

OPS 1.1.038		OPS Inspector Handbook
Check Airman Approval and Surveillance		Revision 2
		26 FEB 14

1. Objective

- 1.1. This section addresses procedures for approval and surveillance of check airmen.
- 1.2. All check airmen must be approved by an operator's principal operations inspector (POI).
 - 1.2.1. Approval is based on an airman having the proper certificates and ratings; being qualified in accordance with the operator's approved initial, transition, or upgrade training program; having completed the operator's approved check airman training program for the appropriate check airman functions; and having demonstrated the ability to conduct flight checks and to evaluate the performance of airmen to the satisfaction of a CAAI inspector.

2. General

- 2.1. See OPS 1.1.037 for:
 - 2.1.1. Regulatory Requirements
 - 2.1.2. General Information
 - 2.1.3. Definitions

3. Reference Material, Forms & Job-Aids

- 3.1. Reference Material
 - 3.1.1. OPS 1.1.037 – Check Airman, Instructor and Supervisor – General
 - 3.1.2. OPS 2.1.038 – Proficiency and Competency Check Inspections
- 3.2. Job-Aids
 - 3.2.1. OPSF 1.1.038-1 – Check Airman Approval Checklist

4. Process

- 4.1. **PHASE ONE—OPERATOR FAMILIARIZATION WITH CHECK AIRMAN REQUIREMENTS AND LETTER OF REQUEST.**
 The first phase of the check airman approval process involves a discussion between the operator and the POI. The POI should ensure that the operator understands the check airman training requirements and that a check airman candidate must

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satisfactorily demonstrate the ability to perform check airman functions to a CAAI inspector before approval. The POI should also ensure that the operator has knowledge of the necessary documentation for initiating the approval process, which is as follows:

- 4.1.1. The letter of request constitutes the operator's nomination. It originates from the operator. It includes the airman's full name, business address, applicable airman's certificate number, current crewmember position, requested check airman classification, and aircraft type.
- 4.1.2. Brief résumé of the airman's aviation background and experience.
- 4.1.3. Copies of the airman's appropriate airman certificates.
- 4.1.4. Copy of the airman's medical certificate.

NOTE: A POI may require that this information be expanded to suit circumstances.

4.2. PHASE TWO—SUBMISSION OF DOCUMENTATION.

Phase two begins when the operator submits the requested documentation to the POI for evaluation. The operator may transmit this submission by conventional mail, e-mail, fax, or by other means mutually acceptable to the operator and the POI. The POI will initially review the information to determine if the check airman candidate meets the basic qualification requirements for the type of check airman approval sought (Refer to section 1 of this chapter). If the operator's submission is unacceptable, the POI should return the submitted documentation with a statement of the reason for non-acceptance. If the operator's submission is acceptable, the POI should initiate phase three.

4.3. PHASE THREE—REVIEW OF DOCUMENTATION.

- 4.3.1. The POI will verify the check airman candidate's certificates and background.
- 4.3.2. After reviewing the candidate's certificates and background, the POI will authorize the operator to start the check airman training. The POI can, at his discretion, decide to observe the candidate performance as a crewmember before granting such authorisation.
- 4.3.3. Before the POI can evaluate an airman for approval as a check airman, all required training must be completed. The airman's training records must show satisfactory completion

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of initial, transition, or upgrade training and all training required under the operator's approved check airman training program for the specified classification as in ANR.OPS. 438,439,332,333 requirements. It may be covered by the use of all training required. When the airman's records show that the airman has previously completed a required curriculum segment, the segment does not have to be repeated.

4.3.4. If, after reviewing the documentation, the POI determines that the candidate does not qualify as a check airman, the POI will provide the operator with a statement of the reason for non-acceptance.

4.4. **PHASE FOUR—CHECK AIRMAN EVALUATION. CHECK AIRMAN SURVEILLANCE.**

In order to evaluate a check airman candidate effectively, inspectors must become thoroughly familiar with the operator's procedures. Inspectors must also become familiar with any special regulatory requirements affecting the operator, such as special conditions contained in the operations specifications and exemptions.

