

United Kingdom Overseas Territories Aviation Circular

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Accountable Manager

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GENERAL

Overseas Territories Aviation Circulars are issued to provide advice, guidance and information on standards, practices and procedures necessary to support Overseas Territory Aviation Requirements. They are not in themselves law but may amplify a provision of the Air Navigation (Overseas Territories) Order or provide practical guidance on meeting a requirement contained in the Overseas Territories Aviation Requirements.

PURPOSE

This Overseas Territories Aviation Circular provides information and guidance on the role of Accountable Manager and the qualifications required to be acceptable to the regulatory authority to carry out that role in an organisation approved under OTAR Parts 119, 140, 145, 171, 172, 173 or 176.

RELATED REQUIREMENTS

This Circular relates to OTAR Parts 119, 121, 135, 140, 145, 171, 172, 173 and 176.

CHANGE INFORMATION

Editorial changes and additional guidance including the addition of a checklist against which to test the level of authority of a candidate for Accountable Manager.

ENQUIRIES

Enquiries regarding the content of this Circular should be addressed to Manager PQS, Air Safety Support International, to the appropriate Director or Director-General of Civil Aviation or to any office of ASSI.

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1. Introduction

Organisations holding an Approval under OTARs are generally required to have an Accountable Manager who has corporate authority and responsibility for ensuring that the activities conducted under the Approval are performed to the standard required. The title of such a person may vary from OTAR to OTAR but, in essence, the role is common to all approved organisations. The key responsibilities outlined in this OTAC must be discharged within any approved organisation by a clearly identified person.

The nomination of a person as Accountable Manager within an OTAR Approved Organisation requires specific approval by the regulatory authority responsible for the oversight of that organisational approval. This OTAC provides guidance on the role of the Accountable Manager and the qualifications and qualities required to be acceptable to act in that role.

2. Key Responsibilities and Experience

The exact nature of the Accountable Manager's responsibilities will vary with the size and type of the organisation and so will the experience required to fulfil the post. However there are several particular areas of responsibility which will apply to the role in any organisation. These are described below; they are not exhaustive, but represent key areas of responsibility for the postholder.

2.1 Corporate Authority

The Accountable Manager should occupy an appropriately senior position within the organisation in order to be able to direct its activities but need not be the person who sets overall company policy or objectives. By their CV and the Terms of Reference for the Accountable Manager's position, the nominee must be able to demonstrate the ability to direct the activities of the organisation for which he is responsible.

The term "corporate authority" is used to establish the seniority of the Accountable Manager's position within the organisation and the sort of managerial positions that might possess the required level of authority. It is not necessary for the position to be the "controlling mind" of the organisation. It is possible for an Accountable Manager to be answerable to and directed by another person or persons, yet retain the appropriate level of authority to ensure that activities are financed adequately and carried out to an acceptable standard. Appropriate previous experience in a senior management position, preferably within the aviation industry, is a prerequisite for any large organisation, but a lack of such experience in a small organisation need not necessarily disqualify a person from holding the post. In this case the nominee should be able to demonstrate an understanding of sound management principles.

Where a single organisation holds more than one approval, the Accountable Manager should normally have final authority over all activities conducted under the OTAR approvals.

2.2 Financial Authority

The Accountable Manager should not only control an allocated budget but also be instrumental in determining what size that budget should be.

A nominee for this post should therefore be able to demonstrate that they are responsible for determining the level of financing appropriate to the proposed activities and resource levels of the organisation and that they have an appropriate level of autonomy in disbursing the funds allocated as a result. The nominee should be able to demonstrate an understanding of the budgetary process and the ability to ensure that all required resources and management tools are available to support the organisation and to ensure that adequate safety standards are maintained.

In very small organisations, the Accountable Manager will probably have control over the disbursement of company funds.

In larger organisations the Accountable Manager might only have control over a budget allocated by a board of directors; however to meet the requirements of “financial authority” they should have been instrumental in determining the size of the budget and its disbursement.

In very large organisations, where there might be a controlling group with a main board directing subsidiary boards at company level, the layers of corporate management can make it difficult to determine the focus of financial control, but the same test of authority applies, ie does the nominated Accountable Manager have appropriate control of the size of their budget and the disbursement of funds allocated to the organisation that they manage?

