

Chief Pilot Guide

An aid for Chief Pilots, intending Chief Pilots, Aviation Managers and Line Pilots





Chief Pilot Guide

The Chief Pilot Guide is an aid for Chief Pilots, intending Chief Pilots, Aviation Managers and Line Pilots to understand the role of the Chief Pilot. The Guide outlines the position, the duties, and the CASA approval process for the Chief Pilot.

This guide was developed with assistance from several CASA Flying Operations Inspectors and practicing Chief Pilots.

Updates for the Chief Pilot Guide are available on the CASA web site: www.casa.gov.au or from CASA Aviation Safety Promotion, telephone 131 757.

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The Chief Pilot Position

The position of Chief Pilot is nominated as one of the key personnel positions for holding an Air Operator Certificate (AOC). Without an approved Chief Pilot, an organisation cannot exercise the privileges of an AOC. The role of Chief Pilot requires a focus on regulatory compliance and is a critical link between the AOC holder and CASA. To be effective in the role, Chief Pilots must have the knowledge, experience and strength of character to balance the sometimes conflicting demands of safety and commercial considerations.

Although management skills are not written into the minimum requirements for a Chief Pilot, depending on the size of the organisation, some formal training may be required. Management skills can be learned and to be fully effective Chief Pilots will need those skills as they commence their role. From this perspective, it is useful to be an understudy to a Chief Pilot before taking up the position. It is important to remember that the Chief Pilots should be selected for their ability to perform the task. The duties of the Chief Pilot are not optional according to their particular personal interests.

From a safety point of view, decisions made without very urgent deadlines are likely to have better long term outcomes than those made under pressure. Skills in planning and

scheduling will help avoid “crisis management” or what are known as unprogrammed decisions. The exposure to risk of incidents and accidents is elevated when snap decisions are made.

Responsibilities under law

The Chief Pilot’s responsibilities are set out in Part 82 of the Civil Aviation Orders or Section 119 of what will become the new Civil Aviation Safety Regulations (CASRs). There are minor differences between each document, so if you need the definitive information, please refer to the current document. The responsibilities are:

(a) ensuring that the operator’s air operations are conducted in compliance with the Act, the Regulations and the Civil Aviation Orders;

The Chief Pilot must establish and document the operational standards for the organisation and be in a position to monitor and if necessary correct operational standards. Route checks, checking load sheets and physical loading of the aircraft, checking flight and duty time records against actual events and compiling a recurrent organisational internal audit process are all processes which help ensure that the operator’s air operations are conducted in compliance with the Act, Regulations, and Civil Aviation Orders. The operational standards should be documented in the Operations Manual.

Good Management: Establish and document the operating standards. A well-thought-out recurrent audit process will help to ensure that every possible effort in meeting the requirements has been made.

Safety Point: Long term safety standards within the organisation are set with this process.



(b) arranging crew rosters

Rostering must be in accordance with the set of flight and duty time limitations which apply to the organisation. Many variations to CAO 48 have been granted and rostering should take the variations applicable to the

company into account. The need for variations should be reduced with the introduction of CASR 119.12. It is good management practice to anticipate the situation should someone, including the chief pilot, be unable to work for any reason. Pilot availability should be considered when compiling a crew roster. The considerations for availability for any particular flight include such factors as route check currency, approach recency and aircraft endorsements. The roster is a plan and the Chief Pilot should monitor how the roster runs so that flight and duty times are not exceeded through rostering problems.

Good Management: In case the rostered crew is unavailable, make a standby arrangement to avoid unprogrammed decisions.

Safety Point: Pilots should be able to plan to come to work fit to fly, that is, adequately rested, medically fit and ready to work.

(c) maintaining up-to-date records of all licences, ratings, medical certificates and endorsements held by each flight crew member employed by the operator

Clear records will give the chief pilot a direct indication of the operational status of the pilots along with a means of avoiding the situation where you are paying pilots who can't work through lack of rating, medical, emergency procedures checks, proficiency checks, route checks or recent experience. A variety of methods can be used. A popular method is to record all the relevant information on a whiteboard. Some organisations use their computer system. If a computer system is used, it should have an alert system to advise when a pilot's training requirements will fall due.

