude (DA).

a. Barometric Vertical Navigation (Baro-VNAV) Approach Operations. Baro-VNAV approach operations (referred to as Area Navigation (RNAV) with vertical guidance) may be authorized for foreign air carriers in accordance with the guidance contained in Volume 4, Chapter 2, Section 5 and AC 120-29, Criteria for Approval of Category I and Category II Weather Minima for Approach.

b. Foreign Air Carrier Aircraft. Once a foreign air carrier has established the aircraft system eligibility and the flightcrew training and checking requirements indicated in subparagraphs a)1)a and a)1)b above, the POI may give authorization to use RNAV equipment to fly to the lateral navigation (LNAV)/VNAV DA as shown on the published IAP.

c. Authorization. To authorize APVs, select “RNAV (GPS)” or “LDA w/Glideslope” from the dropdown list for insertion into column 2.

3) Precision Approach Procedures. Column 3 in the OpSpec’s table provides for the authorization of precision IAPs (instrument landing system (ILS) and Global Positioning System (GPS) Landing System (GLS) approaches) that provide vertical guidance. To authorize a precision IAP, select the appropriate precision IAP(s) from the dropdown list for insertion into column 3.

OPSPEC H103—STRAIGHT-IN CATEGORY I NONPRECISION APPROACH PROCEDURES—ROTORCRAFT OPERATIONS (REQUIRED FOR ALL FOREIGN AIR CARRIERS CONDUCTING ROTORCRAFT IFR OPERATIONS).

a) General. OpSpec H103 is issued to all foreign air carriers conducting rotorcraft IFR operations within the United States. H103 specifies the lowest landing minimums that may be used for Category (CAT) I NPA procedures. There is no ASI input or information needed to complete H103.

b) OpSpec H102 must be issued and authorize NPA-type approaches prior to or in conjunction with the issuance of H103.

**OPSPEC H104—HELICOPTER EN ROUTE DESCENT AREAS (HEDA).
DECOMMISSIONED.**

**OPSPEC H105—ALTERNATE AIRPORT IFR WEATHER MINIMUMS—
ROTORCRAFT OPERATIONS (REQUIRED FOR ALL FOREIGN AIR CARRIERS
CONDUCTING ROTORCRAFT IFR OPERATIONS).**

a) General. OpSpec H105 is issued to all foreign air carriers who conduct rotorcraft IFR operations within the United States. In those cases where it is determined that an alternate airport is required, H105 provides a table from which the foreign air carrier derives United States alternate airport IFR weather minimums. There is no ASI input or information needed to complete H105.

b) Alternate Airport Minimums. Table 1, Alternate Airport IFR Weather Minimums, in H105 is for airports with at least one operational navigational facility providing a straight-in NPA procedure, a CAT I precision IAP, or when applicable, a circling maneuver from an IAP. The required ceiling and visibility is determined per § 91.169(c)(1)(ii):

1) Ceiling. Add 200 feet (ft) to the minimum decent altitude (height) (MDA(H)) or, when applicable, the authorized decision altitude (height) (DA(H)). Additives are applied only to the height value (rounded up to the nearest 100-ft value if not multiple of 100) to determine the required ceiling.

2) Visibility. At least 1 statute mile (sm) visibility, but never less than the published minimum visibility for the approach to be flown.

c) Use of GPS-Based IAP Minimums for Alternate Airport Planning. The ability to plan for an alternate airport utilizing GPS-based IAP minimums is dependent on the aircraft GPS equipage in use by the foreign air carrier. The air carrier must have OpSpecs H101, H102, H103, H105, and H106 issued.

1) In general, GPS systems utilizing an augmentation system (Wide Area Augmentation System (WAAS)) are permitted greater operational flexibility due to their inherent higher continuity and reliability.

a. Rotorcraft equipped with GPS/WAAS navigation equipment may plan to utilize GPS-based IAPs at both the destination and alternate.

b. Rotorcraft not equipped with WAAS navigation equipment may plan to utilize GPS-based IAPs at either the destination or alternate, but not both.

2) Terminal operations: Using GPS as a substitute or alternate means of navigation to navigate onto final approach course requires less stringent avionics standards. Refer to AC 90-100, U.S. Terminal and En Route Area Navigation (RNAV) Operations, and AC 90-108, Use of Suitable Area Navigation (RNAV) Systems on Conventional Routes and Procedures.

Verify that any rotorcraft used to fly the IAP is equipped with a suitable RNAV system per OpSpecs H101, H102, H103, and H105, as appropriate.

