



**U.S. Department
of Transportation**
Federal Aviation
Administration

Advisory Circular

Subject: Voluntary Industry Distributor
Accreditation Program

Date: 5/27/15

AC No: 00-56B

Initiated by: AFS-300

Change:

1. PURPOSE. This advisory circular (AC) describes a system for accrediting civil aircraft parts distributors based on voluntary industry oversight. The AC also provides information for developing accreditation programs. We, the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), strongly endorse participation in such a program to help certificated persons establish the eligibility of parts and products for installation on U.S. type-certificated (TC) products. We have revised this AC to meet current changes in regulatory requirements and industry practices since original publication. This AC is not mandatory and does not constitute a regulation. Any mandatory language used in this AC applies only to those who choose to voluntarily participate in this program; those who do choose to participate must follow the processes and procedures described in this AC in their entirety to be considered compliant with this program.

2. CANCELLATION. This AC cancels AC 00-56A, Voluntary Industry Distributor Accreditation Program, dated June 13, 2002. Distributors seeking initial or renewal accreditation more than 90 days after the effective date of this AC must comply with AC 00-56B. Distributors already in the database of accredited distributors under AC 00-56A may maintain their accreditation under the AC 00-56A standard until their accreditation expires, is superseded upon renewal, or is cancelled or removed by the distributor's accreditation organization.

3. RELATED READING MATERIALS.

a. FAA ACs (current editions).

(1) AC 20-62, Eligibility, Quality, and Identification of Aeronautical Replacement Parts, contains guidance and information regarding the eligibility of aeronautical parts and materials for installation on U.S. type certificated products.

(2) AC 20-142, Eligibility and Evaluation of U.S. Military Surplus Flight Safety Critical Aircraft Parts, Engines, and Propellers, provides information and guidance for use in evaluating and determining the eligibility of U.S. military surplus flight safety critical aircraft parts (FSCAP), engines, and propeller for installation on FAA type certificated products.

(3) AC 21-2, Complying with the Requirements of Importing Countries or Jurisdictions When Exporting U.S. Products, Articles, or Parts, contains the special airworthiness requirements that foreign Civil Aviation Authorities (CAA) have provided to the FAA.

(4) AC 21-29, Detecting and Reporting Suspected Unapproved Parts, contains guidance and information regarding the detection and reporting of suspected unapproved parts.

(5) AC 21-43, Production Under 14 CFR Part 21, Subparts F, G, K, and O, provides information for Production Approval Holders (PAH) under Title 14 Code of Federal Regulations (14 CFR) part 21, Certification Procedures for Products, Articles, and Parts.

(6) AC 21-45, Commercial Parts, explains how you can use the provision in 14 CFR part 21, §§ 21.1(b)(3), 21.8, 21.9(a)(4), and 21.50(c), for commercial parts.

(7) AC 21-46, Technical Standard Order Program, contains guidance and information on the Technical Standard Order (TSO) process for manufacturers producing articles and appliances under a TSO Authorization (TSOA).

(8) AC 21.303-4, Application for Parts Manufacturer Approval Via Tests and Computations or Identity, contains guidance and information to applicants for Parts Manufacturer Approval (PMA) of articles.

(9) AC 43-9, Maintenance Records, provides information regarding maintenance record requirements under 14 CFR parts 43 and 91, §§ 43.9, 43.11, and 91.417, and the related responsibilities of owners, operators, and persons performing maintenance, preventive maintenance, and alterations on U.S. type certificated products and their component parts.

b. FAA Orders (current editions).

(1) FAA Order 8110.42, Parts Manufacturer Approval Procedures, contains guidance and information on how to obtain parts manufacturer approval.

(2) FAA Order 8130.21, Procedures for Completion and Use of the Authorized Release Certificate, FAA Form 8130-3, Airworthiness Approval Tag, contains guidance and information on the proper completion of Form 8130-3.

(3) FAA Order 8120.22, Production Approval Procedures, contains guidance and information on how to obtain production approval for products, articles, and parts.

NOTE: Copies of ACs and FAA Orders may also be available through the FAA's Regulatory and Guidance Library (RGL), <http://rgl.faa.gov/>.

