FAA Acceptance Of Boeing Software Saves Airlines A Step

The U.S. Federal Aviation Administration has accepted two of The Boeing Company's maintenance software products as equivalent to paper or microfilmed documentation, a move that will help airlines adopt digital technology more quickly.

For U.S. airlines, the action streamlines the process of obtaining regulatory acceptance of the use of digitally based information systems for aircraft maintenance in place of the traditional paper or microfilmed manuals.

Previously, as a step toward gaining the acceptance, each airline was responsible for demonstrating to the FAA's satisfaction that the digitized maintenance information was current, accurate and reliable for each airplane model in the carrier's fleet. Now, working closely with the FAA, Boeing has taken care of that requirement for airlines using two Boeing Digital™ software products.

The two products are Boeing Digital Technical Documents and the Portable Maintenance Aid. Both products are sets of compact disks containing the contents of key maintenance documents, such as the aircraft maintenance manual and fault isolation manual.

The Boeing Digital Technical Documents product replicates the exact look of the paper documents. The Portable Maintenance Aid provides similar content but includes advanced search and retrieval capability, enabling mechanics to troubleshoot aircraft quickly using a laptop computer.

Temporary revisions to periodically update both products are available over the Internet via the MyBoeingFleet.com portal. Boeing is developing the portal as a single point of entry for airlines to obtain all the information they need to maintain and operate their Boeing fleets.

"The FAA's acceptance of two of our Boeing Digital products as a replacement for paper and microfilm is a boost for the air transport industry in making the transition to the digital world," said Rich Higgins, Boeing vice president of Maintenance Engineering & Publications. "It saves the airlines a step in the process of making that transition."

Higgins added that gaining FAA acceptance was an extremely rigorous effort.

"We had to demonstrate a very high level of accuracy and timeliness of the data," he said. "This has positive effects on both the safety and efficiency of fleet maintenance and operations."

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