



GHANA
CIVIL AVIATION AUTHORITY

ADVISORY CIRCULAR AC 00-004

OUTLINE OF GCAA GENERIC CERTIFICATION PROCESS

SECTION 1 GENERAL

1.1 PURPOSE

This Advisory Circular (AC) provides guidance to organizations and individuals regarding the certification process generally applied by the Ghana Civil Aviation Authority (GCAA) in the determination for issuance of an authorization, approval or acceptance.

The GCAA publishes separately advisory circulars for more complex certifications or subject matter.

1.2 STATUS OF THIS ADVISORY CIRCULAR

This is an original issuance of this AC.

1.3 BACKGROUND

- A. International standards for safety oversight by civil aviation authorities require an evaluation of documents and, in some cases, demonstrations of capability by the organization and individuals before required authorizations and approvals are granted.
- B. The generic process in this advisory circular will be the basis for any granted of these approvals.

1.4 APPLICABILITY

The guidance in this AC is applicable to all organizations or individuals seeking GCAA authorizations, approvals or acceptances.

1.4.1 DEFINITIONS & ACRONYMS

The following acronyms are used in this advisory circular—

- 1) **AC** – Advisory Circular
- 2) **GCAA** – Ghana Civil Aviation Authority
- 3) **FSSD** – Flight Safety Standards Department

- Advisory Circulars are intended to provide advice and guidance to illustrate a means, but not necessarily the only means, of complying with the regulations, or to explain certain regulatory requirements by providing informative, interpretative and explanatory material.
- Where a regulation contains the words “prescribed by the Authority,” the AC may be considered to “prescribe” a viable method of compliance, but status of that “prescription” is always “guidance” (never regulation).

1.5 RELATED REGULATIONS

This advisory circular is directly applicable to all authorizations, approvals or acceptances required by the Ghana civil aviation regulations

1.6 RELATED PUBLICATIONS

For further information on this topic, organizations are advised to review the following publications and regulatory requirements—

1) Ghana Civil Aviation Authority

- ◆ AC 05-001; AMO Certification
- ◆ AC 09-001; ATO Certification
- ◆ AC 12-001, AOC Certification

Copies may be obtained from the GCAA.

2) International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO)

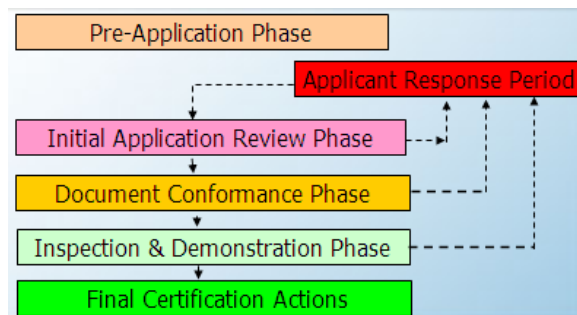
- ◆ Annex 6, Part I: Appendix 5 and Attachment F and G.

Copies may be obtained from Document Sales Unit, ICAO, 999 University Street, Montreal, Quebec, Canada H3C 5H7.

SECTION 2 GENERIC CERTIFICATION PROCESS

2.1 GENERIC PROCESS

- A. The general process of approval or acceptance of certain operations, programmes, documents, procedures, methods, or systems is an orderly method used by the GCAA to ensure that such items meet regulatory standards and provide for safe operating practices.
- B. It is a modular, generic process that can be applied to many types of approval or acceptance tasks.
- C. The process consists of five distinct yet related phases and can result in—
- 1) Approving; or
 - 2) Not approving, accepting or not accepting an applicant's proposal.



2.2 UNDERSTANDING THE PROCESS

This AC provides aid in understanding and applying this process.

- It is essential to understand that this process may result in a decision to not approve or not accept an applicant's proposal.
- The process described is used to assist in making either positive or negative determinations.

SECTION 3 PHASE ONE: PRE-APPLICATION

The first phase starts when an organization or individual inquires about or states a need for a change in some aspect of an aviation activity. Phase one is initiated by the following two possible actions:

3.1 APPLICANT INITIATION

- A. A person or applicant conveys to the GCAA a need that is related to its operation. This “need” may be a requirement for GCAA approval or acceptance.
- Copies may be obtained from the GCAA.
- For example, an applicant may need, want, or be required to have a minimum equipment list (MEL) change.
 - The applicant initiates the process by inquiring about the correct procedures to receive approval from the GCAA for the change.
- B. During initial inquiries, it is important for the applicant and GCAA to become familiar with the subject matter. If, for example, an applicant requests an operational approval, the GCAA will take the following actions—
- Become thoroughly familiar with existing GCAA policy and approval requirements
 - Become familiar with the appropriate technical material
 - Accurately assess the character and scope of the proposal
 - Determine if a demonstration is required
 - Determine the need for any coordination requirements
 - Ensure that the applicant has a clear understanding of the minimum requirements that constitute an acceptable submission
 - Determine the date the applicant intends to implement the proposal

