

NOTICE

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION

N 8900.490

National Policy

Effective Date:
11/9/18

Cancellation Date:
11/9/19

SUBJ: Processing and Destruction of Airman Certificates

1. Purpose of This Notice. This notice announces both new and revised national policy and procedures for Flight Standards Service (FS) aviation safety inspectors (ASI), aviation safety technicians (AST), and designees who conduct airman certification and related duties. The information in this notice provides a consistent procedure across certificate types when processing a superseded airman certificate, and reiterates some common policy regarding certificate revocation, suspension, and downgrade. This notice does not address specific procedural guidance regarding airman certificate eligibility, issuance, surrender, and downgrade; these topics remain the responsibility of the respective policy owner and vary based on certificate-specific regulatory requirements.

2. Audience. The primary audience for this notice includes all FS ASIs and ASTs who conduct airman certification and related duties, and FS designees authorized to issue airman certificates. The secondary audience includes the Civil Aviation Registry Division, the Regulatory Support Division, and all other policy divisions that are responsible for developing and revising guidance related to airman certification.

Note: The information in this notice does not authorize any duties or privileges to an ASI, AST, or designee. Personnel may only conduct airman certification work as authorized by their managing office and all applicable regulations.

3. Where You Can Find This Notice. You can find this notice on the MyFAA employee website at https://employees.faa.gov/tools_resources/orders_notices. Inspectors can access this notice through the Flight Standards Information Management System (FSIMS) at <http://fsims.avs.faa.gov>. Operators can find this notice on the Federal Aviation Administration's (FAA) website at <http://fsims.faa.gov>. This notice is available to the public at http://www.faa.gov/regulations_policies/orders_notices.

4. Background. The procedures on how to process a superseded, surrendered, or revoked airman certificate can vary due to differences in regulatory requirements specific to the certificate type. Procedural variations also occur due to the use of the Integrated Airman Certification and Rating Application (IACRA) process for some certificate types but not for others, and due to differences in airman certification responsibilities between FS personnel and FS designees.

a. Prior to IACRA implementation in 2003, the Airmen Certification Branch required superseded certificates to be returned to the FAA. If the superseded certificate was not enclosed with the application package, a correction notice was sent asking for an affidavit of loss. Since 2003, the majority of applications are fully electronic transmissions using IACRA; however, not all airman certificates can be processed through IACRA, and paper applications remain an option for any certificate type. Because superseded certificates are not collected when applications are completed electronically, the Airmen Certification Branch no longer requires the superseded certificate to be returned within a paper application package.

b. FAA personnel and designees must be aware that airman certificates contain Personally Identifiable Information (PII). When collecting, maintaining, or disseminating records that contain PII, the provisions of FAA Order 1370.121, FAA Information Security and Privacy Program & Policy, must be complied with. Order 1370.121, Appendix 11, Media Protection (MP), and Appendix 19, Authority and Purpose (For Collection of PII), can assist personnel in determining PII handling requirements.

5. Discussion.

a. Definitions:

(1) Airmen Certification Branch (AFB-720). This branch is within the FAA Civil Aviation Registry Division and has final authority for issuance of permanent airman certificates and retention of certification records.

(2) Certifying Officer. A certifying officer is the individual authorized to perform the certification function, to include:

(a) An ASI;

(b) An AST; or

(c) An authorized designee (e.g., Airman Certification Representative (ACR), Aircrew Program Designee (APD), Designated Pilot Examiner (DPE), Training Center Evaluator (TCE), Designated Mechanic Examiner (DME), Designated Parachute Rigger Examiner (DPRE), Designated Aircraft Dispatcher Examiner (DADE), or Designated Flight Engineer Examiner (DFEE)).

(3) Integrated Airman Certification and Rating Application (IACRA). IACRA is a web-based application designed to complete the airman certification process using an Internet version of various FAA certificate application forms. Successful completion of this task results in electronically completed certification documents.

(4) Personally Identifiable Information (PII). PII is any information about a human being, living or deceased, that is maintained by an agency and that permits identification of that individual to be reasonably inferred by either direct or indirect means (such as data mining). This includes, but is not limited to: name, home address, Social Security number, driver's license number, state-issued identification number, birth date, place of birth, mother's maiden name, biometric records, education, financial transactions, medical information, non-work telephone

numbers, criminal or employment history, and any other personal information that is linked or linkable to an individual. Refer to the “Terms and Definitions” section of Order 1370.121.

