

Notice of Proposed Rule Making

NPRM 25-05

19 December 2025

Proposal to make changes to personnel requirements CAR 115

Docket 25/CAR/05

Affected Rule Parts:

Part 115, Schedule A

Background to the Civil Aviation Rules

The Civil Aviation Rules (**the Rules**) establish the minimum regulatory safety boundary for participants to gain entry into, operate within, and exit the New Zealand civil aviation system. The Rules are structured in a manner similar to the Federal Aviation Regulations of the USA.

Rules are divided into Parts and each Part contains a series of individual rules which relate to a particular aviation activity. Some rules empower the use of a CAA notice or a transport instrument. Both these regulatory tools can be used to set mandatory requirements such as performance standards, conditions, operating requirements, procedures and technical specifications. Both can be amended by the Director following appropriate consultation and where amendments are in accordance with the corresponding enabling rule.

Advisory Circulars accompany many rule Parts and contain information about standards, practices and procedures that the Director has established to be an acceptable means of compliance with the associated rule. An advisory circular may also contain guidance material to facilitate compliance with the rule requirements.

The objective of the Civil Aviation Rules system is to strike a balance of responsibility between, on the one hand, the Crown and regulatory authority (CAA) and, on the other hand, those who provide services and exercise privileges in the civil aviation system. This balance must enable the Crown and regulatory authority to set standards for, and monitor performance of, aviation participants whilst providing the maximum flexibility for the participants to develop their own means of compliance within the safety boundary.

Section 13 of the Civil Aviation Act 2023 (the Act) prescribes general requirements for participants in the civil aviation system and requires, amongst other things, participants to carry out their activities safely and in accordance with the relevant prescribed safety standards and practices.

Sections 52 to 60 of the Act allow the Minister to make ordinary rules for a range of purposes including:

- regulating aviation participants, aircraft, aeronautical products, and aviation places, and people and things carried, or to be carried, in aircraft:
- regulating people, activities, and things in relation to the safety and security of civil aviation:
- regulating the effect or potential effect of civil aviation on people, activities, and things:
- providing for the implementation of New Zealand's obligations under the Convention:
- providing for anything the Act says may or must be provided for by rules:
- providing for anything incidental that is necessary for carrying out, or giving full effect to, the Act.

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1. Purpose of this NPRM

This document proposes to change Civil Aviation Rule (CAR) Part 115: Adventure Aviation Certification and Operations by:

- removing and adding references in Appendix A associated with senior persons for parachute-drop aircraft operations, special aircraft operations, and glider and glider tow aircraft operations.
- removing all references to Senior Person that were missed in the tidy-up of the Safety Management Systems transition rule in Appendix A; and
- including minor editorial corrections to Part 115, set out under part 115.207 Emergency Equipment requirements, which are consequential amendments from the Part 91 Appendix A Rule Amendments 25/CAR/04.

2. Background to the proposed changes to Appendix A, Part 115 relating to senior personnel

Adventure aviation is defined as air operation in Part 1 Definitions and Abbreviations, and therefore competency checks should be carried out in a consistent manner across all types of air operations to ensure robustness in the system. It has now been approximately 14 years since Part 115 was introduced.

Aviation organisations certificated under Civil Aviation Rules (the Rules) are required to put in place “senior persons” within the organisation. Senior persons hold managerial responsibility for the safety and overall effective functioning of different aspects of the organisation.

The Rules require that the senior persons have a minimum level of experience and appropriate qualifications to effectively discharge their responsibilities. Part 115 operators are required to put in place a “senior person” responsible for crew training and competency assessment. For certain types of Part 115 operations the Rules state that this person must hold a Category A or B instructor rating.¹

In relation to crew training and competency, the requirement for the role of Senior Person – Crew Training and Competency to hold a Category A or B rating at certain Part 115 operators sets a high bar. This has made it difficult for many Part 115 operators to find people with the necessary qualifications to hold the position. There is general agreement by subject matter experts that the standard is set inappropriately high.

The standard Category A or B instructor requirement for senior person for crew training and competency assessments for parachute-drop operations, special aircraft operations and glider and glider tow aircraft operations sets a higher instructor rating than for the same role in air transport organisations operating under Part 121, 125 or 135.

Subject Matter Expert advice suggests there is little safety benefit in the standard of requiring A and B senior roles in the operating areas described above, and that the standards in the rule are higher than necessary.

Crew training and competency requirements related to some roles in Part 115 are currently being dealt with through exemptions, including for managerial roles. Although this has been a good short-term fix, CAA staff and industry consider that this is not a good long-term approach given costs associated with issuing exemptions. Ideally, if a standard in the rules is not set at the appropriate level, the rule should be changed.

