

## VOLUME 2 AIR OPERATOR AND AIR AGENCY CERTIFICATION AND APPLICATION PROCESS

### CHAPTER 3 THE CERTIFICATION PROCESS—TITLE 14 CFR PART 121

#### Section 2 Certification Phases

**2-316. GENERAL.** The Certification Process Document (CPD) organizes the certification process into five phases and three gates. A phase separates the certification process into related activities supporting a specific function. A gate is a set of precise requirements, which must be met prior to proceeding to the next phase.

NOTE: See Figure 2-10 for both the five phases of certification and the gate process.

#### **2-317. PHASE 1—APPLICANT AND CPT PREPARATION.**

**A. General.** This phase provides the applicant with guidance for initial contact with the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and provides for planning and coordination between the Certification Standardization Evaluation Team (CSET) and the Flight Standards District Office (FSDO) in configuring the Certification Project Team (CPT). It includes completion of the Preapplication Statement of Intent (PASI) and involvement of the Regional Flight Standards Division (RFSD) in the certification process. During this phase, the applicant and FSDO will receive an initial orientation briefing, including an overview of the system safety based certification process, and training. The FSDO certification inspectors will be trained in the automated certification process. CSET will provide automation support to the certifying FSDO. This phase includes a determination of continuance by all parties and a review of all applicant submissions by the CPT and ends when all Gate I requirements have been met. It should be noted that the applicant must make application for Department of Transportation (DOT) economic authority through Office of the Secretary of Transportation (OST), in this phase.

**B. Management Qualifications.** During this phase, management qualifications must be reviewed by the certification team to determine that there is a resume for each required management position and that these resumes contain the basic information necessary to determine regulatory compliance. The depth of review should be only to determine that there are no obvious omissions or significant discrepancies. An example of a significant discrepancy might be that the regulation requires an individual to hold an Airline Transport Pilot (ATP) Certificate, but the resume shows that the individual holds only a Commercial Pilot Certificate. (See Title 14 of the Code of Federal Regulations (14 CFR) part 119, section 119.71(f) for deviation authority.) A detailed review of the management qualifications and effectiveness must be accomplished during the document compliance and the demonstration and inspection phases.

**2-318. PHASE 2—FORMAL APPLICATION.** This phase provides for the submission of the formal letter of application with attachments. The applicant will meet with the CPT and, together, they will review the formal application package. During this phase, all documents submitted by the applicant will be reviewed for completeness. The CPT will evaluate the

application and determine the acceptability of the package. During the formal application meeting the applicant's management personnel will be required to demonstrate their knowledge of the manual system. This phase ends when all Gate II requirements have been met.

**2-319. PHASE 3—SYSTEM SAFETY ASSESSMENT.** This phase provides guidance in using the air carrier system safety assessment process for evaluating the applicant's manuals and documenting completion/compliance within the pmt. SAI data collection tools are used to determine adequate system design. This phase includes the evaluation of training, facilities and equipment, and required applicant demonstrations (table top exercise). Phase 3 does not require the operation of an aircraft. Element Performance Inspection (EPI) data collection tools, will be used as a guide to ensure the applicant follows written procedures, adheres to controls and uses process measures for each element observed. This phase ends when all Gate III requirements have been met.

**2-320. PHASE 4—PROVING TESTS.** This phase provides guidance for conducting the proving tests including the use of applicable EPI data collection tools. The EPIs are used to ensure the applicant follows written procedures, adheres to controls, and uses process measures for each element observed during the proving tests. This phase requires the operation of an aircraft to aid in the assessment of the applicant's system design and regulatory compliance.

**2-321. PHASE 5—ADMINISTRATIVE FUNCTIONS.** This phase provides for completion of all administrative functions, e.g., issuance of the air carrier certificate and OpSpecs. This phase also establishes interfaces with the Internal Evaluation Program (IEP) and the Surveillance and Evaluation Program (SEP) for development of the Initial Surveillance Plan (ISP).

**RESERVED.** Paragraphs 2-322 through 2-340.

Figure 2–10, Initial Certification of Part 121 Air Carriers Flow Chart

