
SUBJECT: GENERAL PROCESS FOR APPROVAL OR ACCEPTANCE

DATE: 24/09/2015

1. OBJECTIVE

1.1.1 This circular contains general information of the process for approval or acceptance.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1.1 The general process for approval or acceptance of certain operations, programmes, documents, procedures, methods, or systems is a method used by AAC Inspectors to ensure these items meet regulatory and safety standards. It is a modular, generic process that can be applied to many types of approval or acceptance tasks. The process consists of five distinct but related steps and can lead to the approval or non-approval, or acceptance or non-acceptance, of an operator's proposal. It is important to understand that the process described is a tool to be used with good judgement in conducting day-to-day duties and responsibilities.

NOTE: The inspector must clearly understand that this process may lead to a decision made not to approve or accept an operator's proposal. This process is therefore a tool to assist inspections in making decisions.

2.1.2 The general process applies to a number of tasks described in the Manual. Each chapter or section that describes an approval or acceptance task completes the general process by outlining specific task requirements for each step. For example, the specific items or actions required of AAC and the operator for each step of the process regarding proving tests are outlined in Part 3, Chapter 3. The five steps of the operational approval or acceptance process are described below.

3. APPROVAL PROCESS

3.1 STEP ONE

3.1.1 Step one of the process begins when an operator, a person, an aviation interest, or AAC inquires about, or states a need for, a change in some aspect of an aviation activity. This step begins with one of the following actions:

3.1.2 A person or operator conveys to AAC a need related to the operation. This "need" may be a requirement for AAC approval or acceptance. For example, an operator may need, want, or be required to have an MEL change. The operator begins the process by inquiring about the correct procedures to follow in order to receive approval from AAC for the change. During initial inquiries, it is important that AAC and the operator gain knowledge about the subject matter. If, for example, an operator requests an operational approval, the inspector must:

- (1) Become thoroughly familiar with existing AAC policy and approval requirements;
- (2) Become familiar with the appropriate technical material;
- (3) Accurately evaluate the character and scope of the proposal;
- (4) Determine the need for a demonstration;
- (5) Determine whether any co-ordination is required;
- (6) Make sure the operator has a clear understanding of the minimum requirements for an acceptable submission;
- (7) Determine the date the operator intends to implement the proposal.

3.1.3 Step one may also begin when AAC conveys to the operator or person a need related to the operation that must be approved or accepted. For example, a principal inspector may require that an operator publish information on low speed buffet in the company aircraft operating manual. The operator must research and know that subject area prior to submitting a proposal to AAC for evaluation. The principal inspector should act as an adviser to the operator during the preparation of the proposal for submission. Inspector advice to the operator may include the following:

- (1) The need for a deviation, authorisation, or waiver.
- (2) The need for demonstrations.
- (3) Clarification of CV-CAR, Procedure, or Manual information.
- (4) Sources of specific technical information.
- (5) Acceptable standards for submission.

3.1.4 A common element in an operator - or AAC- initiated action is the effort made by the operator.

NOTE: The operator must clearly understand that, while the inspector may provide advice and guidelines, the operator is solely responsible for the development of the final product to be submitted to AAC.

3.1.5 In step one, the inspector must make sure the operator clearly understands the form, content, and documents required for AAC acceptance of the submission. The operator must be informed of the advantages of submitting the required documents as early as possible. The operator must also be made aware of its responsibility to inform AAC, in a timely manner, of any significant changes in the proposal. Step one is illustrated as follows:

- (1) The operator makes an inquiry or a request to AAC, or AAC requires the operator to take an action;
- (2) AAC and the operator gain knowledge about the subject area;
- (3) The operator understands the form, content, and documents required for an acceptable submission;