3. Background to changes in emergency equipment

Early in 2026, CAA will consult on proposed changes to Rule Part 91.523 Emergency Equipment, including removing Part 91 Appendix A.12 and A.13. Those changes will require consequential amendments to Part 115 which refer to Appendix A.12 and A.13. For efficiency, we are proposing to make those amendments as part of this project.

Specifically, the changes to Part 91.523 will move the required contents of first aid kits from Appendix A.12 and the requirements for fire extinguishers from Appendix 13, to a transport instruments, requiring a change to these references in Pt rule 115.207(1)(i) and (ii) respectively.

CAA will consult on the proposed changes to Part 91 early in 2026, under docket 25/CAR/04.

¹ See 115.51(b)(2) and Appendix A of Part 115.

4. Issues addressed during development

4.1 We are moving to appropriate standards for personnel requirements in Rule Part 115

The proposed amendment removes the requirement for Category A and B instructors and replace it with a requirement to hold a commercial pilots licence, as per the current exemptions. This will ensure that the requirements for people in senior person roles are appropriate and reflect the specialised nature of 115 operations. As well, additional flexibility is introduced in the 'Managerial experience required' areas in Appendix A to ensure that previous experience can be considered. This has also been previously addressed in exemptions.

4.2 Consequential amendments to Rule Part 115

We propose updating Appendix A to include changes from the revocation of the Part 100 Safety Management transition rules.

We also propose minor consequential amendments to Part 115.207(1)(i) and (ii) to remove the references to A.12 and A.13 and replace them with a reference to Part 91.523 (which will contain the reference to the appropriate transport instruments). These have not been subject to impact consideration or policy assessment.

4.3 ICAO Standards and Recommended Practices

The proposed amendments are consistent with applicable International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) standards and recommended practices (SARPS) and are considered to present no risk to New Zealand aviation safety because they formalize existing practice established through an exemption.

4.4 The proposed amendments do not impose extra costs

The proposed amendments will not introduce additional compliance costs to the industry, and in some cases may reduce the cost of compliance.

The proposed amendments will remove costs to the CAA associated with administering general exemptions to address this issue, which are ultimately contributed to by levies.

5. Regulatory Impact Assessment

The minor or administrative nature of the proposed amendment does not substantially alter existing regulatory arrangements, therefore a Regulatory Impact Assessment is not required.

6. Next steps

Once consultation has closed, officials will analyse the submissions and consider whether to recommend changes to the proposals in the light of the submissions received.

The Minister of Transport will consider officials' recommendations and then decide whether any of the proposals in the document will be progressed into rules.

7. Summary of changes

7.1 Part 115 Appendix A - Qualifications and competencies of senior persons and minor update from Part 100 transition

CAR Part 115 Appendix A – outlines the qualifications and competencies of senior persons for the following: Hot Air Balloon Operation, Parachute-Drop Aircraft Operation, Tandem Parachute Descent Operation, Glider and Glider Tow Aircraft Operation, Hang Glider/Paraglider and Hang Glider Tow Aircraft Operation, Special Aircraft Operation, Microlight Aircraft Operation.

The proposal is to remove references to Category A or B instructor requirement for senior person for crew training and competency assessments for parachute-drop aircraft operations, special aircraft operations, and glider and glider tow aircraft operations. In addition, additional flexibility is introduced in the managerial area to ensure that previous experience can be considered.

In addition, we propose an update to Appendix A to include consequential changes from the revocation of Part 100 Safety Management transition rules. This will remove all references to "Senior Person responsible for the Organisational Management Systems" and the qualifications and competencies required as this role no longer exists.

To align with the senior person role responsibilities described in 115.51(b)(1)(iv), all references to “Senior person responsible for safety management” will be amended to “Senior person responsible for the system of safety management”.

7.2 Update to subparts of Part 91

The proposal includes several minor editorial corrections to Part 115, set out under Part 115.207(1)(i) and (ii), which are consequential amendments from the Part 91 Appendix A Rule Amendments 25/CAR/04. These have not been subject to impact consideration or policy assessment.

The minor consequential amendments to Part 115.207(1)(i) and (ii) are to remove the references to A.12 and A.13 and replace them with a reference to Part 91.523” (which will contain the reference to the appropriate transport instruments).

8. Legislative analysis

8.1 Power to make rules

The Minister may make ordinary rules under sections 52 to 60 of the Civil Aviation Act 2023, for various purposes including implementing New Zealand’s obligations under the Convention, assisting aviation safety and security, and any matter contemplated under the Act.