4.4.1. **Choosing Airmen as Subjects.**

The inspector conducting an evaluation for an original check airman approval must observe the check airman candidate conducting an actual check. The purpose of the check airman evaluation is to ensure that the candidate has achieved the required skills for briefing, evaluating, and debriefing an airman. The airman receiving the check should be a line crewmember who is due for an evaluation. The airman will not be an instructor or check airman unless previous approval has been received from the POI. Such approval is reserved for unusual circumstances.

4.4.2. **Check Airman Candidate's Flying Skills.**

Except for an initial cadre approval, a check airman evaluation does not entail an evaluation of the candidate's flying skills in a crew position. An operator should not request approval of an individual as a check airman when there is any question about the airman's flying skills in a crew position. Should the POI have reason to question a candidate's proficiency the check airman evaluation will not be conducted until the candidate's proficiency is verified. An acceptable way to verify the airman's proficiency is to check the check airman candidate. An inspector may conduct a

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proficiency check, a competency check, or a line check of the check airman candidate, scheduled at some time before the official check airman evaluation. (Such checks are not routinely required.)

4.4.3. **Satisfactory Evaluation.**

If the inspector determines that a check airman candidate meets criteria for the requested check airman approval, the inspector will inform the candidate that a recommendation of approval will be reported to the POI. In this case, the check airman candidate will certify the proficiency of the airman receiving the check and complete the necessary recordkeeping tasks. The POI may permit the new check airman to be scheduled immediately as a check airman, even though processing of the letter of approval has not been completed.

4.4.4. **Unsatisfactory Evaluation.**

If the inspector determines a candidate does not qualify for the requested check airman approval, the inspector will inform the operator that approval is withheld. In such a case, the inspector must determine whether the airman receiving the check performed satisfactorily, and must certify the airman's proficiency and complete the necessary records.

NOTE: The failure of a check airman candidate is uncommon and usually ends a candidate's eligibility for check airman status. In rare circumstances, the POI may allow a reevaluation. In such a case, the operator must conduct sufficient additional training, recertify the candidate's proficiency, and arrange to have another evaluation conducted by a CAAI inspector.

4.4.5. **Content of Check Airman Evaluation.**

The following guidance applies to an inspector's evaluation in respect to each of the six classifications of check airmen.

4.4.5.1 Proficiency Check Airman—Aircraft.

An inspector must evaluate this candidate while the candidate conducts a proficiency check or competency check in an aircraft in flight. The inspector should observe the candidate conducting the entire check in the aircraft. The candidate should be evaluated on his/her ability to evaluate an individual while, at the same time, performing the crewmember activities normally associated with the seat the check airman candidate occupies. With the

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approval of POI, the inspector may observe part of the check in the aircraft and the remainder in a simulator or an approved flight-training device (FTD).

4.4.5.2 Proficiency Check Airman—Simulator.

An inspector must evaluate this candidate while the candidate conducts the simulator (or FTD) segment of an actual proficiency check, or competency check, as applicable. The candidate should be evaluated on his/her ability to evaluate an individual while, at the same time, demonstrating proficiency in operating the simulator or training device. Time management and the ability to adapt to events that might disrupt a planned sequence of events should be considered. If the entire proficiency check or competency check can be accomplished in a flight simulator, the candidate must be observed conducting the entire check.

4.4.5.3 Line Check Airman—All Seats.

An inspector will evaluate this candidate while the candidate conducts an actual line check from either pilot seat. Satisfactory performance will also permit the candidate to conduct a line check from the forward observer's seat, during line-oriented flight training, during revenue service or during nonrevenue service. A candidate for line check airman—all seats must be qualified to be the pilot-in-command (PIC) for that operator and hold a first-class medical certificate.

NOTE: The operator must have procedures, published in its operations manual that will be followed in the event that a line check airman determines that a pilot's performance does not meet standards that would allow the individual to continue to operate the aircraft. The crewmember will not be allowed to continue the flight series or trip. If the line check airman does not possess the appropriate class of medical certificate to substitute for the crewmember, specific alternative procedures must be followed.

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4.4.5.4 Check Airman—All Checks.