3.2 GCAA INITIATION

- A. Phase one may also begin when the GCAA conveys to the applicant or person a requirement related to its operation which must be approved or accepted.
- For example, the GCAA may require an applicant to publish, in the approved company aircraft operating manual, information on low speed buffet.
- B. The applicant must research and understand that subject area before submitting a proposal to the GCAA for evaluation.
- C. The assigned GCAA inspector will act in an advisory capacity to the applicant during the preparation of the submission. Such advice may include the following—
- The necessity for a deviation, authorisation, waiver, or exemption
 - The necessity for required demonstrations
 - Clarification of GCAR requirements or advisory information
 - Sources of specific technical information
 - Acceptable standards for submission

3.3 APPLICANT RESPONSIBILITY

The common element, regardless of whether an action is initiated by an applicant or the GCAA, is the effort expended by the applicant.

- It is essential (particularly in Phase One) for the applicant to have a clear understanding that, the GCAA may provide advice and guidance to the company.
 - But the development of the final product submitted to the GCAA is solely the responsibility of the applicant.

3.4 GCAA/APPLICANT COMMUNICATION

- A. In phase one, the GCAA will assist the applicant to understand the form, content, and documents required for the submission to be acceptable to the GCAA.
- B. The applicant should be aware of the need and benefits of submitting required documents as early as possible and of its responsibility to advise the GCAA, in a timely manner, of any significant changes in the proposal.

3.5 PHASE ONE SUMMARY

Phase one of the process is illustrated as follows—

- 1) Applicant makes inquiry or request to GCAA; or
- 2) GCAA requires applicant to take an action;
- 3) GCAA and applicant develop understanding of subject area;
- 4) Applicant understands form, content, and documents required for acceptable submission.

SECTION 4 PHASE TWO: INITIAL APPLICATION REVIEW

4.1 APPLICANT'S PROPOSAL

- A. Phase two begins when the applicant formally submits a proposal for GCAA evaluation. The request may be submitted in a variety of ways.
- B. The GCAA's first action, in phase two, is to review the applicant's submission to ensure that the proposal is clearly defined, and the documentation specified in phase one has been provided.

The required information must be complete and detailed enough to permit a thorough evaluation of the applicant's capability and competence to fully satisfy the applicable regulations, national policy, and safe operating practices.

4.2 PROPOSAL REVIEWED BY GCAA FOR COMPLETENESS

- A. Phase two does not include a detailed operational and technical evaluation or analysis of the submitted information (see phase three).
 - However, in phase two the submission must be examined in sufficient detail to assess the completeness of the required information.
- B. If the applicant's submission is not complete or the quality is obviously unacceptable, it must be returned immediately with an explanation of the deficiencies, before any further review and evaluation is conducted.
 - Normally, unacceptable submissions should be returned with a written explanation of the reasons for its return.

4.3 RESOLVING ISSUES

- A. In complex cases, a meeting with the applicant and its key personnel may be necessary to resolve issues and agree on a mutually acceptable solution.
- B. If mutual agreements cannot be reached, the GCAA will terminate the meeting, inform the applicant that the submission is unacceptable, and return the submission.
- C. If all parties are able to reach agreement on measures to correct omissions or deficiencies, and the GCAA assigned inspectors determine that the submission is acceptable, the applicant will be so informed, and phase three begins.

4.4 PHASE TWO SUMMARY

- A. Phase two of the process is illustrated as follows—
 - 1) Applicant submits proposal;
 - 2) GCAA makes initial examination of the documents for completeness with respect to requirements established in phase one;

- 3) GCAA returns submitted proposal; or
 - 4) GCAA accepts submitted proposal.
- B. The GCAA will advise the applicant of the status of its proposal. If the inspector takes no other action, or if the submission is deficient and not returned in a timely manner, the applicant may assume that the GCAA has tacitly accepted the submission and is continuing with the process.

SECTION 5 PHASE THREE: DOCUMENT CONFORMANCE

5.1 DETAILED ANALYSIS

- A. Phase three is the GCAA's detailed analysis, review, and evaluation of the applicant's proposal. These actions may take place entirely within the GCAA offices, at the site of operations, or at both facilities.
- B. In phase three the GCAA evaluation is focused on the form, content, and technical quality of the submitted proposal to determine that the information in the proposal meets the following criteria—
- Is not contrary to any applicable GCAR requirement
 - Is not contrary to the direction provided in other safety-related documents
 - Provides for safe operating practices

5.2 ADDRESSING DEFICIENCIES

- A. During phase three the GCAA will, in a timely manner, address any deficiencies in the submitted material before proceeding to subsequent phases.
- B. There may be discussion with the applicant regarding certain discrepancies or questions or to obtain additional information.
- C. The GCAA may determine it necessary to return certain sections of the submission to the applicant for specific changes.
- D. However, when an inspector determines that, for specific reasons, the material is grossly deficient or unacceptable, the inspector must return the entire submission to the applicant with an appropriate explanation and immediately terminate this phase.
- E. If the results of the evaluation are acceptable and a demonstration requirement exists, the GCAA may grant some form of conditional, initial, or provisional approval to the proposal before continuing with the process.