4. DEFINITIONS. In this AC, the following definitions apply:

a. Accreditation Organization. An organization that audits the quality system of a distributor to determine if the system conforms to a standard recognized by us. The accreditation organization must meet the rules and requirements established by the quality system standard organization that maintains such a standard.

b. Distributor. Any person selling or transferring parts for installation in appliances or type certificated aircraft, aircraft engines, or propellers.

c. Distributor Accreditation. Recognition by an accreditation organization that a distributor's quality system complies with the requirements of an acceptable quality system standard referenced in paragraph 7 of this AC.

d. Quality System. A network of administrative processes and procedures whose purpose is to protect aircraft parts from damage or degradation, to preserve documentation associated with those parts, and to satisfy customers that purchase or obtain those parts. A distributor's quality system should ensure that the parts sold by the distributor satisfy the requirements found in Appendix 1 of this AC.

e. Quality System Standards. Criteria developed by various organizations that ensure the distributor's quality system provides an acceptable level of control as delineated in this AC.

f. Quality System Standard Organization. An organization that has developed a quality system standard which the FAA has reviewed and accepted. You can find a list of quality system standard organizations and applicable standards in paragraph 7, Acceptable Quality System Standards.

g. Self-Evaluation. A process that a distributor applies to the distributor's quality system to evaluate compliance with the applicable quality system standard, and with the distributor's quality system.

h. Traceability. Tracking parts, processes, and materials to a source. For an accredited distributor, traceability must meet the minimum standards found in the documentation matrix in Appendix 1.

5. BACKGROUND.

a. Task Force. In 1993, our Associate Administrator for Regulation and Certification (AVR) strongly endorsed voluntary industry oversight of distributors of civil aircraft parts, rather than mandate Federal regulation of those entities. Industry created a task force, comprised of representatives from the FAA Aircraft Maintenance Division (AFS-300); Production and Airworthiness Division (AIR-200); Aerospace Industries Association (AIA); Aeronautical Repair Station Association (ARSA); Air Transport Association of America (ATA); Aircraft Electronics Association (AEA); Air Line Pilots Association International (ALPA); Aviation Suppliers Association (ASA); Aviation Distributors and Manufacturers Association (ADMA); Experimental Aircraft Association (EAA); General Aviation Manufacturer's Association (GAMA); National Air Transportation Association (NATA); National Business Aircraft Association (NBAA); and the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers (IAMAW). The task force prepared a draft AC about industry oversight of distributors. In 1996, we published AC 00-56, Voluntary Industry Distributor Accreditation Program, which formally established third-party accreditation of distributors. We developed this program to give aircraft owners and operators a readily available source of materials and parts, where they could determine acceptability without adding economic burden or expending limited FAA resources.

b. Quality System Standard. Several different quality system standards have been recognized by the FAA as acceptable standards that help to improve aviation safety by providing effective quality management for distributors. A distributor may develop a quality system that meets the requirements of one of these quality system standards (and that meets the requirements of this AC).

c. Quality Auditing. The third-party accreditation program described in this AC uses an independent entity – not the distributor or purchaser – to audit the distributor’s quality system. This independent entity – called an accreditation organization – may audit a participating distributor’s quality system to assess compliance to the quality system standard and the requirements of this AC.

d. Accredited Distributors. Distributors are an important supply source for air agencies, commercial operators, and private aircraft owners and operators. We do not directly regulate distributors, but we do authorize accreditation organizations to accredit a distributor’s quality system. This accreditation helps industry identify distributors who are known to convey assurances that:

- Parts are of the quality stated;
- Appropriate documentation is on file at the distributor’s business; and
- The distributor can maintain a quality system that is acceptable to the FAA.

e. Sound Safety Practices. In evaluating a potential non-compliance with 14 CFR regulations, it is our policy to consider the use of sound safety practices. We consider obtaining parts through accredited distributors is a sound safety practice. If a certificated customer uses an accredited distributor, and voluntarily reports any known potential violations of 14 CFR rules, we would recognize the fact that the certificate holder obtained the part from an accredited distributor as a mitigating circumstance in any subsequent administrative or enforcement action.