Good Management: Schedule renewals, medicals and recurrent training well in advance of any expiry date so the integrity of the check is not compromised by urgency.

Safety Point: Recent experience contributes to safety by reducing pilot workload and ensuring essential information is not forgotten.

(d) *maintaining an efficient system for recording flight crew duty and flight times for each crew member employed by the operator*

Flight and duty time records show how long a pilot has worked. Like any other operators of machinery, a pilot's performance decreases significantly with the onset of fatigue. Flight and duty time limitations have been set to ensure that pilots have sufficient time to

obtain sufficient rest. Those who are nearing the limits should not be scheduled for flying. It is worth noting that, although many operators require that pilots keep their own flight and duty time records, under the Regulations it is the operator's responsibility, not that of an individual pilot to do so.

Good Management: At the rostering stage, set the tours of duty within the company flight time limitations. Flight time limitations are the limit up to which a pilot may be rostered.



The image shows a complex grid of data, likely a flight crew roster or duty time record. It contains multiple rows and columns of text, including names, flight numbers, and time-related information. The text is small and difficult to read, but the overall structure suggests a detailed tracking system for pilot activities.

Safety Point: Some pilots will become fatigued earlier than others. Flight time and duty limitations are to ensure that pilots do not have to work when they are fatigued.

(e) maintaining up-to-date records of the qualifications of each pilot employed by the operator

Keeping records of pilots qualifications will allow the chief pilot to quickly assess their short term company training requirements. Additionally it will provide them with information about the operational status of each pilot. This requirement is set so that in all operations, pilots are appropriately qualified to carry out the task.

Good management: Check the records frequently and schedule the training requirements well in advance. Train pilots to meet future needs.

Safety Point: “No surprises” means no unprogrammed decisions, which reduces the exposure to risk.

(f) ensuring compliance with loading procedures specified for each aircraft type used by the operator and proper compilation of loading documents, including passenger and cargo manifests





Completion of the loading documentation should establish to the pilot's satisfaction that the aircraft is loaded within the centre of gravity and weight limitations for the aircraft. Manifests and load sheets provide a record of the people and cargo on the aircraft and assist in complying with performance requirements. The Chief Pilot should ensure that the loading systems are practical, accurate and appropriate.

Good Management: Load sheets and manifests should be simple to complete, while at the same time being sufficiently comprehensive thus providing the pilot with the maximum amount of useful information.

Safety Point: Completing the load sheet for the aircraft loading will demonstrate that the aircraft is within centre of gravity limits for all stages of flight. Manifests should provide definitive information in the event of an accident.

(g) effectively managing the organisation's training and checking functions

The Chief Pilot is responsible for setting and maintaining the operational standard within the company. The minimum standard is set by law for various categories of operation but there is nothing to prevent the Chief Pilot from requiring a higher standard as they deem appropriate. Standard Operating

Procedures (SOPs) should be established by the Chief Pilot for each aircraft type. These procedures are designed to ensure that the applicable requirements are complied with and that aircraft are operated as intended by the manufacturer. As a consequence, the risk of expensive and/or dangerous incidents and accidents. In smaller organisations, with a high proportion of inexperienced pilots, this may be their first exposure to the discipline of commercial operations.



Organisations which have an approved Training and Checking organisation may apply for written permission from CASA to enable the training and checking functions to be delegated to other pilots within the organisation. However, the Chief Pilot is remains responsible for operational standards. For certain categories of operations, training and checking may be provided externally but the Chief Pilot is still responsible for the standards within the organisation.



For those organisations without an approved Training and Checking function, the required recurrent training (instrument rating renewals, aeroplane flight review, etc.) can be delegated but again the Chief Pilot is still responsible for the operational standards within the organisation.