3) Approach operations: Using GPS to conduct approach operations requires eligibility for Required Navigation Performance Approach (RNP APCH). Refer to AC 90-105, Approval Guidance for RNP Operations and Barometric Vertical Navigation in the U.S. National Airspace System and in Oceanic and Remote Continental Airspace. Verify that any rotorcraft used to fly the IAP is eligible for RNP APCH via OpSpec H102.

OPSPEC H106—IFR STANDARD TAKEOFF MINIMUMS—ROTORCRAFT OPERATIONS (REQUIRED FOR FOREIGN AIR CARRIERS CONDUCTING ROTORCRAFT IFR OPERATIONS). OpSpec H106 is issued to all foreign air carriers who conduct rotorcraft IFR operations within the United States. H106 authorizes the use of standard takeoff minimums for takeoff under IFR, and any variations, limitations, and restrictions associated with the standard minimums. The regulatory foundation for H106 is § 91.175. There is no ASI input or information needed to complete H106. OpSpec H116 must also be issued when the foreign air carrier is authorized to use takeoff minimums lower than 1/2 mile (mi) or Runway Visual Range (RVR) 2400.

OPSPEC H108—CATEGORY II INSTRUMENT APPROACH AND LANDING OPERATIONS—HELICOPTERS. DECOMMISSIONED.

OPSPEC H113—SPECIAL TERMINAL AREA IFR ROTORCRAFT OPERATIONS IN CLASS G AIRSPACE—NONSCHEDULED PASSENGER AND ALL-CARGO OPERATIONS. (OPTIONAL).

a) General. OpSpec H113 is issued to authorize a foreign air carrier to conduct nonscheduled passenger and all-cargo special terminal area IFR rotorcraft operations in Class G airspace within the United States. There is no ASI input or information needed to complete H113.

b) POI Responsibilities Before Authorizing OpSpec H113. Before issuing H113, the POI must instruct the foreign air carrier to provide evidence that it has the required methods or procedures and arrangements in place for obtaining and disseminating necessary operational information and that their civil aviation authority (CAA) has accepted/approved the procedures, and authorized/approved the foreign air carrier for these types of operations. This operational information must include the following:

- 1) Documentation that the airport is served by an authorized IAP (and departure procedure (DP) when applicable);
- 2) Applicable charts for crewmember use;
- 3) Operational weather data from an approved source for control of flight movements and crewmember use;
- 4) Status of airport services and facilities at the time of the operation;

- 5) Suitable means for pilots to obtain traffic advisories (TA); and
- 6) Sources of TAs and airport advisories.

c) Foreign Air Carrier Authorization. Foreign air carriers may be authorized to use any two-way radio source of air TA information listed in the Aeronautical Information Manual (AIM) (for operations in U.S. airspace) or equivalent Aeronautical Information Publications (AIP).

1) These sources include common traffic advisory frequencies (CTAF), aeronautical advisory stations (e.g., UNICOM), MULTICOM, and Flight Service Stations (FSS).

2) In those cases where two sources are listed at the same airport, ASIs must instruct the foreign air carrier to provide documentation that the carrier's manuals have procedures that require pilots to continuously monitor and use the TA frequency when operating within 10 nautical miles (NM) of the airport. The procedures should require communication concerning airport services and facilities to be completed while more than 10 NM from the airport.

3) At some airports, no public use frequencies may be available. In those cases, the foreign air carrier must arrange for radio communication of essential information, including surveillance of local or transient aircraft operations by ground personnel. Ground personnel who operate a company radio for airport status and TAs must be able to view airspace around the airport.

**OPSPEC H116—IFR LOWER-THAN-STANDARD TAKEOFF MINIMUMS—
ROTORCRAFT OPERATIONS (OPTIONAL).**

a) General. OpSpec H116 is issued to a foreign air carrier to authorize lower-than-standard takeoff minimums for rotorcraft operations within the United States. H116 contains specific provisions and limitations regarding pilots, aircraft, and airports when lower-than-standard takeoff minimums are used. This section contains information that Operations ASIs will use when issuing lower-than-standard takeoff minimums for foreign air carriers operating rotorcraft. There is no ASI input or information needed to complete H116.

b) POI Responsibilities. POIs must instruct foreign air carriers requesting lower-than-standard takeoff minimums to provide documentation that associated procedures and training have been approved by the State of the Operator, for all areas referenced in H116.

c) Lower-Than-Standard Takeoff Minimums. Lower-than-standard takeoff minimums that a foreign air carrier uses under these OpSpecs must not be less than those lower-than-standard takeoff minimums that are authorized by the State of the Operator.