6. QUALITY SYSTEM ELEMENTS.

a. Distributors’ Quality System. Distributors must use quality systems to ensure that parts documentation accurately reflects industry safety requirements. This documentation also helps installers confirm that the parts are acceptable for installation on type certificated products. An accreditation organization evaluates a distributor’s quality system to ensure that the system satisfies each element of this AC, and also each element of the applicable quality standard. If the system satisfies each of the elements, then it is acceptable to the Administrator. Quality system standards that we have found acceptable for these purposes are listed in paragraph 7, Acceptable Quality System Standards.

b. Minimum Acceptable Criteria. The following elements are minimum acceptable criteria for an accredited distributor’s quality system:

(1) Receiving inspection process that confirms products and articles are accompanied by documentation that shows the prior source of the product or article and satisfies at least one of the “Required on Receipt” requirements listed in Appendix 1, Documentation Matrix.

(2) A system for training the distributor’s personnel to ensure that the distributor properly executes the quality system, including the elements of the quality system that fall within the trained person’s responsibility and/or job function.

(3) Administrative process that identifies and records the qualifications of employees authorized to make quality determinations, and assures that such employees are qualified and properly trained.

(4) A procedure for removing suspect or nonconforming material that is identified during receiving inspection (or later), and placing the removed material in a separate area until such suspicion or nonconformance can be properly resolved. The separate area may be physically segregated or it may be procedurally segregated, as long as the segregation is effective in preventing inadvertent sale or transfer of the suspect or nonconforming material prior to the identification of an appropriate disposition.

(5) A procedure for controlling measuring and/or test equipment when such equipment is required by the distributor's business model. The procedure should provide for appropriate storage, usage, and calibration of such equipment.

(6) A shelf-life control system that helps the distributor meet quality and technical criteria for each part that has a shelf life.

(7) A system for assuring that technical data is current and accessible, when such data is required by the distributor's business model.

(8) If inspection stamps are used, then a process or procedure for controlling inspection stamps, including stamp issuance, usage, reissuance, loss of, and accountability.

(9) Packaging control, so that the distributor adequately protects shipped parts from damage and deterioration.

(10) Preservation controls, such as environmental controls that help the distributor ensure that parts requiring special environments are identified and stored accordingly.

(11) A process to establish accountability in the event of duplicate approval tags or other traceability documents.

(12) When documentation is required to be duplicated to meet commercial requirements, a process for controlling the copies so as to prevent the misuse, or unintended use, of a copy. Examples of appropriate documentation include lot control, batch control, and remaining inventory control and verification.

(13) A process for maintaining documentation that should include:

- The documents originally received with the parts being sold and shipped;
- The documents shipped with the parts; and
- Any other documents establishing the condition and origin of parts received and shipped.

(14) A process for monitoring the effectiveness of the distributor's quality system. This process should include a self-evaluation program that:

- Identifies distributor personnel responsible for self-evaluations;
- Specifies the frequency of audits;
- Identifies the applicable quality system standard;
- Defines adequate records the distributor must create to document the audit; and
- Describes a process for addressing corrective actions.

(15) A recall control system to ensure adequate circulation of recall notification for parts the distributor has shipped.

(16) A system for notifying the accreditation organization before the distributor significantly changes the distributor's quality system. The accreditation organization shall determine what changes are significant.

(17) A system for hazmat control and transport that meets Title 49 of the Code of Federal Regulations (49 CFR) requirements.

(18) A process or procedure for training purchasing and receiving personnel about the identification of counterfeit parts and suspected unapproved parts.

7. ACCEPTABLE QUALITY SYSTEM STANDARDS. The following organizations have quality system standards acceptable for distributors of civil aeronautical parts for installation in type certificated products.

TABLE 1. FAA ACCEPTABLE ORGANIZATIONS AND THEIR QUALITY SYSTEM STANDARDS

Quality System Standards Organization	Acceptable Quality System Standard (current revision required)	Title	Accreditation Organization
Aviation Suppliers Association (ASA)	ASA-100	Quality System Standard	List maintained by ASA www.aviationsuppliers.org
Transonic Aviation Consultants	TAC-2000	Aeronautical Parts Distributor Quality Assurance Standard	List maintained by Transonic Aviation Consultants www.transonicaviation.com
International Organization for Standardization (ISO)	ISO-9001	Quality Management Systems Requirements	Certification bodies accredited by International Accreditation Forum (IAF) accreditation body signatories (www.iaf.nu)
International Aerospace Quality Group (IAQG)	AS9100, AS9110, and AS9120 (EN9100, EN9110, and EN9120)	Quality Management Systems	List of organizations (certification bodies) is maintained on IAQG Online Aerospace Supplier Information System (OASIS) database website (www.sae.org/?PORTAL_CODE=IAQG)

CAUTION: Quality organizations' contact information may change.