These proposed rules are made under:

- Section 52(1) which allows the Minister to make rules relating to civil aviation for all or any of the following purposes:
 - (i) regulating aviation participants, aircraft, aeronautical products, and aviation places, and people and things carried, or to be carried, in aircraft:
 - (ii) regulating people, activities, and things in relation to the safety and security of civil aviation:
- section 54(1) which allows the Minister to make rules under section 52 relating to the setting of standards, specifications, restrictions, and licensing requirements for all of those persons or things specified in section 53, including but not limited to the following:
 - (i) the setting of standards for training systems and techniques, including recurrent training requirements:
- section 56(b) which allows the Minister to make rules under section 52 for all or any of the following:
 - (i) the conditions under which aircraft may be used or operated, or under which any act may be performed in or from an aircraft:
 - (ii) the prevention of the operation of aircraft in a manner that endangers people or property.
- Section 60(a) which allows the Minister to make rules under section 52 for definitions, abbreviations, and units of measurement to apply within the civil aviation system.

9. The Civil Aviation Authority seeks your comments

If you wish to comment on the proposed rule amendment, please make a submission by:

- emailing us at docket@caa.govt.nz and titled ‘Submission to NPRM 25-05’
- posting the form (a form is available on our website) to:
Docket Clerk (NPRM 25-05)
Civil Aviation Authority
PO Box 3555
Wellington 6140 New Zealand
- making an online submission using the form provided on the CAA website at [NPRMs open for submission |](#)

aviation.govt.nz. When submitted, this form will be sent directly to the Docket Inbox.

Consultation closes at 5pm on Monday 9th February 2026.

9.1 Further information

For further information, contact: docket@caa.govt.nz

9.2 Submissions are public information

Please indicate clearly if your comments are commercially sensitive, or if for some other reason you consider they should not be disclosed. If your submission is subject to an Official Information Act (OIA) request, CAA will consider your confidentiality request in accordance with the grounds for withholding information set out in the OIA. In addition, if you are an individual (that is, your comments are made personally and not on behalf of a company or an organisation), please indicate if you consider for some reason that your identity should not be disclosed.

We will acknowledge all submissions that we receive. Once the rules are finalised a summary of submissions will be published.

10. Proposed rule amendments

[Note: Inserted texts in existing Parts are shaded, deleted texts are struck through and shaded]

10.1 Appendix A – Qualifications and competencies of senior persons

Parachute-Drop Aircraft Operation		
Senior person responsible for crew training and competency assessment	Document required	“A” or “B” category instructor rating Commercial pilot licence
	Currency	Holds a current “A” or “B” category instructor rating; and Meets currency requirement to act as PIC in at least one type of the certificate holder’s aircraft, with 500 hours experience in that category of aircraft.
	Managerial experience required	2 years experience as a qualified instructor; or 2 years experience in a pilot check and training role that is acceptable to the Director; or 2 years of relevant experience that is acceptable to the Director.
Glider and Glider Tow Aircraft Operation		
Senior person responsible for crew training and competency assessment	Document required	Commercial pilot licence (glider) or an “A” or “B” glider instructor rating issued by a gliding organisation that has been certificated under Part 149.
	Currency	Meets currency requirement to act as PIC in at least one type of the certificate holder’s aircraft, with 150 hours experience in that category of aircraft.
	Managerial experience required	2 years experience as an “A” or “B” category glider instructor for a gliding organisation certificated under Part 149; or 2 years of relevant experience that is acceptable to the Director.
Special Aircraft Operation		
Senior person responsible for crew training and competency assessment	Document required	Commercial pilot licence
	Currency	Holds a current “A” or “B” category instructor rating; and Meets currency requirement to act as PIC in at least one type of the certificate holder’s aircraft,

		with 500 hours experience in that category of aircraft.
	Managerial experience required	2 years experience as a qualified instructor; or 2 years experience in a pilot check and training role that is acceptable to the Director; or 2 years relevant experience that is acceptable to the Director.

