ORDER

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION

8610.3

10/28/77

SUBJ: CERTIFICATION OF REPAIR STATIONS FOR CLASS AND LIMITED RATINGS, INCLUDING THE PRIVILEGES OF THOSE RATINGS

1. PURPOSE. This order provides information to field personnel regarding the certification of repair stations for class and limited ratings, limited rating specialized service, and outlines the privileges of those ratings.

2. DISTRIBUTION. This order is distributed to all organizational elements on ZFS-831; to General Aviation, Air Carrier, Engineering and Manufacturing, and Flight Standards District Offices; Flight Inspection, International, and Aeronautical Quality Assurance Field Offices; and to International Aviation Field Offices.

3. BACKGROUND. In the past, policy letters have been issued to clarify the privileges of airframe-rated repair stations performing maintenance on powerplants and accessories. Those letters were not sent to all offices and have resulted in inquiries on this subject. As a result, a lack of standardization exists in the application of the rules.

4. DISCUSSION.

a. FAR 145.51(a) provides that a certificated domestic repair station may maintain or alter any airframe, powerplant, propeller, instrument, radio, or accessory or part thereof, for which it is rated.

b. FAR 145.51(b) provides that a certificated domestic repair station may approve for return to service any article for which it is rated after it has been maintained or altered.

c. FAR 145.51(c) provides that a repair station with an airframe rating may perform 100-hour, annual, or progressive inspections and approve the aircraft for return to service.

d. As defined in FAR 1:

(1) "Maintenance" means inspection, overhaul, repair, preservation, and the replacement of parts, but excludes preventive maintenance.

(2) "Airframe" means the fuselage, booms, nacelles, cowlings, fairings, airfoil surfaces (including rotors but excluding propellers and rotating airfoils of engines), and landing gear of an aircraft and their accessories and controls.

Distribution: ZFS-831; FFS-1,3,7 (wide); FFS-2,5,4,8 (normal); FIA-0 (minimum); AAC-952 (80 copies); AAC-840(1 copy)

Initiated By: AFS-830

5. PRIVILEGES.

a. An airframe-rated repair station with a class rating may perform 100-hour, annual, and progressive inspections, and inspections under FAR 91.217 only on the aircraft included in the class or limited rating listed on the Repair Station Operations Specifications, FAA Form 8000-4-1.

b. When doing work on an aircraft not included under the definition of airframe, an airframe-rated repair station may perform the work limited to inspection only. The repair station may accomplish all the testing necessary to assure the airworthiness of the aircraft.

c. To perform maintenance beyond the scope of inspection, the repair station must be appropriately rated as required by FAR 145.51(a).

d. A repair station may perform the items listed as preventive maintenance in Appendix A of FAR 43. However, when that work is performed by the repair station, it is considered maintenance and they are required to enter it into the aircraft records.

e. A repair station, holding a limited rating-powerplant to replace powerplant modules, is limited to the replacement of the modules only. In order to perform maintenance work related to the module replacement, maintenance to the module or engine would require the repair station to have those maintenance privileges included in the rating or have the maintenance performed by an appropriately-rated person.

6. CONCLUSION.

a. AFS-300 letters dated November 3, 1964, and June 14, 1973, to the Central and Southern Regions, respectively, on this subject shall be disregarded.

b. An airframe-rated repair station performing powerplant maintenance beyond the scope of inspection, without an appropriate powerplant rating, shall be advised to discontinue the practice until it is properly rated.

c. An airframe-rated repair station that uses a powerplant-rated mechanic to accomplish powerplant maintenance, beyond the scope of inspection, must have the powerplant mechanic assume the responsibility for that maintenance under his certificate.

d. Due to the complexity of turbine powerplants, the manufacturers recommend that certain specialized equipment and trained personnel are required to perform turbine-engine hot-section maintenance. Inspectors are cautioned to determine that an applicant for a repair station certification is competent to perform turbine-engine-hot section maintenance in accordance with the recommendations of the manufacturer. A repair station,

unless appropriately powerplant-rated, would be required to hold a limited rating-powerplant to perform the turbine-engine hot-section maintenance, limited as necessary to accomplish the inspection and other maintenance work resulting from an inspection.

e. Since an inspection usually requires maintenance work in addition to inspection, the repair station can be issued a limited rating to accomplish the maintenance, with limitations as necessary for the work of inspection and the other maintenance resulting from the inspection.

f. A repair station performing maintenance on a particular type(s) of airframe, powerplant, propeller, radio, instrument, accessory OR PARTS THEREOF, should be issued a limited rating for those categories and should not be issued a limited rating-specialized services.

g. A repair station performing maintenance that requires equipment and skills not ordinarily found in regular repair stations such as maintenance of aircraft emergency equipment, nondestructive testing and processing, or other purposes for which the Administrator finds the applicant's request is appropriate should be issued a limited rating for specialized services to perform that service.

h. The Repair Station Operation Specifications issued to a repair station with a limited rating for specialized services shall contain the specification used in performing that specialized service. The specification may either be a civil or military one that is currently used by industry and approved by the Administrator or one developed by the applicant and approved by the Administrator.

i. Some technical orders and military specifications developed for military use may not be acceptable to the Administrator. Technical orders, military specifications, manufacturer's technical data and other technical data referenced or developed by an applicant must meet accepted engineering standards and the requirements of the FAR. FAA Airworthiness Inspectors should request the assistance of their Engineering and Manufacturing Branch to assure that those specifications meet acceptable standards before they are approved for use by the repair station.

j. When a repair station submits a process specification that contains indepth details and instructions, the document should be given a title and number by the applicant. The process specification should include the procedures for revising the specification and the requirement that all changes must be submitted to the FAA for approval before being implemented. The specification should also relate that if there are any conflicting details between it and any current or future requirements of the FAR, the FAR requirements will take precedence. After the process specification is approved by the Administrator, it must be referenced on the Repair Station Operations Specifications by title and number.

J. A. Ferrarese

J. A. FERRARESE
Acting Director
Flight Standards Service