

§ 135.619 Operations control centers.

(a) *Operations control center.* After April 22, 2016, certificate holders authorized to conduct helicopter air ambulance operations, with 10 or more helicopter air ambulances assigned to the certificate holder's operations specifications, must have an operations control center. The operations control center must be staffed by operations control specialists who, at a minimum—

(1) Provide two-way communications with pilots;

(2) Provide pilots with weather briefings, to include current and forecasted weather along the planned route of flight;

(3) Monitor the progress of the flight; and

(4) Participate in the preflight risk analysis required under § 135.617 to include the following:

(i) Ensure the pilot has completed all required items on the preflight risk analysis worksheet;

(ii) Confirm and verify all entries on the preflight risk analysis worksheet;

(iii) Assist the pilot in mitigating any identified risk prior to takeoff; and

(iv) Acknowledge in writing, specifying the date and time, that the preflight risk analysis worksheet has been accurately completed and that, according to their professional judgment, the flight can be conducted safely.

(b) *Operations control center staffing.* Each certificate holder conducting helicopter air ambulance operations must provide enough operations control specialists at each operations control center to ensure the certificate holder maintains operational control of each flight.

(c) *Documentation of duties and responsibilities.* Each certificate holder must describe in its operations manual the duties and responsibilities of operations control specialists, including preflight risk mitigation strategies and control measures, shift change checklist, and training and testing procedures to hold the position, including procedures for retesting.

(d) *Training requirements.* No certificate holder may use, nor may any person perform the duties of, an operations control specialist unless the operations control specialist has satisfac-

torily completed the training requirements of this paragraph.

(1) *Initial training.* Before performing the duties of an operations control specialist, each person must satisfactorily complete the certificate holder's FAA-approved operations control specialist initial training program and pass an FAA-approved knowledge and practical test given by the certificate holder. Initial training must include a minimum of 80 hours of training on the topics listed in paragraph (f) of this section. A certificate holder may reduce the number of hours of initial training to a minimum of 40 hours for persons who have obtained, at the time of beginning initial training, a total of at least 2 years of experience during the last 5 years in any one or in any combination of the following areas—

(i) In military aircraft operations as a pilot, flight navigator, or meteorologist;

(ii) In air carrier operations as a pilot, flight engineer, certified aircraft dispatcher, or meteorologist; or

(iii) In aircraft operations as an air traffic controller or a flight service specialist.

(2) *Recurrent training.* Every 12 months after satisfactory completion of the initial training, each operations control specialist must complete a minimum of 40 hours of recurrent training on the topics listed in paragraph (f) of this section and pass an FAA-approved knowledge and practical test given by the certificate holder on those topics.

(e) *Training records.* The certificate holder must maintain a training record for each operations control specialist employed by the certificate holder for the duration of that individual's employment and for 90 days thereafter. The training record must include a chronological log for each training course, including the number of training hours and the examination dates and results.

(f) *Training topics.* Each certificate holder must have an FAA-approved operations control specialist training program that covers at least the following topics—

(1) Aviation weather, including:

(i) General meteorology;

(ii) Prevailing weather;