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Minimum Operational Performance Standards (MOPS) for Devices that Prevent Blocked Channels Used in Two-Way Radio Communications Due to Unintentional Transmissions

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FOREWORD

This document was prepared by Special Committee 163 of the Radio Technical Commission for Aeronautics. It was approved by the RTCA Executive Committee on January 25, 1991.

RTCA is an association of aeronautical organizations of the United States from both government and industry. Dedicated to the advancement of aeronautics, RTCA seeks sound technical solutions to problems involving the application of electronics and telecommunications to aeronautical operations. Its objective is the resolution of such problems by mutual agreement of its member organizations. The findings of RTCA are in the nature of recommendations to all organizations concerned. Since RTCA is not an official agency of the United States Government, its recommendations may not be regarded as statements of official government policy unless so enunciated by the U. S. government organization or agency having statutory jurisdiction over any matters to which the recommendations relate.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

		Page
1.0	PURPOSE AND SCOPE	1
1.1	Introduction	1
1.2	System Overview	1
1.3	Operational Application	2
1.4	Operational Goals	2
1.5	Assumptions	2
1.5.1	Unintentional Continuous Transmissions	2
1.5.1.1	Stuck Microphone PTT Switches	2
1.5.1.2	Loose Microphone Jacks	2
1.5.1.3	PTT Line Activation by Other Causes	3
1.5.1.4	Unkeyed Continuous Transmissions	3
1.6	Test Procedures	3
1.7	Definitions of Terms	4
2.0	EQUIPMENT PERFORMANCE REQUIREMENTS AND TEST PROCEDURES	5
2.1	General Requirements	5
2.1.1	Airworthiness	5
2.1.2	Intended Function	5
2.1.3	Federal Communications Commission Rules	5
2.1.4	Fire Protection	5
2.1.5	Operation of Controls	5
2.1.6	Accessibility of Controls	5
2.1.7	Effects of Test	5
2.2	Equipment Performance - Standard Conditions	7
2.2.1	Automatic Termination of Transmissions	7
2.2.2	Resetting of Transmission Timer	7
2.2.3	Bypass Switch	7
2.3	Equipment Performance - Environmental Conditions	9
2.3.1	Temperature and Altitude Tests	9
2.3.1.1	Ground Survival Low Temperature Test and Operating Low Temperature Test	9
2.3.1.2	Ground Survival High Temperature Test and Short-Time Operating High Temperature Test	9
2.3.1.3	Operating High Temperature Test	9
2.3.1.4	In-Flight Loss of Cooling Test	10
2.3.1.5	Altitude Test	10

Page

2.3.1.6 Decompression Test 10
2.3.1.7 Overpressure Test 10

2.3.2 Temperature Variation Test 10
2.3.3 Humidity Test 10
2.3.4 Operational Shocks and Crash Safety Tests 10

2.3.4.1 Operational Shocks 10
2.3.4.2 Crash Safety 11

2.3.5 Vibration Tests 11
2.3.6 Explosion Proofness Test 11
2.3.7 Waterproofness Tests 11

2.3.7.1 Drip Proof Test 11
2.3.7.2 Spray Proof Test 11
2.3.7.3 Continuous Stream Proof Test 11

2.3.8 Fluids Susceptibility Tests 12

2.3.8.1 Spray Test 12
2.3.8.2 Immersion Test 12

2.3.9 Sand and Dust Test 12
2.3.10 Fungus Resistance Test 12
2.3.11 Salt Spray Test 12
2.3.12 Magnetic Effect Test 13
2.3.13 Power Input Tests 13

2.3.13.1 Normal Operating Conditions 13
2.3.13.2 Abnormal Operating Conditions 13

2.3.14 Voltage Spike Tests 13

2.3.14.1 Category 'A' Requirements 13
2.3.14.2 Category 'B' Requirements 13

2.3.15 Audio Frequency Conducted Susceptibility Test 14
2.3.16 Induced Signal Susceptibility Test 14
2.3.17 Radio Frequency Susceptibility Test (Radiated and Conducted) 14
2.3.18 Emission of Radio Frequency Energy Test 14
2.3.19 Lightning Induced Transient Susceptibility Test 14
2.3.20 Lightning Direct Effects Test 14
2.3.21 Icing Test 14