8. ACCREDITATION ORGANIZATION RESPONSIBILITIES.

a. Operating Procedures. Accreditation organizations must have operating procedures adequately addressing all elements of an effective accreditation program. These elements should include:

- Audit review procedures;
- Auditor qualifications;
- Auditor training;
- Internal auditing;
- Issuance, withdrawal, or reinstatement of certificates;
- Internal document control; and
- Appeals.

b. Audit Distributors. Accreditation organizations must audit distributors to ensure compliance with respective quality system standards (see paragraph 7, Acceptable Quality System Standards) and all requirements in this AC. This audit should include a review of the manual to ensure that the manual adequately addresses the required elements, as well as an onsite audit of a distributor's facility to ensure effective implementation of the quality system.

c. Monitoring Quality System Effectiveness. Accreditation organizations must have a process to periodically monitor the effectiveness of the distributor's quality system.

d. Auditor Qualifications. Each auditor used by the accreditation organization should have at least one of the following qualifications:

- (1) Certification as an ISO 9001 auditor by an internationally recognized organization.
- (2) Training to the CASE 3A standard by the Coordinating Agencies for Supplier Evaluation (C.A.S.E.).
- (3) Past professional experience as either a quality auditor for an air carrier, repair station, or air agency; or as a distributor accredited under this AC.
- (4) Past work as an FAA aviation safety inspector (ASI) with auditing experience.
- (5) Authentication as an AS9100 auditor (EN9100 in Europe), and listed on the Online Aerospace Supplier Information System (OASIS) database.
- (6) Professional experience as a quality auditor auditing to this AC for an accreditation organization.

e. Letter Certifying Compliance. If the distributor complies with a selected quality system standard and with all elements of this AC, and further complies with the requirements of its contract with the accreditation organization, then the accreditation organization shall give the distributor a letter certifying compliance with both the selected quality system standard and all elements of this AC.

f. Distributor Audit Requirements. The accreditation organization must audit a distributor accredited by this AC. The accreditation organization must conduct the audit – using the complete acceptable quality system standard chosen – at least once every 36 months. The organization must conduct at least one surveillance audit during the 36-month term for the distributor to continue to participate in the voluntary industry accreditation program. Any letter certifying compliance with the standards of this AC must become invalid no later than the third anniversary of the certification. This will not affect the letter's validity about any other certifications made. The initial audit and the surveillance audit must each be onsite of a distributor's facility to ensure effective implementation of the quality system.

g. Withdrawal or Revocation. If an accreditation organization withdraws or revokes an accreditation before the date of the compliance-certifying letter for any reason, the accreditation organization must send the database manager written notification within five business days of the withdrawal or revocation.

h. Audit Records. Accreditation organizations must let the FAA audit their records so the FAA can ensure compliance with this AC.

9. ARRANGING AN AUDIT.

a. Contact an Accreditation Organization. Distributors seeking accreditation should contact one of the accreditation organizations authorized to audit a distributor by one of the acceptable quality system standards listed in paragraph 7.

b. Distributor's Self-Evaluation. The distributor should conduct and document a self-evaluation of the distributor's quality system before arranging an audit with the accreditation organization.

c. Audit by Accreditation Organization. The distributor subsequently makes the necessary arrangements with the accreditation organization to audit the distributor's quality system by the appropriate quality standard, the guidelines in this AC, and additional elements described in the distributor's operating procedures manual.

d. Distributor Costs. The distributor bears all costs associated with the accreditation process.

10. TYPICAL ACCREDITATION PROCEDURES.

a. Database Listing. Accreditation becomes effective when the distributor is listed in the Voluntary Industry Distributor Accreditation Program database. The FAA has designated the Aviation Suppliers Association (ASA) as the database manager. The database is available at <http://www.aviationsuppliers.org/FAA-AC-00-56B>.

b. Steps for Database Entry. The distributor must take these steps before the database manager can add it to the database:

(1) Send a letter to the database manager certifying that the distributor has passed an audit by an accreditation organization. The distributor can send the letter by mail, any private or commercial interstate carrier, email, or other electronic means. (See Appendix 2 for a template of this letter.)