An inspector must evaluate this candidate in accordance with preceding paragraphs. The evaluations for this approval may be treated cumulatively.

NOTE: An airman may have been a proficiency check airman—aircraft for a number of years and then qualify as a line check airman—all seats. If the operator does not use simulators in the training program, then upon satisfactory completion of the line check evaluation, the check airman could be approved to conduct all of the forgoing checks.

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4.4.5.5 Check Flight Engineer.

An inspector must evaluate this candidate while the candidate conducts a flight engineer proficiency check in a simulator or approved FTD. In normal, abnormal, and emergency procedures, segments of the check are normally accomplished in a simulator or approved FTD. In those instances when a check flight engineer candidate is to conduct any portion of a check in an airplane in flight, the check airman candidate must be a qualified and current flight engineer and must be evaluated during actual flight.

4.4.6. Conducting a Check Airman Evaluation.

4.4.6.1 Pre-evaluation Briefing. An inspector conducting a check airman evaluation must arrange to meet with the candidate in sufficient time for a pre-evaluation briefing. The inspector must explain the purpose of the evaluation and some ground rules, including:

- that the check should be conducted as if the candidate were fully qualified in the role of check airman;
- that during the briefing, the inspector may ask questions of the check airman candidate as part of the evaluation; and
- that the inspector will not ask questions while the check is in progress.

4.4.6.2 Observing and Debriefing the Candidate. While the check is in progress, the inspector will observe, but should not interrupt or otherwise interfere with the check airman candidate's management of the check. The inspector must determine that all required events and maneuvers were conducted properly; that the check airman candidate's evaluation of the airman's performance was objective and accurate; and that the check airman candidate's debriefing of the airman was thorough and constructive.

4.5. PHASE FIVE—CHECK AIRMAN APPROVAL.

All check airmen approved for ANR.OPS. Chap. 13 or 12 operations must be approved by the operator's POI.

4.5.1. Letter of Approval.

Approval of a check airman will be in the form of a letter of approval addressed to the check airman and signed by the POI or a representative approved by the POI. This letter of designation may be transmitted to the operator by conventional mail, e-mail, by fax, or by other means

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acceptable to the operator and the POI. The letter must contain the following:

- Check airman's name and applicable CAAI airman's certificate number,
- Approved check airman classification (1–6),
- Specified category, class, or type of aircraft,
- Authorizations and limitations, and

NOTE: A POI may only approve check airmen for operators under their oversight.

- Effective date of each approval (since different approvals may occur at different times, this information simplifies record checks. The date on which the check airman was recommended for approval by an inspector will be the effective date of approval.)

NOTE: Under current regulations, no normal term to expiration is specified for approvals of check airmen. A check airman's approval may be given, limited, or withdrawn, in the discretion of the POI. Normal practice is to issue approvals valid until Dec 31st of the current calendar year.

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4.5.2. **One Letter of Approval.**

A check airman will be approved only in the six classifications covered earlier in this chapter.

4.5.3. **WTS.**

The POI must ensure that a record of the approval is entered in WTS. Each time a check airman approval is given or withdrawn, the POI must ensure that the operator's file accurately reflects:

- 4.5.3.1 the current number of active check airmen approved for the operator, and
- 4.5.3.2 the correct status of the individual.

4.6. **APPROVAL OF INITIAL CADRE CHECK AIRMEN.**

During the early phases of establishing a check airman program, initial cadre check airmen are required. Initial check airman candidates must first become fully qualified as flight crewmembers and then be trained, evaluated, and approved as check airmen. ANR.OPS. Chap. 12 and 13 does not address a training process for initial cadre check airman, this handbook provides guidance. This process that follows is valuable for startup operations for at least two reasons:

- it is a practical way to bootstrap a check airman program into existence; and
- it takes advantage of proving flights, when the operator/applicant is under close CAAI scrutiny—with desirable effects on the check airman program.

4.6.1. **Letter of Request from Operator.**

The overseeing inspector must arrange with the operator/applicant to approve one or more likely check airman candidates to form an initial cadre of temporary check airmen. The operator/applicant will submit a letter of request, as described earlier in this section. This letter comprises the request for initial cadre check airmen and a description of the training that they will undergo.

