

Federal Aviation Regulation

▼ Sec. 121.310

Part 121 OPERATING REQUIREMENTS: DOMESTIC, FLAG, AND SUPPLEMENTAL OPERATIONS	
Subpart K--Instrument and Equipment Requirements	

Sec. 121.310

Additional emergency equipment.

(a) *Means for emergency evacuation.* Each passenger-carrying landplane emergency exit (other than over-the-wing) that is more than 6 feet from the ground with the airplane on the ground and the landing gear extended, must have an approved means to assist the occupants in descending to the ground. The assisting means for a floor-level emergency exit must meet the requirements of Sec. 25.809(f)(1) of this chapter in effect on April 30, 1972, except that, for any airplane for which the application for the type certificate was filed after that date, it must meet the requirements under which the airplane was type certificated. An assisting means that deploys automatically must be armed during taxiing, takeoffs, and landings. However, if the Administrator finds that the design of the exit makes compliance impractical, he may grant a deviation from the requirement of automatic deployment if the assisting means automatically erects upon deployment and, with respect to required emergency exits, if an emergency evacuation demonstration is conducted in accordance with Sec. 121.291(a). This paragraph does not apply to the rear window emergency exit of DC-3 airplanes operated with less than 36 occupants, including crewmembers and less than five exits authorized for passenger use.

(b) *Interior emergency exit marking.* The following must be complied with for each passenger-carrying airplane: (1) Each passenger emergency exit, its means of access, and its means of opening must be conspicuously marked. The identity and location of each passenger emergency exit must be recognizable from a distance equal to the width of the cabin. The location of each passenger emergency exit must be indicated by a sign visible to occupants approaching along the main passenger aisle. There must be a locating sign--

- (i) Above the aisle near each over-the-wing passenger emergency exit, or at another ceiling location if it is more practical because of low headroom;
 - (ii) Next to each floor level passenger emergency exit, except that one sign may serve two such exits if they both can be seen readily from that sign; and
 - (iii) On each bulkhead or divider that prevents fore and aft vision along the passenger cabin, to indicate emergency exits beyond and obscured by it, except that if this is not possible the sign may be placed at another appropriate location.
- (2) Each passenger emergency exit marking and each locating sign must meet

the following:

(i) Except as provided in paragraph (b)(2)(iii) of this section, for an airplane for which the application for the type certificate was filed prior to May 1, 1972, each passenger emergency exit marking and each locating sign must be manufactured to meet the requirements of Sec. 25.812(b) of this chapter in effect on April 30, 1972. On these airplanes, no sign may continue to be used if its luminescence (brightness) decreases to below 100 microlamberts. The colors may be reversed if it increases the emergency illumination of the passenger compartment. However, the Administrator may authorize deviation from the 2-inch background requirements if he finds that special circumstances exist that make compliance impractical and that the proposed deviation provides an equivalent level of safety.

(ii) For a transport category airplane for which the application for the type certificate was filed on or after May 1, 1972, each passenger emergency exit marking and each locating sign must be manufactured to meet the interior emergency exit marking requirements under which the airplane was type certificated. On these airplanes, no sign may continue to be used if its luminescence (brightness) decreases to below 250 microlamberts.

(iii) For a nontransport category turbopropeller powered airplane type certificated after December 31, 1964, each passenger emergency exit marking and each locating sign must be manufactured to meet the requirements of Sec. 23.811(b) of this chapter. On these airplanes, no sign may continue to be used if its luminescence (brightness) decreases to below 100 microlamberts.

(c) *Lighting for interior emergency exit markings.* Except for nontransport category airplanes type certificated after December 31, 1964, each passenger-carrying airplane must have an emergency lighting system, independent of the main lighting system. However, sources of general cabin illumination may be common to both the emergency and the main lighting systems if the power supply to the emergency lighting system is independent of the power supply to the main lighting system.

The emergency lighting system must--

- (1) Illuminate each passenger exit marking and locating sign;
- (2) Provide enough general lighting in the passenger cabin so that the average illumination when measured at 40-inch intervals at seat armrest height, on the centerline of the main passenger aisle, is at least 0.05 foot-candles; and
- (3) For airplanes type certificated after January 1, 1958, after November 26, 1986, include floor proximity emergency escape path marking which meets the requirements of Sec. 25.812(e) of this chapter in effect on November 26, 1984.

(d) *Emergency light operation.* Except for lights forming part of emergency lighting subsystems provided in compliance with Sec. 25.812(h) of this chapter (as prescribed in paragraph (h) of this section) that serve no more than one assist means, are independent of the airplane's main emergency lighting systems, and are automatically activated when the assist means is deployed, each light required by paragraphs (c) and (h) of this section must comply with the following:

- (1) Each light must--

- (i) Be operable manually both from the flightcrew station and, for airplanes on which a flight attendant is required, from a point in the passenger compartment that is readily accessible to a normal flight attendant seat;
 - (ii) Have a means to prevent inadvertent operation of the manual controls; and
 - (iii) When armed or turned on at either station, remain lighted or become lighted upon interruption of the airplane's normal electric power.
- (2) Each light must be armed or turned on during taxiing, takeoff, and landing. In showing compliance with this paragraph a transverse vertical separation of the fuselage need not be considered.
- (3) Each light must provide the required level of illumination for at least 10 minutes at the critical ambient conditions after emergency landing.
- (4) Each light must have a cockpit control device that has an "on," "off," and "armed" position.