(5) Regulations Division (AGC-200). This division is within the Office of the Chief Counsel (AGC) and is responsible for coordinating legal enforcement actions regarding airman certificates with appropriate offices.

b. Superseded Airman Certificates. Airman certificates may be superseded by an exchanged or reissued certificate due to a certificate upgrade, added rating, changes to personal data, renewal (i.e., certificated flight instructor (CFI)), as a result of typographical errors, or due to organizational name changes applicable to certain Repairman Certificates. An airman must have his or her currently issued certificate available at the time of issuance of the changed certificate. Following the issuance of the changed certificate, it is the responsibility of the certifying officer to destroy the superseded certificate using an acceptable manner described in subparagraph 5b(1). Do not send superseded certificates to the Airmen Certification Branch. Downgrades to certificates should be processed as a voluntary surrender (see subparagraph 5d); i.e., the superseded certificate is sent to the Airmen Certification Branch.

(1) Acceptable methods of destruction include the following:

(a) Hole Punch. When the airman would like to retain the superseded certificate, the certifying officer must destroy the certificate by punching a hole through the holographic FAA emblem in the lower right-hand corner of the certificate with a hole punch. The hole should be at least a quarter of an inch in diameter (approximately) to ensure the destruction is obvious. The certificate may then be returned to the airman. See Figure 1, Sample Superseded Airman Certificate with Hole-Punched FAA Holograph.

Note: The hole must be punched through the holographic FAA emblem to show as destroyed. Do not confuse the FAA emblem with the Department of Transportation (DOT) emblem in the upper right-hand corner of the certificate.

Figure 1. Sample Superseded Airman Certificate with Hole-Punched FAA Holograph



(b) Shredding. When the airman does not retain the superseded certificate, the certifying officer should ensure the certificate is destroyed by shredding it using a cross-cut model shredder or putting it in a lockable bin designated specifically for the destruction of sensitive material.

(2) Temporary certificates have an expiration date no longer than 120 calendar-days from date of issuance (emergency issuance may specify an expiration timeframe of no more than 60 calendar-days). When a temporary certificate is superseded prior to its expiration date with another temporary certificate containing additional privileges, the airman may retain the superseded certificate if requested. When not retained by the airman, the certifying officer should destroy the superseded temporary certificate by using the shredding method of destruction described above. Temporary certificates which are superseded by a downgraded certificate of airman privileges should be treated as a voluntary surrender as described in subparagraph 5d.

(3) The Inspection Authorization (IA) card (FAA Form 8310-5) is neither a certificate nor a rating; it is an authorization with an expiration date. Superseded IA cards that are past their expiration date, soiled, worn, or the reverse side is completely filled out, do not need to be retrieved from the airman. When the card is not retained by the airman, the certifying officer should destroy it by using the shredding method of destruction described above.

c. Suspended or Revoked Certificates. Suspension or revocation of an airman certificate occurs only following a legal action and applicable legal process.

(1) When suspension or revocation actions have been adjudicated, AGC-200 will issue a stop order that indicates the surrender or revocation status of the certificate. The stop order is sent to the Airmen Certification Branch to update the airman's record.

(2) Under no circumstances should an ASI, AST, or designee destroy a suspended or revoked certificate. If personnel obtain possession of an airman certificate that was suspended or revoked, an ASI must contact AGC-200 to determine the appropriate course of action.

d. Voluntary Surrender or Certificate Downgrade. An airman may voluntarily surrender or have a downgrade to a certificate for a variety of reasons. Certificate-specific policy and procedures must be followed within the applicable sections of FAA Order 8900.1 to ensure that surrenders and downgrades are processed correctly. Samples of surrender letters may be found within the applicable certificate guidance sections. FAA Order 2150.3, FAA Compliance and Enforcement Program, contains policy regarding when FAA personnel should refuse a certificate holder's voluntary surrender of a certificate (chapter 7, paragraph 7).

(1) A certificate or rating may not be accepted for surrender or downgrading unless the applicant submits a request in writing and fully understands that he or she has no reinstatement rights. Additionally, the certificate may not be accepted unless the reason for surrender is identified. A certificate may not be accepted for voluntary surrender in order for the airman to avoid pending or contemplated certificate action.

(2) Certificates that are voluntarily surrendered or downgraded must not be destroyed. The ASI/AST must forward the certificate, along with the signed statement regarding the surrender or downgrade, to the Airmen Certification Branch.

(3) Regarding organizational Repairman Certificates, when a repairman is no longer employed by the organization, or the organization no longer wants the person to hold the certificate, the organization should send a letter to their Flight Standards District Office (FSDO) stating as such and include the surrendered certificate. Surrender letters are to be completed individually and not grouped onto a single letter. If the certificate was not able to be recovered, the organization should state that in the letter they provide to the FSDO. The FSDO will forward any surrendered certificate and the letter to the Airmen Certification Branch. When a letter from the organization cannot be provided, the FSDO can send a memo to the Airmen Certification Branch on behalf of the organization, informing of a surrendered Repairman Certificate, and including the surrendered certificate if it was recovered.