(2) Include with the letter a copy of the signed certification letter or certificate from the accreditation organization.

(3) Keep a copy of the registered certification letter on file until the next accreditation.

(4) Send their certification letter to the ASA. Distributors can get the ASA's contact information at <http://www.aviationsuppliers.org>.

(a) The distributor's certification letter must contain the following information:

1. Date.
2. Company name.
3. Company address.
4. Company management official who is the company's point of contact (POC).
5. Company phone number.
6. Company fax number.
7. Company email address.
8. A certification statement by a senior management official that the distributor will maintain and continue to follow their quality system as approved by the accreditation organization.
9. The distributor may also elect to submit their Commercial and Government Entity (CAGE) code. This is not mandatory, but will make automated searches easier. The CAGE code is a five-character identification number used extensively within the Federal Government, and is assigned by the Department of Defense's (DOD) Defense Logistics Agency (DLA).

(b) The distributor's certification letter must have a copy of the signed certificate from the accreditation organization indicating that the distributor has successfully passed an audit. The certificate must also show that the distributor's quality system met the requirements and standards of this AC by noting the standard and the date. The certificate must indicate the date on which the accreditation expires.

c. Publication Information. The database manager will publish the information in subparagraph 10(b)(4) via the Internet within 10 days of receiving a properly completed certification statement.

d. Certification Expiration. Because accreditation under this program lasts 36 months, the certification expiration date must be the three-year anniversary of the certification issue date, unless the expiration date listed on the certificate is sooner.

e. Removing Information. The database manager will remove the information from the database within ten days from the certification expiration date, upon notification from an accreditation organization that it has revoked a distributor's certification, or if the certificate has been surrendered. In cases where the certification date has expired, but the accreditation organization has informed the database manager that the distributor is actively completing recertification requirements, the database manager must keep the information posted up to one month from the expiration date.

f. Providing Notification of Accreditation. Once the database manager has published this information on the Internet, accreditation is complete, and the accredited distributor may provide this information to the distributor's customers in the form of the following statement:

[Company Name] certifies that we are an accredited distributor meeting the [listed quality standard] and the provisions of AC 00-56B. (Followed by a management signature from the distributor organization.)

11. DISTRIBUTORS APPROVED BY CAAs THAT HAVE A BILATERAL AGREEMENT WITH THE FAA THAT INCLUDES MAINTENANCE IMPLEMENTATION PROCEDURES (MIP).

a. Bilateral Aviation Agreement. If a country has a bilateral aviation agreement (or bilateral aviation safety agreement) that includes a MIP or Maintenance Annex Guidance (MAG), and its CAA regulates distributors, the country may request the FAA to confirm that the distributors meet the requirements of this AC, and that the ASA can add the distributor to its database.

b. Determining Equivalency of Regulatory Standards. The FAA must determine if the regulatory standards imposed on the foreign distributor are equivalent to the criteria in this AC on a case-by-case basis. The CAA must submit their request to:

Federal Aviation Administration
Flight Standards Service
Aircraft Maintenance Division, AFS-300
800 Independence Ave, SW
Washington, DC 20591

c. CAA Approval. If the FAA grants the request, then the database manager may list the foreign distributors regulated by that CAA in the database of accredited distributors, as long as they have met the documentation and certification requirements of subparagraph 10(b)(4), and include a copy of the certificate from the CAA in the mailing.

12. ACCREDITATION TERM. The procedures contractually established by the quality system standard organization and the distributor will determine the term of accreditation and renewal of accreditation. The maximum term for distributor accreditation under this AC must be for 36 months with at least one surveillance audit during the 36-month term.

13. PROGRAM MONITORING. Aircraft Maintenance Division and the Design, Manufacturing, and Airworthiness Division will jointly monitor the effectiveness of this program by participating in, or conducting, assessments of the accrediting organizations and distributors on a periodic basis, as deemed necessary by the FAA. When a new quality systems standard is added, the accreditation organization will notify us prior to performing the first five audits, and we may accompany the auditor on these audits. The point of contact is the Aircraft Maintenance Division, (202) 267-1675.

