

FAA Updates Electronic Flight Bag Guidance

The FAA released Advisory Circular 120-76B late last week, updating the "Guidelines for the Certification, Airworthiness and Operational Use of Portable Electronic Flight Bags." Naturally, much of the interest surrounding the updated AC involves how it applies to tablet computers such as the Apple iPad, which has gained a huge following among pilots in all segments of aviation.

According to NBAA senior manager of finances and tax policy (and formerly part of the Operations Service Group) Scott O'Brien, "It's a safety-based document." The AC outlines processes that the FAA recommends for safely incorporating portable EFBs, including the recommendation for rapid decompression and non-interference testing and battery safety and backups.

Part of the AC is confusing, O'Brien explained, because while the document applies primarily to fractional and commercial operations, it implies that Part 91 operators of heavy jets should consider following the AC guidance as well because they must fly with current charts. O'Brien suggests that Part 91 operators using iPads or tablets in the cockpit "be prepared to document what your mitigation strategies are," even though this isn't required by regulation. "It's in your best interest to document what your plan is. Using the guidance here, you can do that pretty easily."

<http://www.ainonline.com/aviation-news/ainalerts/2012-06-12/faa-updates-electronic-flight-bag-guidance>