It is worth remembering that other tasks of the Chief Pilot may be delegated but the Chief Pilot is still responsible for them. That is, although the Chief Pilot has delegated a task, the Chief Pilot must be satisfied that the task has been conducted correctly. This information should be documented in the company Training and Checking Manual.

Good Management: In small organisations it is possible for the Chief Pilot to effectively do all the Training and Checking. In larger organisations it is essential to delegate some or all of the functions. Checking and training can only be delegated following written approval from the Authority.

Safety Point: Chief Pilots, should know that their pilots are competent to operate in accordance with standard procedures set by the organisation.

(h) conducting proficiency tests in the execution of emergency procedures and issuing certificates of proficiency as required by section 20.11 of the Civil Aviation Orders

Emergency Procedures Training ensures that all flight and cabin crew are proficient in the use of applicable emergency equipment. The Order calls for testing each year for all the applicable emergency equipment. Additionally, each pilot must be able to demonstrate their knowledge and execution of emergency procedures.

Good Management: A variety of training focussing on a different topic each year will maintain the staff's level of interest and make it more likely to be remembered.

Safety Point: Emergency procedures training helps maximise the chances of survival and minimise injury in the event of an accident.

(i) training flight crew in the acceptance and handling of dangerous goods as required by the Regulations or the Orders

Irrespective of whether or not your organisation transports Dangerous Goods, all crews carrying cargo and/or luggage must undertake Dangerous Goods training. Dangerous Goods recognition and appropriate handling minimises the chances of incidents resulting from their carriage. All pilots must be familiar with the particular company requirements as well as the use of the ICAO Technical Instructions or equivalent publication. Crews must be aware of types of baggage which may contain dangerous goods along with methods to address the issue with passengers.

Good Management: Schedule training well in advance

Safety Point: Even if you have a policy of not transporting dangerous goods you must know how to recognise them and your passengers and crew will undoubtedly have in their baggage permissible quantities of dangerous goods from time to time. If your company does



carry dangerous goods, it is essential that you know what action to take to prevent them becoming a hazard to the aircraft or the occupants.

(j) ensuring that the document library required under the conditions of the operator's AOC is properly maintained and kept up-to-date

The purpose of the document library is to ensure that any operational information is up to date. This is the reference library for the organisation. Apart from a set of pilot's operational documents, the library also contains company documentation and operating manuals. Aircraft manuals should be for the particular aircraft in the fleet rather than a generic aircraft manual which may differ in considerable detail from the organisation's aircraft.



Good Management: Purchase the documents with an amendment service, rotate the task of amending the documents among the staff and don't accept poor workmanship.

Safety Point: Information which is out of date can be a risk to safety. The library must contain all current information.

(k) monitoring the standard of operation authorised by the operator's AOC

There are two particular types of function here. The first is to "product check" to ensure that the operating standards of the organisation are appropriate. The second function is to be in

a position to detect and remedy any “gross errors” that occur in the operation. The rules are documented in the CARs, or CASRs and the Chief Pilot must determine standards which adequately meet the requirements of the rules.

Good Management: High standards, while they take some time to attain, mean you will spend less time undergoing surveillance activities. Additionally, there are substantial safety benefits associated with high standards.

Safety point: A solid safety culture will ingrain compliance with the company operating standard. Compliance with the rules is the minimum acceptable standard.

(l) allocating aircraft for use in particular operations conducted under the operator’s AOC.

The right aircraft for the job is the requirement here. On any operation, the aircraft chosen for the task must be of appropriate capacity. That is, it must be capable of carrying the load with sufficient fuel for the flight and appropriate reserves depending on the weather and have performance capabilities compatible with the operation in question. Certain categories of operation will require certain types of equipment fit.

In the allocation task, the Chief Pilot should consider any special equipment required, or any maintenance which will fall due during the task. For example, if a long charter is

scheduled, during which maintenance will fall due, a servicing arrangement needs to be put in place, or an alternative aircraft used.