(e) *Emergency exit operating handles.*

(1) For a passenger-carrying airplane for which the application for the type certificate was filed prior to May 1, 1972, the location of each passenger emergency exit operating handle, and instructions for opening the exit, must be shown by a marking on or near the exit that is readable from a distance of 30 inches. In addition, for each Type I and Type II emergency exit with a locking mechanism released by rotary motion of the handle, the instructions for opening must be shown by--

- (i) A red arrow with a shaft at least three-fourths inch wide and a head twice the width of the shaft, extending along at least 70° of arc at a radius approximately equal to three-fourths of the handle length; and
- (ii) The word "open" in red letters 1 inch high placed horizontally near the head of the arrow.

(2) For a passenger-carrying airplane for which the application for the type certificate was filed on or after May 1, 1972, the location of each passenger emergency exit operating handle and instructions for opening the exit must be shown in accordance with the requirements under which the airplane was type certificated. On these airplanes, no operating handle or operating handle cover may continue to be used if its luminescence (brightness) decreases to below 100 microlamberts.

(f) *Emergency exit access.* Access to emergency exits must be provided as follows for each passenger-carrying transport category airplane:

(1) Each passage way between individual passenger areas, or leading to a Type I or Type II emergency exit, must be unobstructed and at least 20 inches wide.

[(2) For each Type I or Type II emergency exit equipped with an assist means, there must be enough space next to the exit to allow a crewmember to assist in the evacuation of passengers without reducing the unobstructed width of the passageway below that required in paragraph (f)(1) of this section. In addition, all airplanes manufactured on or after November 26, 2008 must comply with the provisions of Secs. 25.813(b)(1), (b)(2), (b)(3) and (b)(4) in effect on November 26, 2004. However, a deviation from this requirement may be authorized for an airplane certificated under the provisions of part 4b of the Civil Air Regulations in effect before December 20, 1951, if the Administrator finds that special circumstances exist that provide an equivalent level of safety.]

(3) There must be access from the main aisle to each Type III and Type IV exit. The access from the aisle to these exits must not be obstructed by seats, berths, or other protrusions in a manner that would reduce the effectiveness of the exit. In addition--

(i) For an airplane for which the application for the type certificate was filed prior to May 1, 1972, the access must meet the requirements of Sec. 25.813(c) of this chapter in effect on April 30, 1972; and

(ii) For an airplane for which the application for the type certificate was filed on or after May 1, 1972, the access must meet the emergency exit access requirements under which the airplane was type certificated; except that,

(iii) After December 3, 1992, the access for an airplane type certificated after January 1, 1958, must meet the requirements of Sec. 25.813(c) of this chapter, effective June 3, 1992.

(iv) Contrary provisions of this section notwithstanding, the Manager of the Transport Airplane Directorate, Aircraft Certification Service, Federal Aviation Administration, may authorize deviation from the requirements of paragraph (f)(3)(iii) of this section if it is determined that special circumstances make compliance impractical. Such special circumstances include, but are not limited to, the following conditions when they preclude achieving compliance with Sec. 25.813(c)(1)(i) or (ii) without a reduction in the total number of passenger seats: emergency exits located in close proximity to each other; fixed installations such as lavatories, galleys, etc.; permanently mounted bulkheads; an insufficient number of rows ahead of or behind the exit to enable compliance without a reduction in the seat row pitch of more than one inch; or an insufficient number of such rows to enable compliance without a reduction in the seat row pitch to less than 30 inches. A request for such grant of deviation must include credible reasons as to why literal compliance with Sec. 25.813(c)(1)(i) or (ii) is impractical and a description of the steps taken to achieve a level of safety as close to that intended by Sec. 25.813(c)(1)(i) or (ii) as is practical.

(v) The Manager of the Transport Airplane Directorate, Aircraft Certification Service, Federal Aviation Administration, may also authorize a compliance date later than December 3, 1992, if it is determined that special circumstances make compliance by that date impractical. A request for such grant of deviation must outline the airplanes for which compliance will be achieved by December 3, 1992, and include a proposed schedule for incremental compliance of the remaining airplanes in the operator's fleet. In addition, the request must include credible reasons why compliance cannot be achieved earlier.

(4) If it is necessary to pass through a passageway between passenger compartments to reach any required emergency exit from any seat in the passenger cabin, the passageway must not be obstructed. However, curtains may be used if they allow free entry through the passageway.