**OPSPEC H117—STRAIGHT-IN CATEGORY I PRECISION INSTRUMENT
APPROACH PROCEDURES—ROTORCRAFT OPERATIONS (REQUIRED FOR ALL
FOREIGN AIR CARRIERS CONDUCTING ROTORCRAFT IFR OPERATIONS).**

a) General. OpSpec H117 authorizes the lowest straight-in CAT I precision IAPs and IFR landing minimums for rotorcraft operations within the United States. These precision approaches

are also referred to as CAT I, ILS, or GPS/GLS approach procedures. There is no ASI input or information needed to complete H117.

OPSPEC H118—CATEGORY I IFR LANDING MINIMUMS—CIRCLE-TO-LAND APPROACH MANEUVER—ROTORCRAFT OPERATIONS (OPTIONAL).

a) General. OpSpec H118 is issued to foreign air carriers conducting rotorcraft circle-to-land approach maneuver operations using CAT I IFR landing minimums within the United States. H118 specifies the lowest minimums that can be used for CAT I rotorcraft circle-to-land approach maneuvers. There is no ASI input or information needed to complete H118.

b) Circle-to-Land Maneuvers. For the purpose of H118 authorization, any foreign air carrier issued H118 is authorized to conduct circle-to-land maneuvers.

1) In any weather condition, a foreign air carrier that permits its pilots to accept a “circle-to-land” or a “circle-to-runway [runway number]” clearance from air traffic control (ATC) conducts circle-to-land maneuvers.

2) The term “circle-to-land maneuver” includes the maneuver that is referenced in various regulations, publications, and documents as “circle-to-land maneuver,” “circling,” “circling maneuver,” “circle,” “circling approach,” and “circling approach maneuver.”

3) With regard to pilots, “conducting” a circle-to-land maneuver means to act as the pilot flying (PF) when a circle-to-land maneuver is being conducted.

c) Aircraft Operating Under IFR During All Circle-to-Land Maneuvers. Aircraft operating under IFR during all circle-to-land maneuvers are required to remain clear of clouds. If the flightcrew loses visual reference to the airport while conducting a circle-to-land maneuver, they must follow the Missed Approach Procedure (MAP) specified for the applicable instrument approach, unless ATC specifies an alternate MAP.

d) Two Separate Provisions. Foreign air carriers may conduct circle-to-land maneuvers under two separate provisions contained within H118 subparagraph b:

1) Foreign air carriers whose pilots have been trained and checked for the circle-to-land maneuver in accordance with the foreign air carrier’s CAA-approved training program may conduct a circle-to-land maneuver:

a. At the published circle-to-land landing minimums for the instrument approach to be used; or

b. At the minimums specified in the table contained within H118, whichever is higher.

Note: Any pilot who possesses a pilot certificate restricting circle-to-land approaches to visual meteorological conditions (VMC) is not eligible to conduct circle-to-land maneuvers, except as provided in subparagraph d)2) below.

2) Foreign air carriers conducting circle-to-land maneuvers without training and checking must use an MDA of 1,000 ft height above airport (HAA) or the MDA of the published circle-to-land landing minimums for the instrument approach to be used, whichever is higher. Foreign air carriers that conduct a circle-to-land maneuver under this provision remain under an IFR clearance and must comply with those procedures otherwise required for circle-to-land maneuvers. The foreign air carrier may conduct a circle-to-land maneuver when:

- a. The reported ceiling is at least 1,000 ft and the visibility is at least 3 mi; or
- b. The reported weather is at least equal to the published circle-to-land landing minimums for the instrument approach to be used, whichever is higher.

3) Documentation Submissions Before Issuing H118. Before issuing H118 authorizing circling approaches, the POI must instruct the foreign air carrier to submit documentation showing that their flightcrew member training program, approved by their CAA, provides the appropriate training and checking on circle-to-land approaches and that their CAA has approved circle-to-land approach maneuvers for the air carrier.

OPSPEC H121—SPECIAL TERMINAL AREA IFR ROTORCRAFT OPERATIONS IN CLASS G AIRSPACE—SCHEDULED PASSENGER OPERATIONS. DECOMMISSIONED.

OPSPEC H122—SPECIAL NON-14 CFR PART 97 INSTRUMENT APPROACH OR DEPARTURE PROCEDURES FOR ROTORCRAFT OPERATIONS. DECOMMISSIONED.