Good Management: Excess capacity in fine weather can save much replanning and reorganising when the weather turns bad. This leaves less room for errors.

Safety Point: The correct aircraft for the mission contributes to the best possible outcome.

Appointment of Chief Pilot

Chief Pilots are responsible for holding and carrying out the duties of one, and in many cases two, of the four “key personnel” positions listed in the Act – namely, the “the head of the flying operations part of the organisation” and “the head of the training and checking part (if any) of the organisation”.

Chief Pilot Approval Process

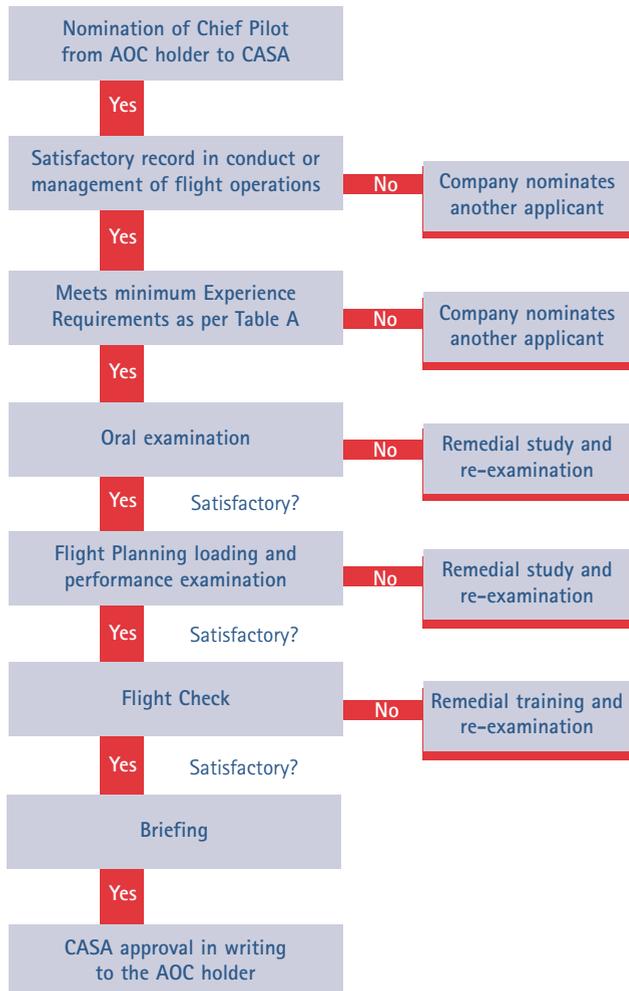
To become a Chief Pilot of an organisation, you must be nominated in writing to CASA and be approved by the Authority. The approval process will consider the relevant aeronautical experience, knowledge of the duties and

responsibilities of the Chief Pilot, flight planning, loading and performance, briefing and probably a flight check of the candidate. The applicant should also expect to be required to demonstrate to a CASA representative that they have a clear understanding of the maintenance systems in their organisation. Particular reference should be made to the procedure for recording aircraft defects and the process to ensure they are rectified in a timely manner.

CASA will not proceed with Chief Pilot approval applications without nomination from an AOC holder.



Common Assessment Process



Satisfactory record

The Flying Operations Inspector (FOI) assessing the application for approval as Chief Pilot must be confident that the applicant has a satisfactory record in the conduct or management of flight operations. If this cannot be established, the candidate will be generally considered unsuitable for the position. Such an applicant would unlikely to become suitable in the short term and in such circumstances, the company would need to find an alternative applicant.

Flight check

A flight check of a prospective Chief Pilot is at the discretion of CASA. The current recommendation is that a check is obligatory unless the applicant's in-flight performance has been observed by an FOI within the last 12 months, and can be assessed as satisfactory within the context of the proposed appointment. If a flight check is required a FOI must in writing set out and forward to the applicant the particulars of the required flight and identify the testing officer. Evaluation of the Chief Pilot application may be suspended until the applicant satisfactorily completes a flight check.