10.2 Appendix A – Qualifications and competencies of senior persons

Hot Air Balloon Operation		
Senior person responsible for safety management the system for safety management	Competency	Demonstrate competency relevant to systems of safety management. A working knowledge of the applicable Civil Aviation Rules and safety management requirements.
	Experience	Experience and background relevant to the management of safety systems and the activities of the organisation
Senior person responsible for the organisational safety management system	Document required	Certificate of training for quality assurance that is acceptable to the Director.
	Vocational experience required	Demonstrable knowledge and awareness of general quality assurance/quality management systems and 3 years of experience in an operational role in the aviation industry; or 2 years experience with organisational management systems in the aviation industry.
Parachute-Drop Aircraft Operation		
Senior person responsible for safety management the system for safety management	Competency	Demonstrate competency relevant to systems of safety management. A working knowledge of the applicable Civil Aviation Rules and safety management requirements.
	Experience	Experience and background relevant to the management of safety systems and the activities of the organisation
Senior person responsible for the organisational safety management system	Document required	Certificate of training for quality assurance that is acceptable to the Director.
	Vocational experience required	Demonstrable knowledge and awareness of general quality assurance/quality management systems and 3 years of experience in an operational role in the

system		aviation industry; or 2 years experience with organisational management systems in the aviation industry.
Tandem Parachute Descent Operation		
Senior person responsible for safety management the system for safety management	Competency	Demonstrate competency relevant to systems of safety management. A working knowledge of the applicable Civil Aviation Rules and safety management requirements.
	Experience	Experience and background relevant to the management of safety systems and the activities of the organisation
Senior person responsible for the organisational safety management system	Document required	Certificate of training for quality assurance that is acceptable to the Director.
	Vocational experience required	Demonstrable knowledge and awareness of general quality assurance/quality management systems and 3 years of experience in an operational role in the aviation industry; or 2 years experience with organisational management systems in the aviation industry.
Glider and Glider Tow Aircraft Operation		
Senior person responsible for safety management the system for safety management	Competency	Demonstrate competency relevant to systems of safety management. A working knowledge of the applicable Civil Aviation Rules and safety management requirements.
	Experience	Experience and background relevant to the management of safety systems and the activities of the organisation
Senior person responsible for the organisational safety management system	Document required	Certificate of training for quality assurance that is acceptable to the Director.
	Vocational experience required	Demonstrable knowledge and awareness of general quality assurance/quality management systems and 3 years of experience in an operational role in the aviation industry; or 2 years experience with organisational management systems in the aviation industry.
Hang Glider/Paraglider and Hang Glider Tow Aircraft Operation		
Senior person responsible for safety management the system for safety management	Competency	Demonstrate competency relevant to systems of safety management. A working knowledge of the applicable Civil Aviation Rules and safety management requirements.
	Experience	Experience and background relevant to the

		management of safety systems and the activities of the organisation
Senior person responsible for the organisational safety management system	Document required	Certificate of training for quality assurance that is acceptable to the Director.
	Vocational experience required	Demonstrable knowledge and awareness of general quality assurance/quality management systems and 3 years of experience in an operational role in the aviation industry; or 2 years experience with organisational management systems in the aviation industry.
Special Aircraft Operation		
Senior person responsible for safety management the system for safety management	Competency	Demonstrate competency relevant to systems of safety management. A working knowledge of the applicable Civil Aviation Rules and safety management requirements.
	Experience	Experience and background relevant to the management of safety systems and the activities of the organisation
Senior person responsible for the organisational safety management system	Document required	Certificate of training for quality assurance that is acceptable to the Director.
	Vocational experience required	Demonstrable knowledge and awareness of general quality assurance/quality management systems and 3 years of experience in an operational role in the aviation industry; or 2 years experience with organisational management systems in the aviation industry.
Microlight Aircraft Operation		
Senior person responsible for safety management the system for safety management	Competency	Demonstrate competency relevant to systems of safety management. A working knowledge of the applicable Civil Aviation Rules and safety management requirements.
	Experience	Experience and background relevant to the management of safety systems and the activities of the organisation
Senior person responsible for the organisational safety management system	Document required	Certificate of training for quality assurance that is acceptable to the Director.
	Vocational experience required	Demonstrable knowledge and awareness of general quality assurance/quality management systems and 3 years of experience in an operational role in the aviation industry; or 2 years experience with organisational management systems in the aviation industry.

10.3 Part 115.207 Emergency equipment requirements

A holder of an adventure aviation operator certificate must ensure that—

- (1) each aircraft other than a hang glider, paraglider, or tandem parachute, is equipped with—
 - (i) a first aid kit that meets the requirements specified by rule 91.523 of Appendix A.12 of Part 91 and is readily accessible to the occupants of the aircraft; and
 - (ii) except for a glider, a fire extinguisher that meets the requirements specified by rule 91.523 of Appendix A.13 of Part 91; and
 - (iii) except for a hot air balloon, or a glider, an axe that is readily accessible to the crew.
- (2) for a hang glider, paraglider or tandem parachute descent operation, the pilot in command, or tandem master has reasonable access to a first aid kit that is suitable for treatment of minor injuries.