(5) No door may be installed in any partition between passenger compartments.

[(6) No person may operate an airplane manufactured after November 27, 2006, that incorporates a door installed between any passenger seat occupiable for takeoff and landing and any passenger emergency exit, such that the door crosses any egress path (including aisles, crossaisles and passageways).

(7) If it is necessary to pass through a doorway separating any seat (except those seats on the flightdeck), occupiable for takeoff and landing, from an emergency exit, the door must have a means to latch it in the open position, and the door must be latched open during each takeoff and landing. The latching means must be able to withstand the loads imposed upon it when the door is subjected to the ultimate inertia forces, relative to the surrounding structure, listed in Sec. 25.561(b) of this chapter.]

(g) *Exterior exit markings.* Each passenger emergency exit and the means of opening that exit from the outside must be marked on the outside of the airplane. There must be a 2-inch colored band outlining each passenger emergency exit on the side of the fuselage. Each outside marking, including the band, must be readily distinguishable from the surrounding fuselage area by contrast in color. The markings must comply with the following:

(1) If the reflectance of the darker color is 15 percent or less, the reflectance of the lighter color must be at least 45 percent.

(2) If the reflectance of the darker color is greater than 15 percent, at least a 30 percent difference between its reflectance and the reflectance of the lighter color must be provided.

(3) Exits that are not in the side of the fuselage must have the external means of opening and applicable instructions marked conspicuously in red or, if red is inconspicuous against the background color, in bright chrome yellow and, when the opening means for such an exit is located on only one side of the fuselage, a conspicuous marking to that effect must be provided on the other side.

"Reflectance" is the ratio of the luminous flux reflected by a body to the luminous flux it receives.

(h) *Exterior emergency lighting and escape route.*

(1) Except for nontransport category airplanes certificated after December 31, 1964, each passenger-carrying airplane must be equipped with exterior lighting that meets the following requirements:

(i) For an airplane for which the application for the type certificate was filed prior to May 1, 1972, the requirements of Sec. 25.812 (f) and (g) of this chapter in effect on April 30, 1972.

(ii) For an airplane for which the application for the type certificate was filed on or after May 1, 1972, the exterior emergency lighting requirements under which the airplane was type certificated.

(2) Each passenger-carrying airplane must be equipped with a slip-resistant escape route that meets the following requirements:

(i) For an airplane for which the application for the type certificate was filed prior to May 1, 1972, the requirements of Sec. 25.803(e) of this chapter in effect on April 30, 1972.

(ii) For an airplane for which the application for the type certificate was filed on or after May 1, 1972, the slip-resistant escape route requirements under which the airplane was type certificated.

(i) *Floor level exits.* Each floor level door or exit in the side of the fuselage (other than those leading into a cargo or baggage compartment that is not accessible from the passenger cabin) that is 44 or more inches high and 20 or more inches

wide, but not wider than 46 inches, each passenger ventral exit (except the ventral exits on M-404 and CV-240 airplanes), and each tail cone exit, must meet the requirements of this section for floor level emergency exits. However, the Administrator may grant a deviation from this paragraph if he finds that circumstances make full compliance impractical and that an acceptable level of safety has been achieved.

(j) *Additional emergency exits.* Approved emergency exits in the passenger compartments that are in excess of the minimum number of required emergency exits must meet all of the applicable provisions of this section except paragraphs (f)(1), (2), and (3) of this section and must be readily accessible.

(k) On each large passenger-carrying turbojet-powered airplane, each ventral exit and tailcone exit must be--

- (1) Designed and constructed so that it cannot be opened during flight; and
- (2) Marked with a placard readable from a distance of 30 inches and installed at a conspicuous location near the means of opening the exit, stating that the exit has been designed and constructed so that it cannot be opened during flight.

[(1) Emergency exit features.

(1) Each transport category airplane manufactured after November 26, 2007 must comply with the provisions of Sec. 25.809(i) and

(2) After November 26, 2007 each transport category airplane must comply with the provisions of Sec. 25.813(b)(6)(ii) in effect on November 26, 2007.]

(m) Except for an airplane used in operations under this part on October 16, 1987, and having an emergency exit configuration installed and authorized for operation prior to October 16, 1987, for an airplane that is required to have more than one passenger emergency exit for each side of the fuselage, no passenger emergency exit shall be more than 60 feet from any adjacent passenger emergency exit on the same side of the same deck of the fuselage, as measured parallel to the airplane's longitudinal axis between the nearest exit edges.

(n) *Portable lights.* No person may operate a passenger-carrying airplane unless it is equipped with flashlight stowage provisions accessible from each flight attendant seat.

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▶ **Comments**

▼ **Document History**

Notice of Proposed Rulemaking Actions:

Notice of Proposed Rulemaking. [Notice No. 96-9](#); Issued on 7/16/1996.

Final Rule Actions:

Final Rule. Docket No. [FAA-2004-19412](#); Issued on 10/15/2004.