Notice of approval or rejection

CASA must advise both the operator and the applicant as to the outcome of the approval process. When approval is given it remains in force for a fixed period or until it is withdrawn, whichever occurs first.

Table A is a guide to the minimum experience requirements for intending Chief Pilots.

TABLE A

| Operator's fleet type | Number | Minimum total flight time on relevant kind of aircraft | Experience in commercial operations | Remarks |
|---|----------------------|--|-------------------------------------|---|
| Single engine | 1 aircraft | 300 hours | 6 months | The Chief Pilot may be employed on a part-time basis by the operator. |
| Single engine | More than 1 aircraft | 500 hours | 9 months | The Chief Pilot must be employed full-time by the operator. |
| Multi-engine | 1 aircraft | 500 hours including 50 hours in command of multi-engined aircraft | 9 months | The Chief Pilot must be employed full-time by the operator. |
| Multi-engine | More than 1 aircraft | 1000 hours including 200 hours in command of multi-engined aircraft | 12 months | The Chief Pilot must be employed full-time by the operator. |
| Multi-engined aircraft for which 2 or more flight crew are required | Any number | 2000 hours including 400 hours in command of multi-engined aircraft for which 2 or more flight crew are required | 2 years | The Chief Pilot must be employed full-time by the operator. The 400 hours in command of multi-engined aircraft for which 2 or more flight crew are required may be waived by CASA in the case of existing Chief Pilots of operators obtaining such aircraft for the first time. |

What happens when the Chief Pilot goes on leave?

It is a condition of the AOC that there be a Chief Pilot of the operation. Without an approved Chief Pilot, an organisation cannot exercise the privileges of an AOC. A Chief Pilot must have in place procedures to deal with situations which may occur while he or she is on leave. The key is that the Chief Pilot while on leave, is still responsible for the safety of the operation authorized by the AOC. If in fact they are in a position to accept this responsibility while on leave, there is no requirement to have someone act in the position. However, the Chief Pilot should nominate a point of contact for CASA to their company while they are absent. An alternative arrangement could be to nominate an acting Chief Pilot while the Chief Pilot is on leave. Effectively, they are a nominated alternative for the Chief Pilot for a short time. This person would need to go through the approval process.

Professional relationship with CASA and your section of the industry

Developing a professional interface between the AOC holder and the Authority can make life a lot easier for both the AOC holder and CASA. If there are rules which the AOC holder finds unnecessarily onerous, a professional relationship with CASA may assist in finding a long term solution to the problem. Working with the Authority avoids surprises on both sides and



often negates the need for “crisis management”. The importance of a Chief Pilot establishing and should working relationship with the Inspectors assigned to oversee his company’s operations cannot be over-emphasised.

A good industry network is extremely helpful in unearthing safety issues which may affect an operation. A poor safety record is expensive both in insurance premiums and loss of income. Any one operator and their competitors should have the same interests in achieving high levels of safety. After all, if industry safety levels reduce, insurance premiums will rise. Use the network to find out about the latest innovations in safety management.

The safety culture of the organisation

The Chief Pilot very much determines the safety culture of the organisation. High personal standards will serve as an example to other pilots. The regulatory standard is the minimum safety standard in any instance.

The Chief Pilot may use a method of their choice to meet the regulatory standard. Attaining a good safety culture in an organisation may be a long slow process but will ultimately pay dividends through reduced costs through safe operations. Remember, a poor safety culture is more likely to produce behaviours which contribute to an accident.



References for more information

Civil Aviation Act 1988

Section 28(1)(b)(iv)

Civil Aviation Regulations (CARs)

CAR 215

CAR 216

CAR 217

Civil Aviation Safety Regulations (CASRs)

Part 119

Civil Aviation Orders (CAOs)

CAO 82.0

CAO 82.0 Appendix 1

Air Operators Certification Manual (AOCM) Volume 2

Annex 3.1.16 Approval of Chief Pilot



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