14. COMMENTS INVITED. Any proposed changes to this AC should be directed to:

Federal Aviation Administration
Flight Standards Service
Aircraft Maintenance Division, AFS-300
800 Independence Ave, SW
Washington, DC 20591

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John Barbagallo". The signature is written in a cursive style with some horizontal lines through the letters.

John Barbagallo
Deputy Director, Flight Standards Service

APPENDIX 1. DOCUMENTATION MATRIX

CLASS OF PART	REQUIRED ON RECEIPT	REQUIRED FOR SHIPMENT
Consumable materials intended to be consumed in the maintenance, alteration, or preventive maintenance of a product or article (e.g. tape, grease, paint, sealant, etc.).	Statement from seller as to identity.	Statement as to identity and that original seller's statement is on file.
Raw materials.	Physical and chemical properties reports traceable to heat code or lot number.	Certified true copy of the physical and chemical properties reports.
Standard parts.	Certificate of Conformity (C of C) from producer or seller verifying adherence to the appropriate requirements.	Certified true copy of the received C of C and statement that original certified statement is on file.
New parts produced by a U.S. type certificate (TC) holder and produced under TC only.	Certified statement from seller as to identity and condition.	Statement as to identity and condition and that original certified statement is on file.
New parts produced by a U.S. Production Approval Holder (PAH) that are accompanied by airworthiness approval or that bear part marking required by 14 CFR part 45.	FAA Form 8130-3 or part marking required by 14 CFR part 45.	Certified true copy of the regulatory airworthiness approval document or statement as to identity and condition for a part marked according to 14 CFR part 45.
New parts produced by a U.S. PAH that are not accompanied by airworthiness approval and that do not bear part marking required by 14 CFR part 45.	Certified statement from seller as to identity and condition.	Statement as to identity and condition and that original certified statement is on file.
New parts produced by a non-U.S. PAH and approved under the provisions of a bilateral agreement between the United States and a foreign country or jurisdiction.	Regulatory airworthiness approval document meeting the requirements of the bilateral agreement between the U.S. and the nation that issued the production approval; document should meet the requirements that were effective at the time that the part was imported into the United States.	Certified true copy of the regulatory airworthiness approval document.
New parts produced by a non-U.S. PAH that are not accompanied by airworthiness approval.	Certified statement from seller as to identity and condition.	Statement as to identity and condition and that original certified statement is on file.
Used parts that have been maintained under 14 CFR part 43 (including 14 CFR § 43.17).	Approval for return to service meeting provisions of 14 CFR §§ 43.9, 43.11, or 43.17.	Approval for return to service.
Used parts that have been maintained under foreign maintenance standards but not maintained under 14 CFR part 43.	Approval for return to service meeting the requirements of the foreign maintenance standards.	Approval for return to service. The documentation should clearly identify the applicable airworthiness authority.

CLASS OF PART	REQUIRED ON RECEIPT	REQUIRED FOR SHIPMENT
Used parts, products, and appliances without approval for return to service.	Certified statement from seller about identity and condition – must use an accurate descriptive term or narrative to describe condition, such as “as-is,” or any other term that accurately describes the current condition and conveys to the distributor that the part may not meet other categories of this matrix.	Statement about identity and condition and that original certified statement is on file. Must use an accurate descriptive term or narrative to describe condition, such as “as-is,” or any other term that accurately describes the current condition and conveys to the transferee that the part may not meet other categories of this matrix.

APPENDIX 2. SAMPLE DATABASE LETTER

(Company Name)
(Company Address)
(Phone Number)
(Fax Number)
(Point of Contact)
(Email Address)

(Date)

Dear Database Manager,

This is a certification statement by a senior management official that the distributor will maintain and continue to follow their quality system as approved by the accreditation organization.

- a) Only parts for which documentation is on file at this place of business, as described in AC 00-56B, Appendix 1, will be sold for installation on civil aviation products.
- b) [The accreditation organization] has completed an audit and found our quality system to be in compliance with the provisions of AC 00-56B and [quality system standards] on [date].
- c) A copy of the audit result is on file and available for inspection by any interested person.

(Printed Name)
(Job Title)

Signature

NOTE: A copy of the signed certification letter, or a certificate from the accreditation organization, must accompany the distributor's certification letter.