6. Action.

a. ASIs, ASTs, and FS Designees. ASIs, ASTs, and FS designees who are performing airman certification duties must use the procedures outlined in this notice when determining how to appropriately process an airman certificate that was superseded, surrendered, or revoked.

b. Policy Divisions. Policy divisions will incorporate this information into applicable areas of the guidance before this notice expires. Appendix A contains Table 1, Affected Sections of FAA Order 8900.1, and Table 2, Miscellaneous Affected Guidance, that list guidance that may need to be revised in order to consistently implement the information described in this notice. Policy owners are responsible to determine the specific revisions needed (if any), and to identify any additional affected guidance and revise it as appropriate.

7. Disposition. The information in this notice will be incorporated into Order 8900.1 before this notice expires. Direct questions concerning the information in this notice to the Aircraft Maintenance Division (AFS-300) at 202-267-1675.

ORIGINAL SIGNED by

/s/ Rick Domingo
Executive Director, Flight Standards Service

Appendix A. Affected Guidance for Revision**Table 1. Affected Sections of FAA Order 8900.1**

Document Owner	8900.1 V C S	Section Title	Certificate Type	14 CFR
AFS-800	V5 C1 S3	Phases of Certification	Pilots, Flight Instructors, and Ground Instructors	61
AFS-800	V5 C1 S5	Issuance of Temporary Certificates	Pilots, Flight Instructors, and Ground Instructors	61
AFS-800	V5 C1 S9	Detection of Falsified or Altered Airman Certificates	All	All
AFS-800	V5 C2 S4	Integrated Airman Certification and/or Rating Application Process	Pilots, Flight Instructors, and Ground Instructors	61
AFS-800	V5 C2 S5	Miscellaneous Part 61 Certification Information	Pilots, Flight Instructors, and Ground Instructors	61
AFS-800	V5 C2 S13	Issue a Gold Seal Flight Instructor Certificate	Pilots, Flight Instructors, and Ground Instructors	61
AFS-800	V5 C2 S15	Issue a Title 14 CFR Part 61 Pilot Certificate Based on Military Competence	Pilots, Flight Instructors, and Ground Instructors	61
AFS-800	V5 C2 S17	Issue a Title 14 CFR Part 61 Ground Instructor Certificate and Added Ratings	Pilots, Flight Instructors, and Ground Instructors	61
AFS-200	V5 C3 S7	Documentation Phase—All Aircraft Transport Pilot Applicants Engaged in Operations Under Part 121, 135, or 91 Subpart K	Pilots, Flight Instructors, and Ground Instructors	61
AFS-200	V5 C4 S3	Documentation Phase—Flight Engineer Applicants Engaged in Operations Under Title 14 CFR Part 121, 135, or 91 Subpart K	Flight Engineer	63
AFS-200	V5 C4 S5	Title 14 CFR Part 63 Aircraft Navigator Certificates	Aircraft Navigator	63
AFS-350	V5 C5 S2	Certificate Airframe and/or Powerplant Mechanic/Added Rating	Mechanic	65
AFS-350	V5 C5 S3	Certificate Foreign Applicants Located Outside the United States for Part 65 Mechanic Certificates/Ratings	Mechanic	65
AFS-350	V5 C5 S4	Certificate Part 65 Repairman/Added Privileges	Repairman	65

Document Owner	8900.1 V C S	Section Title	Certificate Type	14 CFR
AFS-350	V5 C5 S5	Certificate Repairman for Experimental Aircraft Under 14 CFR § 65.104	Repairman	65
AFS-350	V5 C5 S6	Certificate Repairman for Light-Sport Aircraft (§ 65.107)	Repairman	65
AFS-350	V5 C5 S7	Evaluate a Part 65 Inspection Authorization	Mechanic-Inspection Authorization	65
AFS-350	V5 C5 S8	Renew a Part 65 Inspection Authorization	Mechanic-Inspection Authorization	65
AFS-350	V5 C5 S9	Certificate Part 65 Parachute Rigger/Added Rating	Parachute Rigger	65
AFS-200	V5 C5 S10	Part 65 Aircraft Dispatcher Certification	Dispatcher	65
AFS-800	V16 C3 S1	Remote Pilots	Remote Pilot	107

Table 2. Miscellaneous Affected Guidance

Document Owner	Document Type	Document Number	Document Title
AFS-300	AC	65-24	Certification of a Repairman (General)
AFS-600	Order	8900.2	General Aviation Airman Designee Handbook
AFS-800	Website	https://iacra.faa.gov/IACRA/Default.aspx	Frequently Asked Questions: Certifying Officers