4.6.2. **Letter of Approval.**

The POI must approve the candidates using procedures described earlier in this section. Usually initial cadre check airmen are approved to function as check airman—all checks or check flight engineer, so that they may conduct all types of checks and supervise operating experience (OE) during the period that the startup operation is

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beginning. The initial cadre check airman letter of approval is a temporary approval, to be replaced with a permanent letter of approval after the check airman is fully qualified. The initial cadre check airman letter must contain a statement similar to the following:

(Name) is approved as an initial cadre check airman to function as a check airman—all checks or as a check flight engineer for the purpose of initiating operations with the (type of aircraft) for (name or operator). This approval expires on (expiration date).

4.7. TRAINING, CERTIFICATION, AND QUALIFICATION—STARTUP.

The operator must provide a full qualification process for its initial cadre check airmen.

4.7.1. Initial Training and Certification.

The operator must first arrange to have initial cadre check airmen trained and appropriately certificated for their cockpit duty positions. The operator may provide the training by contracting with a manufacturer, with another operator of the same operating level, or with properly qualified individuals. An inspector or a designated examiner may certificate the initial cadre airmen.

4.7.2. Gaining Proficiency as Instructors.

After the initial training and certification, initial cadre check airmen must become proficient in the operator’s proposed training program by instructing each other, or in the case of a single initial cadre check airman, by self-training. During this training, an operator may arrange for a pilot from the manufacturer, from another operator, or from another source to act as the safety pilot or instructor pilot.

4.7.3. Proficiency and Competency Checks.

After the first initial cadre check airmen have become proficient as instructors, they may then begin the training and checking of other initial cadre check airmen in accordance with the operator’s initially approved flight training and qualification curriculum segments. Each check must be observed by an CAAI inspector who holds the appropriate airman’s certificate, and the appropriate type rating, when applicable. If the inspector determines that the performance of an initial cadre check airman conducting a certain check is satisfactory, the inspector will recommend

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to the overseeing inspector that the airman be approved as a check airman for that type of check. One initial cadre check airman may check another, with the process repeated until each candidate has been approved as a check airman or has been terminated from the program. If only one person is being considered to be the initial cadre check airman, an inspector will observe that person conducting a check of another airman. If the candidate's performance is satisfactory, the inspector must recommend to the POI that the candidate be removed from temporary status and approved for full-time check airman duty with the operator.

4.7.4. **Operating Experience (OE).**

Initial cadre check airmen will be permitted to acquire OE flight hours on any flight that can be credited toward the proving-test flight-hour requirement (including training flights, ferry flights, and representative en route proving flights). OE flight hours may be accrued by initial cadre check airmen while they are:

- conducting aircraft checks;
- overseeing the OE of other airmen,
- being checked, or
- acquiring OE under the supervision of other initial cadre check airmen.

4.7.5. Initial cadre check airmen must receive a line check and conduct a line check during an en route proving flight or a ferry flight. The same process (above) will apply: one initial cadre check airman line checks another while being observed by a CAAI inspector. If the airman's performance is satisfactory, the inspector may recommend that the person be removed from temporary status and approved for full-time duty as a check airman for the operator. If there is only one initial cadre check airman, then the CAAI inspector will conduct the line check.

4.8. **APPROVAL OF A CHECK AIRMAN IN MULTIPLE AIRCRAFT.**

Before an airman may be approved as a check airman in more than one type of aircraft, the operator must show that there is a need. The airman must be fully qualified and current in each of the aircraft types. Overseeing inspectors must be judicious in approving check airmen and vigilant in overseeing their performance. There are various acceptable combinations of check airman approvals.

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4.8.1. A check airman may be approved to serve in all single-engine, normal, or commuter category airplanes that an operator operates under Chap. 12 .

4.8.2. A check airman may be approved to serve in two different types of helicopters.

4.8.3. For Chap. 12 operations, a check airman may be approved to serve in a combination of two of the following aircraft families:

- One series of multiengine, normal, or commuter category airplanes;
- Single-engine, normal, or commuter category airplanes; or
- Helicopters.