3.2 STEP TWO

3.2.1 Step two begins when the operator formally submits a proposal for AAC evaluation. The request may be submitted in a number of ways. The AAC Inspector initial action is to review the operator's submission to make sure the proposal is clearly defined and the documentation specified in step one has been compiled. The submission must contain sufficient detail as to permit a thorough evaluation of the operator's capability and competence to meet the applicable regulations, national policy, and safe operating practices. Although it does not require a detailed operational and technical evaluation or analysis at this stage (see step three below), the submission must be examined by the AAC Inspector for completeness. If the operator's submission is incomplete or of poor quality, it must be returned immediately, accompanied by an explanation of its deficiencies, before any further review or evaluation. Generally, an unacceptable submission should be returned accompanied by a written explanation of the reasons for its return. Often, a meeting with the operator's key personnel is necessary to resolve issues and agree on a mutually acceptable solution. If an agreement cannot be reached, the AAC Inspector must end the meeting, inform the operator that the submission is unacceptable, and return the submission. When the parties reach an agreement on measures to correct omissions or deficiencies, and the principal OI's (operations, airworthiness, as applicable) deem the submission acceptable, the operator is informed of the submission's acceptance and phase three begins. Step two of the process is illustrated as follows :

- (1) The operator submits a proposal;
- (2) AAC initially examines the documents for completeness in accordance with the requirements established in step one;
- (3) AAC returns or accepts the proposal.

NOTE: It is important that the inspector keep the operator informed of the status of the proposal. If the inspector takes no further action, or if the submission is unacceptable and not returned in a timely manner, the applicant may presume that AAC has accepted the submission and is pursuing the process. Timeliness of action varies according to the situation as well as Inspector judgement, and is discussed in the applicable sections of the Manual.

3.3 STEP THREE

3.3.1 Step three involves AAC detailed analysis, review, and evaluation of the operator's proposal. Step three may take place inside a field office, at the site of operations, or at both. During step three, the AAC evaluation focuses on the form, content, and technical quality of the submitted proposal to ensure the information :

- (1) Is not contrary to any applicable CV-CAR or AAC Directive;
- (2) Is not contrary to the guidelines outlined in the Manual or other safety-related documents;
- (3) Provides for safe operating practices.

3.3.2 Criteria for evaluating the formal submission are found in the applicable chapters of the Manual. The inspector must make sure the documents adequately establish the operator's capability and competence to safely conduct operations in conformity with the submitted proposal.

- 3.3.3 During step three, the AAC inspector must address any deficiencies in the submitted material in a timely manner before beginning the next step. Consultation with the operator may be sufficient to resolve certain discrepancies or questions, or to obtain additional information. It may be necessary to return certain sections of the submission to the operator for specific changes. However, when an inspector deems the material deficient or unacceptable, the submission must be returned to the operator, accompanied by an explanation, and this step immediately ended. If the results of the evaluation are acceptable and a demonstration is needed, the inspector may have to grant some form of conditional, initial, or provisional approval to the proposal before pursuing the process.
- 3.3.4 In step three, it is important that AAC Inspector begins planning step four. While evaluating the operator's submission, Inspectors should begin formulating plans to observe and evaluate the operator's performance. These plans have to be finalised before the demonstrations. Step three is illustrated as follows:
- (1) AAC examines the formal submission on the basis of compliance with the CV -CAR, the guidelines provided in the Manual, other safety-related documents, and safe operating practices;
 - (2) When the results of the AAC evaluation are unsatisfactory, return the submission to the operator for correction, and/or end the step;
 - (3) Begin planning step four, where applicable;
 - (4) When the results of the AAC evaluation are satisfactory, proceed with step four, where applicable, and if appropriate, grant conditional approval or acceptance;
 - (5) Proceed with step five, where applicable.

