



U.S. Department
of Transportation
**Federal Aviation
Administration**

InFO

Information for Operators

InFO 16006
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Flight Standards Service
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http://www.faa.gov/other_visit/aviation_industry/airline_operators/airline_safety/info

An InFO contains valuable information for operators that should help them meet certain administrative, regulatory, or operational requirements with relatively low urgency or impact on safety.

Subject: Non-Revenue Flight Procedures

Purpose: This InFO provides information and best practices for non-revenue flights.

Background: A non-revenue flight is defined as a flight conducted under Part 91 for crewmember training, maintenance tests, ferrying, re-positioning, and the carriage of company officials. The Commercial Aviation Safety Team (CAST) studied a series of accidents and incidents involving non-revenue flights. CAST found that loss of the energy state awareness, loss of attitude awareness, and inadequately prepared flightcrew members were some of the causal factors of the incidents and accidents. With the conclusion of the study, CAST recommended the FAA provide guidance and best practices to operators for conducting non-revenue flights.

Discussion: Accidents and incidents as highlighted by the Flight Safety Foundation's "Functional Check Flight Compendium" show that non-revenue flights have a higher risk of being involved in an accident or incident than revenue flights. The higher risk can be attributed to non-revenue flights lacking the same structure and defined procedures as revenue flights. Further, flightcrews who are not trained or experienced in non-revenue flying are more likely to be involved in an accident or incident. Two causal factors that have been associated with the increased risk are:

- An unfamiliar environment with no defined standard operating procedures (SOPs); and
- Flightcrew personnel applying a lesser degree of discipline than exhibited on revenue flights.

There are several ways in which the risks associated with non-revenue flights can be mitigated, they include:

- Non-revenue flights should be conducted as close to possible as revenue flights with defined SOPs. If an operator elects to treat non-revenue flights differently than revenue flights with respect to operational control, the operator should state specifically how operational control will be handled, and what supporting information and services will be provided to the flightcrew of a non-revenue flight; and
- A Flight Operations Risk Assessment specific to the mission should be conducted prior to any non-revenue flight. All personnel involved in the preparation and operation of flights covered by this risk assessment should work to its detailed assumptions and requirements. All points of significant detail should be cross checked by a qualified person as defined in the Risk Assessment.

- For each type of non-revenue flight:
 - The operations manual should contain a supplementary brief which covers the operation;
 - If the flight requires operation of intentionally degraded aircraft systems, then a task-specific program of training should be required for the flightcrew;
 - Supplementary or amended checklists should be provided if the normal and/or non-normal checklists cannot be used as a result of deactivated systems; these checklists should be used in the training provided for the crew prior to the flight;
 - Appropriate additional time should be planned for pre-flight briefing for all those persons who will occupy flight deck seats; and
 - The role of any persons who will have access to the flight deck during the flight should be defined in writing and form part of the overall procedures for the conduct of the particular type of flight.

Additional References: The current editions of the following documents provide additional information:

- <http://flightsafety.org/current-safety-initiatives/functional-check-flights>
- AC 60-22, Aeronautical Decision Making.
- AC 120-51, Crew Resource Management Training.
- AC 120-71, Standard Operating Procedures for Flight Deck Crewmembers.
- http://flightsafety.org/files/FCF_Compndium.pdf.
- VS 8000.367A, Aviation Safety (AVS) Safety Management System Requirements.

Recommended Action: Directors of Operations, Directors of Training, Training Center Managers, Check Pilots, Training Pilots, and flightcrews should be familiar with the content of this InFO. They should work together to ensure that the content of this InFO is incorporated into operational policy and provided to pilots during ground training, and reinforced during flight training and checks.

Contact: Questions or comments regarding this InFO should be directed to the Air Carrier Operations Branch, AFS-220 at (202) 267-8166.