2.3 Human Resource Management

The management structure itself, including the appointment of those nominated postholders where required by OTARs, will normally be the responsibility of the Accountable Manager. The Accountable Manager therefore needs the ability to set up an appropriate management structure, using suitable technically-qualified persons with an adequate knowledge of the standards required by the regulatory authority. He or she must also be able to justify the scale and scope of the proposed management structure and the divisions of responsibilities within it.

An organisation cannot function effectively unless it is adequately staffed. Personnel are needed in sufficient numbers and with the competencies and skills for the jobs they are required to perform, and training will be required to ensure that these are enhanced where necessary and then maintained. The Accountable Manager should normally have overall responsibility for all these human resources matters.

2.4 Safety Management System

Any nominee should be able to demonstrate a commitment to the management of safety and a sound knowledge of SMS principles and practices where such a system operates, or is required to operate, within the organisation for which they are responsible. The nominee should be able demonstrate the importance attached to the management of safety by giving examples of where it applies within the organisation for which they are responsible. Where a SMS has been, or will be, implemented within the organisation, the nominee should be able to

demonstrate knowledge of the principles and practices as they apply within the organisation including, in particular, their own role.

2.5 Quality System

The Approval may require the establishment of a quality system to support management of the organisation and to monitor compliance both with OTARs and with those standards specified by the operator to ensure a safe operation or product. As the person with ultimate responsibility for meeting the required standards, the Accountable Manager plays an important part in any quality system. He or she is therefore expected to play a central and influential role in the establishment and operation of the organisation's quality system, if required. Where there is no requirement to establish a formal quality system, the application of quality assurance principles will still be important to the effective management of the organisation, in particular safety management.

A nominee should be able to demonstrate a sound knowledge of quality principles and practices and how those principles and practices are applied within their own organisation including, in particular, knowledge of their own role. Consequently, the nominee should be able to demonstrate a sound knowledge of the regulatory material as it applies to the scope, purpose and function of the quality system within the organisation and particularly their role within it. They should additionally be able to demonstrate an ability to manage quality control or quality assurance functions and to respond to quality assurance input.

2.6 Standards

The Accountable Manager is the manager with ultimate responsibility for operational standards and compliance with the relevant regulations.

Specifically, the Accountable Manager is accountable to the regulatory authority for activities conducted under the terms of the OTAR Approval. In practice, technical specialists, appointed to other subordinate managerial roles, may provide the level of regulatory and technical knowledge needed to ensure compliance on a day-to-day basis.

The nominee should be able to demonstrate a basic understanding of the standards required of the organisation for which they will be responsible. This will include a basic understanding of the applicability of the regulatory documents that apply to the organisation and an appropriate level of knowledge of their content and purpose. In particular, the nominee should be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the requirements related to the appointment of those persons within the organisation with designated responsibilities for standards under the relevant requirements, including nominated postholders or their equivalents. Any nominee for the position of Accountable Manager should be able to evaluate the qualities and qualifications required for those persons within the organisation with designated responsibilities for standards.

2.7 Check List

A questionnaire or checklist which can serve as a filter for potential candidates for the role of Accountable Manager is in the Appendix to this OTAC.

3. Approval of nominee

The nomination of a person as Accountable Manager of an organisation requires approval by the regulatory authority. Evaluation of the suitability of a nominee will be made against the criteria above.

The organisation putting forward a nominee as Accountable Manager should consult the regulator at an early stage, providing the fullest information regarding the nominee's fulfilment of these criteria. It is advisable that approval is gained before contractual arrangements concerning employment are concluded with the nominee.

There may be instances where the nominee does not meet fully every aspect of the criteria listed. Nevertheless, where the candidate substantially fulfils the main requirements, the deficit may be remedied by training or managed experience. For example, the nominee may have limited experience of safety management systems. In such cases, conditional approval may be given subject to the nominee achieving within a specified time the full level of knowledge and experience required and there being readily available to the nominee a source of experience and knowledge in the area in which he is deficient. In addition, conditions may be attached to the organisation's Approval during this period.

4. Organisational and personnel changes

The senior management of the Approved organisation should notify the regulator immediately if the Accountable Manager leaves the company or no longer occupies the same post or if the terms of reference associated with the post change substantially.

Any proposed change of Accountable Manager requires the same approval of the regulator as the initial nomination. If there is an interval between the departure of an Accountable Manager and an approved successor taking up the post conditions may be attached to the organisation's Approval or, in extreme cases, the Approval may be suspended.

Appendix Accountable Manager Selection Questionnaire