4.8.4. Before a candidate may be approved as a check airman in two commuter category aircraft types or two transport category types, the overseeing inspectors must ensure that the following conditions are met:

- For proficiency check airman—aircraft or simulator the candidate must have logged at least 500 hours as PIC in each type;
- For line check airmen the candidate must have logged at least 100 hours as PIC in each type and at least 1,000 hours as PIC in transport- or commuter-category airplanes; and
- For check flight engineer the candidate must have logged at least 500 hours as a flight engineer in each type.

4.9. **APPROVAL OF A CHECK AIRMAN FOR MULTIPLE OPERATORS.**

This paragraph provides a standard method for approving a check airman to serve multiple operators. The approval of a check airman to serve more than one operator is limited to those cases in which the operator's aircraft, aircraft operating manuals, procedures, and checklists are compatible in the judgment of the overseeing inspector(s). Provision for multiple check airman approvals is made for ANR.OPS. Chap. 12 single-pilot operators, Chap. 12 single-PIC operators, and for Chap. 13 and Chap. 12 operators with programs that are compatible, in the judgment of the respective operator's POI. An operator's POI may also approve a check airman to serve multiple Chap. 13 and Chap. 12 operators on a temporary basis, when a startup operation is initiated or when new equipment is being introduced. Other multiple approvals may be made with

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the concurrence of the regional Flight Standards division when justified.

4.10. CREWMEMBER FAILURE RATES.

The repetitive failure of a single crewmember, or the failure of several crewmembers during proficiency or competency checks, may indicate a training program deficiency. Overseeing inspectors must establish procedures with their certificate holders that provide for CAAI notification when unsatisfactory performance occurs. Identified deficiencies should be promptly investigated and corrective action taken. A comparison of failure rates between checks conducted by inspectors and those conducted by check airmen should also be made. If a significant difference in failure rates exists, additional observations and counseling should be conducted. The overseeing inspector must discuss the matter with the appropriate official responsible for the certificate holder's training and checking activities. Should these discussions not lead to an improvement in the quality of training and evaluations, consideration should be given to withdrawing approval of any check airmen involved, or if appropriate, withdrawing approval for a specific part or for the entire training program.

5. Task Outcomes

5.1. SURVEILLANCE OF CHECK AIRMEN.

Overseeing inspectors must establish a surveillance program for each check airman at the time of approval. The POI must determine which inspector will have responsibility for the check airman's surveillance program and notify that inspector of the check airman's approval.

5.1.1. Biennial Check Airman Observation. The surveillance program must include a specific observation by a CAAI inspector of each approved check airman in his or her area of responsibility at least once in every 24 months. Check airman inspections should be conducted while the check airman is conducting an approved checking activity. For example, a check airman approved to conduct proficiency checks and line checks should be observed conducting a proficiency check in the aircraft or simulator, or conducting a line check, or overseeing initial OE. Constraints of Aircraft with Two Pilot Seats. Inspectors may encounter difficulties in conducting the surveillance of check airmen whose activities are restricted to two-place airplanes or helicopters. In such cases, it may not be possible for an inspector to observe the check airman conducting actual

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checks. In lieu of these observations, the POI may review the check airman's activities and arrange for an inspector to administer the check airman's competency and line checks.

5.1.2. **Periodic Report by the Operator.**

The POI should arrange to have the operator provide the POI with a periodic report of each check airman's checking activities, including a pass/fail rate, to coincide with the POI's periodic review (annual, semiannual, or other). POIs may arrange for these reports to arrive at a time that meets the POI's needs. A check airman should be active enough to retain the required knowledge and skills. This activity level may vary depending on the check airman function, the size of the operator, and the number of approved check airmen. Usually a check airman should conduct at least eight authorized check airman activities during a 12-month period (including supervision of OE). For example, a proficiency check airman – simulator conducting 4 annual training sessions that include checking 2 pilots at every check counts as 8 activities. For check airmen – simulator, the proficiency in operating the simulator or FTD must be taken into account. For example, a check-airman who only conducted line checks or proficiency checks in an airplane may not be eligible for renewal of his simulator checking designation. In order to re-qualify as a check airman – simulator, he must demonstrate his proficiency in conducting simulator proficiency checks to a CAAI inspector. The POI should specifically re-assess the operator's need for those check airmen whose records indicate low activity levels.

