



Airworthiness

Questions and Answers

May 5, 2004

1. What is an airworthiness certificate?

An airworthiness certificate is an FAA document that grants authorization to operate a civil aircraft in flight. There are two different classifications of FAA airworthiness certificates, Standard Airworthiness Certificate and Special Airworthiness Certificate.

2. What is the definition of airworthiness?

According to FAA Order 8130.2, airworthiness means that:

- a. The aircraft conforms to its type design, and;
- b. It is in a condition for safe flight.

Courts have ruled that flyability should not be equated with airworthiness.

3. What is a Restricted Airworthiness Certificate?

A Restricted Airworthiness Certificate is a Special Airworthiness Certificate limited to purposes identified in the applicable type design. These special purpose operations include: agricultural, forest and wildlife conservation, aerial surveying, patrolling, weather control, aerial advertising, and any other operations specified by the Administrator.

4. Do public aircraft require an airworthiness certificate?

No.

5. What is a type certificate?

A certificate issued by the FAA to a manufacturer meeting the airworthiness requirements of the applicable Federal Aviation Regulations for an aircraft, aircraft engine, appliance, or propeller. The Forest Service holds three airtanker type certificates for the P3-A, C-130A, and P2V-5 aircraft.

6. Who is responsible for the airworthiness of and aircraft?

The pilot in command is ultimately responsible for the airworthiness of his aircraft. However, maintenance personnel, the aircraft owner and operator, the FAA, and the aircraft manufacturer all have critical roles in ensuring the aircraft's airworthiness.