2.4 Equipment Test Procedures 15

2.4.1 Definitions of Terms and Conditions of Test 15
2.4.2 Detailed Test Procedures 16

Page

2.4.2.1 Automatic Termination of Transmissions 16
2.4.2.2 Resetting of Transmission Timer 16

3.0 INSTALLED EQUIPMENT PERFORMANCE 17

3.1 Equipment Installation 17

3.1.1 Accessibility 17
3.1.2 Aircraft Environment 17
3.1.3 Display Visibility 17
3.1.4 Dynamic Response 17
3.1.5 Failure Protection 17
3.1.6 Interference Effects 17
3.1.7 Inadvertent Turnoff 18
3.1.8 Aircraft Power Source 18

3.2 Installed Equipment Performance Requirements 18
3.3 Conditions of Test 18

3.3.1 Power Input 18
3.3.2 Associated Equipment or Systems 18
3.3.3 Environment 18
3.3.4 Adjustment of Equipment 18
3.3.5 Warm-up Period 18

3.4 Test Procedures for Installed Equipment Performance 18

3.4.1 Ground Test Procedures 19

3.4.1.1 Conformity Inspection 19
3.4.1.2 Equipment Function 19
3.4.1.3 Interference Effects 19
3.4.1.4 Power Supply Fluctuations 19
3.4.1.5 Equipment Accessibility 19
3.4.1.6 Functional Tests 19

MEMBERSHIP 21

1.0 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

1.1 Introduction

This document sets forth minimum operational performance standards for systems that prevent blocked frequencies used in air traffic control (ATC) two-way radio communications due to unintentional transmissions. Incorporated within these standards are system characteristics that should be beneficial to users of the systems as well as to designers, manufacturers and installers.

Compliance with these standards is recommended as a means of assuring that the equipment will perform its intended function(s) satisfactorily under all conditions normally encountered in routine operations. Any regulatory application of this document is the sole responsibility of appropriate government agencies.

Because the measured values of equipment performance characteristics may be a function of the measurement method, standard test conditions and methods of test are recommended in this document.

This document considers an equipment configuration to consist of: transmitter, receiver, power supply, microphone, control panels, antenna, interconnecting cables and related accessories. It should not be inferred that all equipment will necessarily include all of the foregoing components as separate units. This will depend on the specific design configuration chosen by the manufacturer. Additional functions and components that may refer to expanded equipment capabilities that exceed the stated minimum requirements are identified as optional features. Equipment features that are beyond the scope of this document may be developed in future RTCA activities.

If the equipment implementation includes a computer software package, the guidelines contained in RTCA/DO-178A, *Software Considerations in Airborne Systems and Equipment Certification*, shall be considered.

1.2 System Overview

The aviation communications system includes ground-based and airborne receiving and transmitting equipment that provides air-to-ground, ground-to-air, air-to-air and ground-to-ground voice and data communications. The equipment addressed in this document provides the means for reducing unintentional transmissions that adversely affect two-way voice radio communications.

Disruption to voice communications in the ATC system presents the potential for degrading flight safety. Although these communication disruptions may occur in areas where traffic density is low, the growth of air traffic (and communications) has increased the number of disruption incidents. The FAA concluded, as early as 1968, that the occurrence of communication disruptions presented serious problems, e.g., the loss of separation standards between aircraft, near mid-air collisions, delays and potentially disastrous disruptions of traffic flow. Various educational programs and advisory material issued by the FAA have not reduced the problem. In fact, subsequent surveys have indicated that the problem has intensified.

In 1984, the FAA was petitioned to enact rulemaking requiring two-way radio communication systems employing anti-blocking and stuck microphone protection circuitry. The FAA subsequently published the petition for rulemaking for public comment. The majority of responses to the petition for rulemaking were favorable.