5.1.3. **Withdrawing Check Airman Approval.**

The POI's reasons for withdrawing the approval of a check airman may include a lack of check airman activity, a request by the operator, or an unsatisfactory performance on the part of the check airman. To withdraw approval of a check airman, the POI must notify the operator and the check airman by letter that approval is withdrawn. The letter should include the name of the check airman, the effective date of withdrawal, and the reason approval is being withdrawn.

In case the withdrawal is initiated by the POI, the POI must allow the operator an opportunity to respond to the decision.

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NOTE: Under current regulations, no normal term to expiration is specified for approvals of check airmen. Contract check airmen who are employees of a training center will have their term contingent upon continued employment with the training center and maintaining their instructor/evaluator qualification with the employing center.

5.1.4. A check airman's approval may be given, limited, or withdrawn, in the discretion of the POI.

5.1.5. In case of withdrawal of a check airman approval for a check airman who also serves as a Designated Examiner, the POI will notify the PEL division.

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Figure 3-85, Check Airman Letter of Approval—Sample A

February 24, 2006
Mr. Sam A. Frost
Chief Pilot
Transcon Express, Inc.
48 Perimeter Rd.
Utica, OH 22032
Dear Mr. Frost:

John R. Smith, ATPL number 467120928, is approved as a check airman. This check airman is approved to conduct checks in the Douglas DC-9 aircraft for employees of the Transcon Express, Inc. This approval is applicable for the following checking functions:

- Proficiency Check Airman—Aircraft Effective_____
- Proficiency Check Airman—Simulator Effective 8/27/06
- Line Check Airman - All Seats Effective_____
- Line Check Airman—Observer’s Seat Only Effective 02/20/07
- Check Airman—All Checks Effective_____
- Check Flight Engineer Effective_____

Please retain a copy of this letter in Mr. Smith’s individual flight training records.

Sincerely,
James J. Jones
Principal Operations Inspector

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Figure 3-86, Check Airman Letter of Approval—Sample B

February 24, 2007
Mr. Sam A. Frost
Chief Pilot
Trans Regional Airlines, Inc.
48 Perimeter Rd.
Utica, OH 22032

Dear Mr. Frost:

John R. Brown, ATPL number 467219028, is approved as a check airman. Mr. Brown is approved to conduct checks in multiengine Cessna, reciprocating-series airplanes and in all single-engine airplanes to pilots that are employed by Trans Regional Airlines, Inc. This approval is applicable for the following checking functions:

- Proficiency Check Airman—Aircraft Effective_____
- Proficiency Check Airman—Simulator Effective_____
- Line Check Airman—All Seats Effective_____
- Line Check Airman—Observer’s Seat Only Effective_____
- Check Airman—All Checks Effective 02/24/07

Please retain a copy of this letter in Mr. Brown’s individual flight training records.

Sincerely,
James J. Jones
Principal Operations Inspector

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Figure 3-87, Check Airman Letter of Approval for Multiple Operators—Sample A

February 24, 2007
 Mr. Sam A. Frost
 Chief Pilot
 Trans Regional Airlines, Inc.
 48 Perimeter Road
 Utica, OH 22032

Dear Mr. Frost:

John R. Brown, certificate number 467219028, is approved as a check airman. Mr. Brown is approved to conduct checks in multiengine Cessna, reciprocating series airplanes and all single engine airplanes to pilots that are employed by:

Trans Regional Airlines, Inc., Effective 02/24/07, and Transylvania Charter Services, Effective 11/15/06.

This approval is applicable for the following designated functions:

- Proficiency Check Airman—Aircraft Effective _____
- Proficiency Check Airman—Simulator Effective _____
- Line Check Airman—All Seats Effective _____
- Line Check Airman—Observer’s Seat Only Effective _____
- Check Airman—All Checks Effective 02/24/07

Please retain a copy of this letter in Mr. Brown’s individual flight training records.

Sincerely,
 James J. Jones
 Principal Operations Inspector