If the initial submission does not contain all required items prescribed by the GCAA, the entire package will be returned to the applicant.

5.3 PHASE THREE SUMMARY

Phase three is illustrated as follows—

- GCAA evaluates the formal submission for compliance with GCAR requirements, compliance with the direction provided in the GCAA aviation safety publications, other safety-related documents and safe operating practices:
- When results of GCAA evaluation are unsatisfactory, the submission will be returned to the applicant for correction and/or terminate the phase:

- When results of GCAA evaluation are satisfactory, proceed with phase four (if demonstration required) and if appropriate, grant conditional approval or acceptance.

- The GCAA may determine that, due to the limited nature or simplicity of this particular certification, phase four will not be required.
- GCAA validation will then be conducted through inspections during commercial operations.

SECTION 6 PHASE FOUR: INSPECTION & DEMONSTRATION

6.1 APPLICANT'S DEMONSTRATION

- In phase four the GCAA will finalize plans to observe and evaluate the applicant's demonstration of its ability to perform in accordance with the procedures, guidelines, and parameters described in the formal proposal.
- Phase four is an operational evaluation of the applicant's ability to function in accordance with the proposal evaluated in phase three.
- Usually, these demonstrations are required by regulation, and some examples include the following—
 - Conduct of training
 - Demonstrations of knowledge
 - Conduct of qualification scenarios
 - Demonstrations of processes
 - Demonstration flights
 - Validation flights

6.2 EVALUATION OF DEMONSTRATIONS

- The GCAA will plan for the conduct and observation of the demonstration to include such factors as participants, evaluation criteria, and sequence of events.
- During these demonstrations it is normal for minor discrepancies to occur.
 - Discrepancies can often be resolved during the demonstration by obtaining commitments from responsible company officials.
 - The inspector responsible for overseeing a demonstration must evaluate each discrepancy in terms of its overall impact on the applicant's ability and competence to conduct the proposed operation.
- The inspector must stop the demonstration in phase four when gross deficiencies or unacceptable levels of performance are observed.
- The inspector must identify the phase of the general process for approval or acceptance to which the applicant must return, or decide to terminate the process entirely when it is clear that continuation would not result in approval or acceptance.
 - For example, if an simulator scenario demonstration is unsatisfactory due to equipment failure, it may be appropriate to require the applicant to reenter the process at phase four and conduct another demonstration
 - If the demonstration is unacceptable because crew members were unable to perform their assigned duties, it may be appropriate to advise the applicant that the process is terminated pending review and evaluation of the applicant's emergency training programme, and that the applicant may need to reenter the process at phase two (that is, submit a new proposal).
- If the GCAA evaluation of the applicant's demonstrated ability is acceptable, the process continues.

6.3 PHASE FOUR SUMMARY

- A. Phase four of the process is illustrated as follows—
- 1) GCAA plans for the conduct and observation of the demonstration;
 - 2) Applicant demonstrates ability;
 - 3) Demonstration unsatisfactory; or
 - 4) Demonstration satisfactory.
- B. An applicant will not be authorised to conduct any particular operation until all airworthiness and operations requirements are met and the applicant is clearly capable of conducting a safe operation in compliance with GCAR regulations and safe operating practices.

SECTION 7 PHASE FIVE: FINAL CERTIFICATION ACTIONS

7.1 APPROVAL OR ACCEPTANCE

In phase five the GCAA approves or accepts the applicant's proposal. If the proposal is not approved or accepted, the applicant will be notified in phase three or four.

7.2 INDICATING APPROVAL

- A. Approval is granted by letter, by a stamp of approval, by the issuance of operations specifications, or by some other official means of conveying approval.
- B. The following are examples of approvals granted by the GCAA—:
- All-weather terminal operations
 - Training programmes
 - MEL
 - Cockpit checklist
 - Company Aircraft Operating Manual (limitations, performance, and operating procedures)
 - Air navigation operations

7.3 INDICATING ACCEPTANCE

- A. Other proposals, submissions, or requests not requiring specific GCAA approval but required to be submitted to the GCAA are items that are presented for acceptance.
- B. Acceptance of an applicant's proposal may be accomplished by various means, including a letter, verbal acceptance, or by taking no action, which indicates there is no GCAA objection to the proposal.

7.4 PHASE FIVE SUMMARY

- A. Phase five is illustrated as follows—
- GCAA approves submission: or
 - GCAA accepts submission
- B. Sometimes GCAA approval or acceptance of an applicant's proposal may be conditional in nature.
- For example, a training programme may be initially approved pending GCAA evaluation of the flight simulator to be used in that programme.

End of Advisory Circular

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