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DEPARTMENT OF CIVIL AVIATION
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To whom it may concern

Oranjestad, Monday, May 16, 2005

Ref.: MEL submission requirements and guidelines

This is a summary of the guidelines and requirements for MEL submissions of Private Foreign Operators holding Aruban registration(s):

Highlights:

- 1- MEL (minimum Equipment List) for private operators is not a requirement. However, the DCA grants authorization to use an MEL if it is found that compliance with all aircraft equipment requirements is not necessary in the interest of safety for a particular operation. Through the use of appropriate conditions or limitations, the MEL provides for improved scheduled reliability and aircraft utilization with an equivalent level of safety. This process is possible because of the installation of additional and redundant instruments, equipment and/or systems in present transport aircraft. Without an approved MEL, inoperative equipment would ground the airplane until repair or replacement of the nonfunctioning equipment. An MEL is approved for a specific make, serial number and model of aircraft, and the use of it is authorized by special approval.
- 2- An MMEL (Master Minimum Equipment List) is a source document setting up the guidelines and standard to follow when an operator makes its own MEL. It is a generic document (not tailored to a specific aircraft) that shows what could "eventually" be deferred for dispatch if the operator, pilots and mechanics comply with the associated procedures (that must be developed by the operator himself and approved by the Authority). Therefore, an MMEL can NOT be approved as an operational document and can NOT be used as such. It will be "accepted" (as one of the source documents) in most cases by the Authority of registration or operation without any further formal modifications for the sole purpose of making an operator's MEL. Usually authorities that are publishing an MMEL are States of manufacture of the aircraft involved. These MMELs are produced by a board (panel) that meet regularly and is composed of the State of manufacture Authority, major airlines and eventual other important Aviation Industry technical experts.

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- 3- Unlike the MMEL that addresses a vast range of aircraft type variants (and some times more than one specific type), the MEL must be specific to the aircraft used. I.e. it must reflect accurately the quantity of components in each system installed and the exact configuration of the particular aircraft. Also, items not installed should be clearly marked as such to avoid any confusion to the crew and mechanics. Quantity of items installed marked as “-“ (variable quantity) should be avoided by all means unless impossible otherwise.
- 4- Wherever an MMEL specifies an “O” (operation) or “M” (Maintenance) symbol in the remark column, the corresponding MEL must describe accurately (with references) the associated operation or maintenance procedure(s). These procedures must be developed by the operator based on existing approved documentation (AFM, FCOM/AOM, manufacturer “accepted” procedure manual, maintenance manuals etc.).
- 5- Generally, the MEL must be designed having in mind that it is an operational document that often must be used under some time restriction situations (in the cockpit or on the field when a problem has been discovered and the aircraft is expected to depart soon). So the document must be “user-friendly” and incorporate all information required to carry-out the operation and maintenance procedures and their limitations. It must however follow the sequence and (ATA) numbering (“System and Sequence Number” column), the exact text used (“Remarks and Exceptions” column), the category items and the quantities required for dispatch of the MMEL.
- 6- JAR-MMEL/MEL subpart C should be used as the regulatory guidelines when making the MEL. Alternatively, upon special authorization, the equivalent FAA guidelines could be used.

Details:

Details explaining how to create and operator MEL and what needs to be included, can be found in JAR-MMEL/MEL subpart C or in the “Definitions” and “Preamble” sections of the MMEL and its corresponding FOEB “policy letters”.

The MMEL(s) and policy letters are usually available free of charge from the manufacturer or the State of manufacture Authority.

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MEL [initial] submission to the DCA-Aruba:

- 1- Only MEL(s) will be accepted for approval requests. As stated above, MMEL(s) cannot be approved for operational use.
- 2- Original MEL(s) sent for approval must be accompanied by the following documents:
 - a. Letter of request for approval from the operator responsible for the operation, including the name of the Company, the type of operation, the name of the authorized representative, the registration number(s) of the aircraft to be considered and serial number(s).
 - b. Copies of any document or publication that the MEL refers to, such as: AFM, Manufacturer Procedure Manual, FCOM/AOM, relevant portion(s) of the maintenance manual(s) etc.,
 - c. Copy of the basic (up-to-date) equipment list or manufacturer “packing list” (revised) that describe the last known and approved list of components installed in the aircraft considered (including modifications post-factory). (The list must include at least all the systems and components addressed by the relevant MMEL).

Original copies of the MEL will be returned to the operator either approved (stamped on the list of effective pages), or with a list of discrepancies to correct.

If the original copy was returned to the operator for correction, the entire [original] document must be sent back to the DCA for approval.

Once the MEL is approved and returned to the operator, a copy of the newly approved document will be sent to the DCA for its own library.

MEL revision submissions:

As MMEL(s) are regularly revised by the State of manufacture or because of modifications made to the aircraft by its (their) owner/operator, the operator’s MEL must be revised accordingly.

These revisions must be submitted for approval in a timely manner.

Only the revised pages and the list of effective pages must be sent to the DCA for approval.

If a revision is refused and needs correction, it will be returned to the operator for further modifications.

The approved [original] pages will be sent back together with the effective list of pages (stamped for approval) to the operator.

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The operator will consider the DCA's copy (MEL) as part of the controlled operator's library; therefore copies of the revision will also be sent back to the DCA. The DCA will incorporate these revisions in its own [library] MEL.

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