3.4 STEP FOUR

- 3.4.1 During step four, AAC finalises plans to observe and evaluate the demonstration of the operator's ability to perform operations in conformity with the procedures, guidelines, and parameters outlined in the formal proposal. Hence, step four is an operational evaluation of the operator's ability to function in conformity with the proposal evaluated in step three. Demonstrations are generally required by regulation for such items as:
- (1) Training programmes;
 - (2) Proving tests;
 - (3) Emergency evacuations;
 - (4) All-weather terminal operations;
 - (5) Air navigation operations;
- 3.4.2 Criteria and procedures for assessing demonstrations of an operator's performance ability are outlined in the applicable chapters of the Manual. In planning the conduct and observation of the demonstration, the AAC Inspector must foresee the need for participants, evaluation criteria, and sequence of events. During a demonstration, it is normal for minor discrepancies to occur. Such discrepancies can often be resolved during the demonstration by obtaining commitments from company officials responsible. The Inspector responsible for overseeing a

demonstration must evaluate each discrepancy in terms of its overall impact on the operator's ability and competence to conduct the proposed operation. The AAC Inspector must end the demonstration when important deficiencies or unacceptable levels of competence are observed. The AAC Inspector must either identify the step of the general process to which the applicant must return, or decide to end the process altogether. For example, if an emergency evacuation demonstration is unsatisfactory because of equipment failure (a slide fails to inflate), it may be appropriate to make the operator return to the beginning of step four and do another demonstration. However, if the demonstration is unacceptable because crewmembers failed to perform their assigned duties, it may be appropriate to end the process and ask the operator to submit a new proposal. When AAC deems the operator's demonstration acceptable, the process continues. Step four of the process is illustrated as follows:

- (1) AAC plans the conduct and observation of the demonstration;
- (2) The operator demonstrates its ability;
- (3) The demonstration is either satisfactory or unsatisfactory.

NOTE: An operator will not, under any circumstance, be authorised or otherwise be approved to conduct any particular operation until all airworthiness and operations requirements are satisfied and the operator is clearly capable of conducting a safe operation in accordance with AAC regulations and safe operating practices.

3.5 STEP FIVE

3.5.1 In step five, AAC approves or accepts the operator's proposal.

3.5.2 Approval is granted by letter, a stamp of approval, the issuance of operations specifications, or some other official means. Every section of the Manual that discusses a requirement for approval provides specific guidelines on approval procedures and documentation. The following are examples of AAC-granted approvals:

- (1) All-weather terminal operations;
- (2) Training programmes;
- (3) MEL;
- (4) Cockpit checklist;
- (5) Company Aircraft Operating Manual (limitations, performance, and operating procedures);
- (6) Air navigation operations.

3.5.3 Some proposals, submissions, or requests do not require specific AAC approval but must be submitted to AAC nonetheless. These items are presented for acceptance. Acceptance of an operator's proposal can be communicated in a number of ways, such as in writing, verbally, or tacitly. Tacit acceptance indicates no AAC objection to the proposal. Methods and procedures for accepting operator proposals or submissions, where applicable, are discussed in the relevant chapters of the Manual. Step five is illustrated as follows:

- (1) AAC approves or accepts the submission.

NOTE: Occasionally, AAC approval or acceptance of an operator's proposal may be conditional. For example, a training program may be initially approved provided the simulator to be used receives AAC approval.

4. SUMMARY OF PROCESS

- 4.1.1 The general, operational approval or acceptance process, comprising the five steps described above, is referenced throughout the Manual with the specific task requirements for each applicable job function.
- 4.1.2 The inspector must clearly understand the modular concepts of the process, the interdependence of the steps, and the nature of the process as a tool to be used in the Inspector's day-to-day duties and responsibilities.

The image shows the AAC logo, which consists of the letters 'AAC' in a stylized, bold font. Below the logo, the text reads 'AGÊNCIA DE AVIAÇÃO CIVIL', 'Civil Aviation Authority', and 'Praia / Cabo Verde'. A blue ink signature is written over the logo and text. Below the signature, the name 'João dos Reis Monteiro' and the title 'President of the Board' are printed.

João dos Reis Monteiro
President of the Board